

PERSONAL HEALTH PROMOTION INTERVENTIONS USING TELEPHONE AND WEB-BASED TECHNOLOGIES

Submission 006

I submit the following comments to the Health and Ambulance Services Committee for consideration in relation to Personal Health Promotion Interventions Using Telephone and Web-based Technologies.

Personal health interventions appear to require an individual to actually want to change. Without this desire to change, individuals simply won't continue a task to its conclusion. Acceptance of a condition will influence compliance.

Examples of this are from my own lifestyle and also talking to local general practitioners who advise (informally) that if they mention weight to their clients, the clients simply "disappear into the black hole". In other words, they do not attend that medical practice again as they do not wish to address that particular health issue.

There are a number of existing web based health technologies in Australia and overseas. The Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association has a program to train nurses to better support patients in general practices by using a non-dieting approach to healthy weight management.

There are dedicated health institutions already in Australia, eg Heart Foundation, Asthma Australia, Lung Foundation. Collaborations with such agencies who may already have web based technology should be encouraged.

The Primary Health Networks in Queensland could be one of the main inclusions in any development of health promotion interventions. The local general practitioner is the main contact with delivery of health services and usually the first contact for individuals when there are health problems. However many people appear to be more comfortable talking to a nurse rather than a doctor. These nurses are trained to interact with clients

Some research I have done found the following two examples of where web based technology required more research and trials before it could be an effective tool.

The Use of Behavior Change Theory in Internet-Based Asthma Self-Management Interventions: A Systematic Review Al-Durra M, Torio MB, Cafazzo JA
<http://www.jmir.org/2015/4/e89/#Abstract> J Med Internet Res 2015;17(4):e89 DOI:
[10.2196/jmir.4110](https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.4110) PMID: [25835564](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25835564/)

This review evaluates Internet-based asthma interventions that were published between 2004 and October 2014 with respect to the use of behavioral change theoretical frameworks, applied clinical guidelines, and assessment tools.

Conclusions: The findings of this literature review indicate that the majority of published Internet-based interventions do not use any documented behavioral change theory, clinical guidelines, and/or assessment tools to inform their design. Further, it was found that the application of clinical guidelines and assessment tools were more salient across the reviewed interventions. A consequence, as such, is that many Internet-based asthma interventions are designed in an ad hoc manner, without the use of any notable evidence-based theoretical frameworks, clinical guidelines, and/or assessment tools.

Social Networking Strategies That Aim To Reduce Obesity Have Achieved Significant Although Modest Results

1. **Health Aff (Millwood)**. 2014 Sep 1;33(9):1641-7. doi: 10.1377/hlthaff.2014.0370.
2. Ashrafian H, Toma T, Harling L, Kerr K, Athanasiou T, Darzi A.

<http://www.obesityaustralia.org/research-professionals/social-networking-strategies-that-aim-to-reduce-obesity-have-achieved-significant-although-modest-re>

Abstract

The global epidemic of obesity continues to escalate. Obesity accounts for an increasing proportion of the international socioeconomic burden of non-communicable disease. Online social networking services provide an effective medium through which information may be exchanged between obese and overweight patients and their health care providers, potentially contributing to superior weight-loss outcomes. We performed a systematic review and meta-analysis to assess the role of these services in modifying body mass index (BMI). Our analysis of twelve studies found that interventions using social networking services produced a modest but significant 0.64 percent reduction in BMI from baseline for the 941 people who participated in the studies' interventions. We recommend that social networking services that target obesity should be the subject of further clinical trials. Additionally, we recommend that policy makers adopt reforms that promote the use of anti-obesity social networking services, facilitate multi-stakeholder partnerships in such services, and create a supportive environment to confront obesity and its associated non-communicable diseases.

From the Journal of Medical Internet Research (JMIR) the following Scoping Review outlines results of social media health promotion on some Australian Indigenous populations.

<http://www.jmir.org/2014/12/e280>

Brusse C, Gardner K, McAullay D, Dowden M, Social Media and Mobile Apps for Health Promotion in Australian Indigenous Populations: Scoping Review. J Med Internet Res 2014;16(12):e280. DOI: [10.2196/jmir.3614](https://doi.org/10.2196/jmir.3614), PMID: [25498835](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25498835/), PMCID: [4275496](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/4275496/)

As can be seen from the above three cited research studies, and others listed in the JMIR, it would seem that an integrated study should be commenced before any telephone or web-based health technology is introduced. General Practitioners, allied health professionals and consumers need to collaborate to ensure a web-based technology will be receptive to the consumer, effective in the specific intervention and is measurable.

[The following websites identified that Apple and IBM may be merging to provide various methods of health technology. http://www.skynews.com.au/business/tech/2015/04/14/ibm-and-apple-to-merge-health-data.html?cid=BP_RSS_sn-technology_1_ibm-and-apple-to-merge-health-data_140415](http://www.skynews.com.au/business/tech/2015/04/14/ibm-and-apple-to-merge-health-data.html?cid=BP_RSS_sn-technology_1_ibm-and-apple-to-merge-health-data_140415)

The Medical Technology Association of Australia (MTAA) is a national association representing companies in the medical technology industry. MTAA aims to ensure the benefits of modern, innovative and reliable medical technology are delivered effectively to provide better health outcomes to the Australian community. Their website provides information on web based health technology which could be a linkage for your committee.

<http://www.mtaa.org.au/home/home-news/2015/03/09/medtech-knowledge-hub-launch>

If web based health technology is to be introduced, my suggestions include:

- Personal approach – logging on so that the program personalises the encouragement – “you can do it John”
- Auto messages for behavioural change encouragements.
- Persuasive messages when program detects non-use.
- Capacity to notify local GP/Nurse when program monitoring detects adverse change.
- Linkages to authorised web sites could be included for further information.
- Feedback allowed and encouraged to either the GP/Nurse.
- Outcomes highlighted,
- Name the program appropriately – eg a Wellness program
- Identify that there will never be a quick fix without effort on both sides.
- Training to use the program
- Understanding aids compliance

Concluding, I suggest there are ample examples in Australia to collaborate with or link into without re-inventing the wheel. Thank you for the opportunity to submit my thoughts on this matter.

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