

The alcohol self-management smartphone application: an evidence-based approach

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Received 14 April 2015

Accepted 24 April 2015

The WHO, in its report on the global status on alcohol and health, has clearly highlighted that alcohol use disorders are a major problem worldwide that has resulted in millions of deaths each year.¹ Previous research² conducted a content analysis of 500 alcohol smartphone applications made available in stores and highlighted the fact that the vast majority of applications (50%) are not clinical-based, and are largely for entertainment purposes. One of the issues highlighted by the previous

review and analysis was that the vast majority of applications appeared to help promote drinking and even though there were applications estimating blood alcohol concentration, they were highly unreliable. The current application aims to resolve this issue through the introduction of a unique alcohol tracker that enables individuals to log the absolute number of beers, glasses of wine and shots they have taken on a daily basis; this would, in turn, be translated into units of alcohol and stored in the smartphone application (figure 1, and see the online video for a demonstration). There will be immediate notification if users have exceeded the limits for the day, or their limits for the week (the notifications are pre-programmed based on the recommended number of units for men and women in accordance to the NICE (UK) and the Canada guidelines). In addition, the current application has links to an alcohol helpline as well as psychological therapies built in, such as a functional analysis and behavioural goals toolkit. There is also an integration of the AUDIT questionnaire that users can take to determine whether they are at risk.

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Competing interests None declared.

Provenance and peer review Not commissioned; internally peer reviewed.

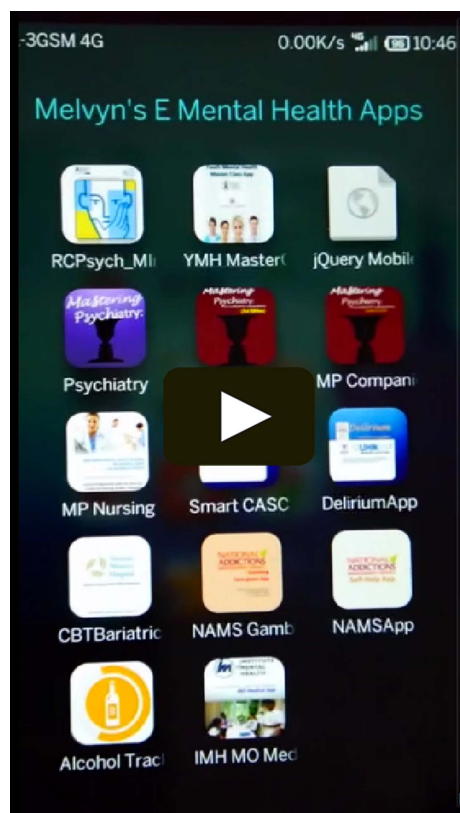


Figure 1 Screenshot of video demonstration of the alcohol tracker. To view the video, click http://brightcove.vo.llnwd.net/v1/uds/pd/2696240571001/201506/2098/2696240571001_4275116565001_4275112454001.mp4



To cite: Zhang MW, Ho RC. *BMJ Innov* 2015;1:74.

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BMJ Innov 2015 1: 74 originally published online July 6, 2015
doi: 10.1136/bmjinnov-2015-000057

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