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Psychological interventions for bipolar disorder based on new e-technologies: Systematic review of the present and insights into the future

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In the last decade, there was an increasing advent of innovative concepts in psychological interventions for bipolar disorder patients empowered by technological advancements and the proliferation of Internet. To review and discuss the studies published so far aimed to deliver evidence-based psychological interventions for bipolar disorder patients. We conducted a systematic review of the literature from multiple technological, psychiatric and psychological domains. We identified over 251 potential entries matching the search criteria and after a thorough manual review, 28 publications pertaining to 12 different projects were selected. Among them, we describe our project SIMPLe, aimed to psycho educate bipolar patients through a smartphone app. Taking into consideration the diversity and inconclusive results of the studies, there is still limited evidence available to draw firm conclusions about the effectiveness of interventions using Internet-supported technologies for bipolar disorder. Nonetheless, considering the high rates of retention and compliance reported, they represent a highly feasible and acceptable method of delivering this kind of interventions.

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Facilitators towards integration of health information technologies within healthcare systems

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European Union (EU) health care systems will face in the near-future a challenging society and must offer and assure high-quality and affordable care to all citizens. This will force EU Health Care Systems to tackle some challenges such as demographic change, increased prevalence of chronic diseases, mobility of patients, rising healthcare costs, etc. HIT can contribute to different aspects related to the health sector, which involved much more than healthcare such as public health, research and innovation, education and training of professionals and citizens and patients' empowerment for independent living. Health Information Technologies (HIT) can play a key role to tackle them, transforming the current healthcare towards a proactive and preventing healthcare and self-care. And moreover, HIT delocalizes the care delivery, which is nowadays mainly performed in hospitals. Although HIT and related technology as mHealth can alleviate the socio-economic challenges described above, their deployment and adoption is still slow and fragmented. We have investigated through a qualitative analysis more than 30 telehealth, telecare and integrated personal health system projects and systems, implemented across 25 regions in European countries and beyond, to understand the factors that prevent or facilitate the integration of them into the actual healthcare systems. We have identified key facilitators that are necessary for successful deployment and adoption in those regions (e.g. re-organisation of services, patient focus, governance mechanisms, interoperable information systems, policy commitment, engaged professionals, national investments and funding programs). From our research, we observed a promising trend, awareness and introduction of eHealth and HIT is increasing.

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