Telepsychiatry in the UK: How digital tech transformed mental health provision

RCPsych International Congress 2021
Session: Digital Psychiatry and the service user experience in a pandemic
Date: Thursday 24 June 2021 | Time: 15.10 - 16.25

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Declaration of Interest

- Designated Partner and Investment Partner with Psychiatry UK LLP (private & NHS tele-psychiatry provider).
Fifth Industrial Revolution…

1st: Mechanization, water power, steam power
2nd: Mass production, assembly line, electricity
3rd: Computer and automation
4th: Cyber Physical Systems
5th: Mass Customization & Cyber Physical Cognitive Systems
Outline

- Introduction to telepsychiatry
- Pros & Cons
- South London Partnership surveys
- Wandsworth CMHT staff survey
- Psychiatry UK LLP survey
- Case examples
Positive implications in health...

- more efficient
- more remote consultations
- more agile working
- more data and better evidence
- more scrutiny

- better health
Breast cancer screening: 450,000 women missed out on checkup invitations due to IT error, Jeremy Hunt admits

Up to 270 women may have died prematurely and ‘would still be alive today’ if failure had not happened, says health secretary

Alex Matthews-King Health Correspondent | Wednesday 2 May 2018 12:20 BST | 160 comments

Regular breast cancer screening helps maximise chances of early detection in older women at most risk

Nearly half a million women missed out on NHS cancer screening because of an IT error, the government has admitted – adding that hundreds may have died as a result.
Negative implications in health...

- more health anxiety
- more quacks & snake oil
- more scepticism
- more tech addiction
- exclusion
- diagnoses missed

- worse health
THE DAILY

CORONAVIRUS

FAKE NEWS

The spread of COVID-19 fake news

WELCOME TO
THE REGENT’S PARK

Ditch the Mask!
It’s not unusual for you to spend decades destroying your own Health and Venomous System then trying to blame "Useless People" for NOT SHARING your MEDIA INDUCED PARANOIA

Can’t realise they’ve been brainwashed by the media and government, either.

This only ends when you take off your muzzle and stop complying.
US fuel pipeline hackers 'didn't mean to create problems'

By Mary-Ann Russon
Business reporter, BBC News

10 May 2021
Updated 10 May 2021

A cyber-criminal gang that took a major US fuel pipeline offline over the weekend has acknowledged the incident in a public statement.

Cyber-crime: Irish health system targeted twice by hackers

16 May 2021

Ireland's Department of Health and the Health Service Executive have both been targeted by hackers.

Ireland's healthcare system has twice been targeted in cyber-crime attacks, it has been
Other potential problems..

- Confidentiality & Hacking
- New standards and governance
- Overseas policy
- Hardware and internet availability
- Medico-legal stance
- Patient/practitioner resistance
Dementia Care
Prof Ramin Nilforooshan
Babylon Health

Dr Ali Parsa

NHS GP appointments just a tap away*

- On mobile in minutes 24/7
- In person at a choice of locations
- Free digital Healthcheck

Get Started

*To register you will need to switch from your current GP practice. Once an application is made, a registration period will apply before you are able to access the service. Available for people living or working within the catchment area of one of our clinic locations.
Initial scepticism, from both clinicians and patients.

Scepticism reduced after one tele-consultation.

BUT patients still preferred face-to-face.

Clinician worried about,
- quality
- connectivity
- security
- indemnity.
Trust surveys

Patient experience of remote appointments

OXLEAS
90% of patients responded “Yes” or “Somewhat” when asked if they were happy with the care and treatment received in their remote appointment.

79% of patients responded “Yes” or “Maybe” when asked if they would like to be able to have remote appointments in future.

SWLSTG
97% of survey participants reported that they would either ‘definitely’ or ‘probably’ use the system again, were they to be offered the option, despite issues with video and audio quality reported in the survey.
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Emerging themes- Summary

• **Modality - telephone predominant mode.** Video peaked at one Trust at 25% (highest speciality 60%), average 45-60% telephone consultation.

• **Is it effective and acceptable? Yes**- high ratings in all Trusts and the literature reviews.

• **Patient experience – vast majority positive,** clear ask for more video over telephone. convenience, face to face for initial appointment.

• **Uptake lower in older adults, need to understand more about correlation with ethnicity** - social deprivation link emerging.

• **Staff experience - ambivalence** (regardless of mode) but open to persuasion. Indication right place more important than right equipment.

• **Digital exclusion – needs more research**

• **Clinical outcomes, cost-effectiveness** - requires more evidence.
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Wandsworth CMHT Staff Survey (June 2020 & April 2021)

- A main disadvantage is Staff well-being
- Poor quality reviews - almost half in 2020 & 15% in 2021 (improvement over time)
Staff Survey (Jan 2021)

- **Positives**
  - 60.4% have shown that it has allowed them to more efficiently manage their workload
  - 79.6% expressed negative opinions on the subject that telepsychiatry would diminish post-COVID-19.
  - increased patient interaction

- **Negatives**
  - females more susceptible to reduced overall wellbeing than males.
Patient feedback (2018-2021)

- **2018**
  - >75% satisfied (successful, reusable and recommendable)
  - Yet telepsychiatry still not “preferable” over face-to-face
  - Criticisms include connection issues

- **2019**
  - the majority felt the service was efficient (85.7%), good quality of care (71.4%) had good experience with it (85.7%)

- **2020**
  - Waiting time very convenient (86.2%), very positive experience (72.4%), very likely to recommend (89.7%).

- **2021**
  - responded positively regarding travel (86.6%), short waiting times (85.9%), safe online during pandemic (65.1%), supportive during the pandemic (70.5%).
Surveys Summary

- High satisfaction
- Initial scepticism much reduced
- Improving quality
- But poor staff well-being
Case Report 1
Schizophrenia

- John is 70 years old and has Schizophrenia.
- He doesn’t have a smartphone and lives alone!
- During pandemic he has been struggling as isolated with closed day centres.
- Previous CC used to call him and reported no issues and ‘taking medication.’
- New CC undertakes a home visit with PPE.
- Notices house unkempt and no food in fridge. Also many empty whiskey bottles in kitchen.
- Doctor joins remotely (MS Teams) notices weight less and John being more depressed.

- Care Plan - Food vouchers brought. Urgent request for GP review made.
76% of respondents aged over 75 were supportive of video consulting.

10% of the adult UK population were classed as ‘internet non-users’

Sources: Near Me, ONS
Case Report 2
LSE student

- 20-year-old student coming to the end of first year at LSE.
  - has been disorganised and unable to complete projects.
  - never adapted to student-led style of learning.
  - projects left last minute.
  - is behind projects and will most likely fail.
- Was using alcohol and drugs, particularly heavily in recent months.
- No past psychiatric history. Family history of autism. Sleep is poor chronically.
- He is considering dropping out.

- Plan - remote assessment and treatment for ADHD.
Pathway…

- Book on-line, self-referral (no/low waiting list)
- Can be via Right To Choose, need GP referral
- Complete questionnaires,
  - Rating Scale
  - Self report
  - Informant report
- 50 min diagnostic assessments
  - ADHD
  - Discuss treatment options
A Post-Pandemic Virtual Future…
(Golden Rules)

- Digital shortcuts should not compromise **Quality**
- **Video** (5G) for visual cues crucial
- Service user **Choice**

- Hybrid model and agile service delivery is here to stay….  
- BUT! Beware of digital poverty!
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