

Evaluating the role of m-health interventions in patient empowerment

A study protocol focusing on management of chronic diseases such as diabetes



Norwegian Centre for
E-health Research

Omid Saadatfard¹, Anne Granstrøm Ekeland^{1,2}, David Wiljer^{3,4}, Meghan Bradway^{1,2}, Eirik Årsand^{1,2}

¹Norwegian Centre for E-health Research, University Hospital of North Norway (UNN), Tromsø, Norway

²UiT – The Arctic University of Norway, Department of Clinical Medicine, Tromsø, Norway

³University Health Network (UHN), Toronto, Canada

⁴University of Toronto (UoT), Department of Psychiatry; Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation (IHPE), Toronto, Canada

Background and aims:

Mobile health (m-health) promotes a patient-centred model for healthcare service delivery by making patient care ubiquitous and independent of providers. Our overall aim is to develop a framework for evaluating patient empowerment related outcomes of m-health interventions.

Methods:

Literature reviews and patient interviews were conducted to understand how the empowerment process is explained and its outcomes measured in evaluation of healthcare information systems and in disciplines such as patient education, social work, behavioural science and socioeconomic development, [1,2,3,4,5] are some examples of the reviewed literature. The outcomes of reviews and interviews were used to build the foundation of our study, which has two phases. In the first phase, we will use inductive exploratory methods to generate a conceptual model to understand which factors influence the patient empowerment process in m-health. In the second phase, we will assess the utility of this conceptual model in evaluation of empowerment related outcomes by measuring the validity and reliability of instruments developed based on our model in an m-health evaluation study.

Results:

Literature reviews showed that current m-health evaluation studies have little focus on empowerment related outcomes. The

results identified a gap in healthcare evaluation for understanding and measuring empowerment as patient-reported outcomes for chronic conditions such as diabetes [6]. Feedback from patients who use m-health tools for managing their chronic conditions confirmed the influence of m-health on empowerment related outcomes such as health literacy, information seeking behaviour and higher awareness of their health condition.

Conclusion:

Our study will inform the development of a needed framework and tools for evaluating the empowerment related outcomes of m-health interventions. We are currently seeking funding for this study, and welcome potential partners to contact us for discussing collaboration opportunities.

References:

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