

Uptake and usage of IntelliCare: a publicly available suite of mental health and well-being apps.

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Uptake and usage of IntelliCare: A publicly available suite of mental health and well-being apps

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Highlights

- â€¢ Digital mental health treatments have many targets, which can be at odds with how people use smartphone apps
- â€¢ A suite 12 interactive apps and one coordinating Hub app were developed and made free to download on the Google Play store
- â€¢ In the first year, 5,210 individuals downloaded one or more IntelliCare apps, and many demonstrated sustained engagement
- â€¢ The use rate of the IntelliCare suite suggests that people will use

multiple apps.

â€¢ Suites of apps may be a useful strategy for providing diverse behavioral strategies

Abstract

Background

Treatments for depression and anxiety have several behavioral and psychological targets and rely on varied strategies. Digital mental health treatments often employ feature-rich approaches addressing several targets and strategies. These treatments, often optimized for desktop computer use, are at odds with the ways people use smartphone applications. Smartphone use tends to focus on singular functions with easy navigation to desired tools. The IntelliCare suite of apps was developed to address the discrepancy between need for diverse behavioral strategies and constraints imposed by typical app use. Each app focuses on one strategy for a limited subset of clinical aims all pertinent to depression and anxiety. This study presents the uptake and usage of apps from the IntelliCare suite following an open deployment on a large app marketplace.

Methods

Thirteen lightweight apps, including 12 interactive apps and one Hub app that coordinates use across those interactive apps, were developed and made free to download on the Google Play store. De-identified app usage data from the first year of IntelliCare suite deployment were analyzed for this study.

Results

In the first year of public availability, 5210 individuals downloaded one or more of the IntelliCare apps, for a total of 10,131 downloads. Nearly a third of these individuals (31.8%) downloaded more than one of these apps. The modal number of launches for each of the apps was 1, however the mean number of app launches per app ranged from 3.10 to 16.98, reflecting considerable variability in the use of each app.

Conclusions

The use rate of the IntelliCare suite of apps is higher than public deployments of other comparable digital resources. Our findings suggest that people will use multiple apps and

provides support for the concept of app suites as a useful strategy for providing diverse behavioral strategies.



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Keywords

Mobile apps; mHealth; Depression; Anxiety

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