Evaluating digital health products

Encouraging better evaluation in digital health: guidance, training and community development

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The problem

Most publicly available apps have not been evaluated in the scientific literature

Most apps evaluated in the scientific literature are not publicly available

318,000+ health apps are available to the public, but very few have been clinically evaluated

(Byambasuren et al., npj Digital Med 2018;1:12)

Of the health apps found to be efficacious in RCTs, only $\frac{1}{4}$ were publicly available and functioning

(Rogers et al., J Med Internet Res 2017;19:e90)
Public Health England wanted to understand, and tackle pragmatically, the problem of evaluating digital health

- multidisciplinary team: service designers, academics, and public health professionals
- user-centred design methods, including qualitative research, and engagement with end-users and stakeholders
- identified opportunity areas, developed concepts, tested prototypes, and planned service implementation
What we did

We created **guidance** and **training models** for people developing digital health products with limited knowledge of evaluation.
Evaluation guidance

Practical online guidance on GOV.UK, covering:

• how to conduct an evaluation
• where to get support
• in-depth explanations of different methods with digital health case studies
Evaluation training

Two facilitated workshops available to PHE staff

1. Creating a model of how your product works
2. Choosing measures and methods

We have developed ways to run workshops online since March 2020

Non-PHE staff can run the workshops themselves, using instructions in the online guidance.

We have also tested a train the trainers model.
Evaluation Service: next steps

Guide

Training

Community


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