

Digital Assessments and Interventions for Mental Healthcare:

Potential Benefits and Guidelines

Digital assessments and interventions

- Digital assessment tools can use data gathered from mobile apps, health sensors, or computerized screenings to monitor clinical symptoms and treatment effects^{1,2}
- Digital interventions include digital therapeutics that are software-driven tools that can provide patients with evidence-based therapeutic interventions in mental or behavioral health³



Potential benefits

- For digital assessment and intervention tools:
 - Efficient collection of clinically useful information²
 - Prevention of missed opportunities to identify patients who may benefit from behavioral health treatment²
 - Identification of individuals with varying behavioral health to provide them with helpful resources and services²
 - A reduction in the amount of contact required with HCPs and improved effectiveness of therapy⁴
- For digital therapeutics³:
 - Improvement or support for current medical treatments
 - The provision of novel therapeutic options for unmet medical needs
 - A reduction in reliance on pharmaceuticals or other therapies
 - Integration into medical guidelines and best practices
 - The delivery of high-quality, evidence-based therapies to underserved and underdiagnosed populations

Guidelines

- Considerations for using a web-based intervention program provided by SAMHSA TIP series 60 include evaluating²:
 - The developer's credentials
 - Evidence supporting the use of the program in a specific patient
 - The presence of a plan and resources in the event of patient distress or if a patient is at high risk of self-harm
 - Where data will be hosted, and whether all patient data are confidential and encrypted
 - How HCPs can obtain patient feedback
- All digital therapeutics must adhere to industry-adopted core principles and best practices regarding³:
 - Product quality
 - Design and manufacture
 - Security
 - Clinical validation
 - Regulatory oversight
- Indications, efficacy, and safety claims of digital therapeutics are reviewed and approved by regulatory bodies³

References

1. Bell IH et al. *Psychiatr Serv.* 2017;68:1172-1181.
2. SAMHSA. Using technology-based therapeutic tools in behavioral health services. TIP series 60. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 15-4924. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015.
3. Digital Therapeutics Alliance. Digital therapeutics: Combining technology and evidence-based medicine to transform personalized patient care. https://www.dtxalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/DTA-Report_DTX-Industry-Foundations.pdf. 2018. Accessed November 18, 2019.
4. Loo Gee B et al. *J Am Med Inform Assoc.* 2016;23:221-229.

Disclaimer

These resources are intended for informational purposes only and are intended for healthcare professionals who may choose to share them with their patients. They are not intended as, nor are they a substitute for, medical care, advice, or professional diagnosis. Healthcare professionals should use their independent medical judgement when considering these educational resources. Those seeking medical advice should consult with a healthcare professional. These resources are not intended as reimbursement or legal advice. Please seek independent advice from a qualified professional to ensure that your organization complies with the complex legal and regulatory requirements governing health care services, and that treatment decisions are consistent with the current applicable standards of care.

Abbreviations

EHR, electronic health record;
HCP, healthcare provider;
SAMHSA, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration;
TIP, Treatment Improvement Protocol.