



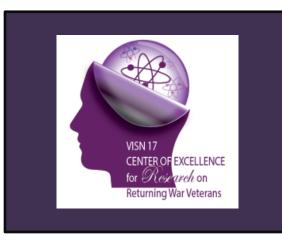
Collaborative Management of PTSD Treatment through Smartphone Apps:

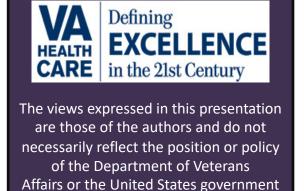
¹ VA VISN17 Center of Excellence for Research on Returning War Veterans; ² VISN1 Center for Healthcare Organization and Implementation Research; ³ Boston University;

⁴ Alpert Medical Center, Brown University; ⁵ Texas A&M Health Science Center; ⁶ Texas A&M Industrial & Systems Engineering; ⁷ Center for Remote Health Technologies and Systems

What Is Available and Accessible?

Brown, E.K.¹, Benzer, J.K.^{2,3}, Creech, S.K.^{1,4}, Kum, H.C.⁵, Lawley, M.^{6,7}, Sasangohar, F.⁶





INTRODUCTION

By integrating smartphone apps into standard treatment, clinicians may potentially improve treatment quality, expedite its process, and reduce barriers to access.

Smartphone apps can complement PTSD treatment in a variety of ways. 1-2

- e.g. Homework tools, psychoeducation
- Recent research has shown that apps are a feasible method for enhancing standard treatment for PTSD.3
- 76% of Veterans receiving outpatient treatment for PTSD reported owning a smartphone⁴
- 85% reported interest in at least one potential use of an app as part of therapy⁴
- VA clinicians trained in evidence-based treatment for PTSD generally find treatment integration of smartphone apps to be favorable⁵

There are few comprehensive resources available to find information on smartphone apps that can be used in collaboration with standard treatment for PTSD

References: ¹ Price et al., 2014; ² Donker et al., 2013; ³ Kuhn et al., 2014; ⁴ Erbes et al., 2014; ⁵ Kuhn et al., 2014

METHOD

Systemic Review of Publically Available Smartphone App Information

This study utilized an extensive web search to locate as many relevant smartphone apps for individual treatment of PTSD as possible with a variety of web locations and search criteria.

Web search for relevant apps:

- Search Engines.
- e.g., Google.com Online Forums and Communities,
- e.g., Reddit.com
- App Rating Sites
- e.g., Mobileaction.com Government Mobile App Sites
- e.g. t2health.dcoe.mil
- Search terms included either "App" or "Apps" and the

Words related to PTSD

- e.g., Trauma
- Symptoms of PTSD e.g., Anger
- Treatments specific to PTSD
- e.g., Cognitive Processing Therapy Social support for PTSD
 - e.g., PTSD social support

Mental health or treatment apps had to be relevant to

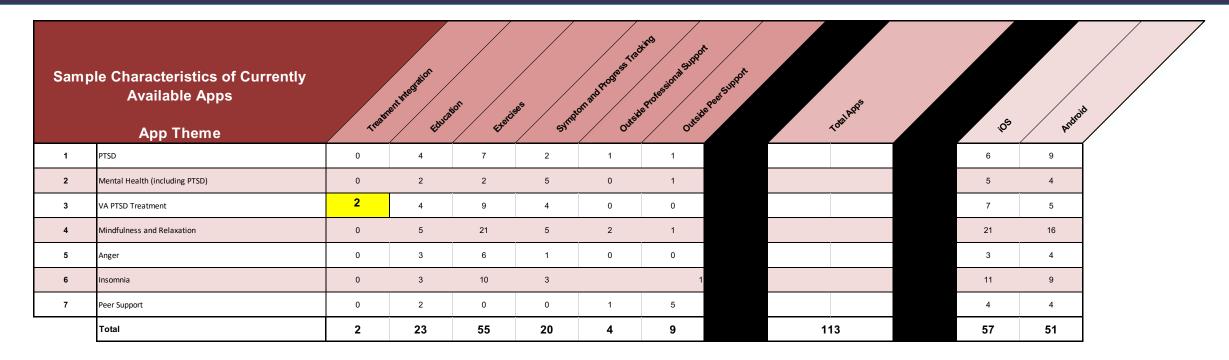
Could not be specific only to other diagnoses

Apps for PTSD symptoms (e.g., insomnia) had to either be specific to PTSD or generalizable across mental health conditions.

Information collected on each app is as follows:

- Designed for Treatment Integration
- Exercises
- Symptom Tracking
- Outside Professional Support
- Outside Peer Support
- Minimum Software Required
- Number of Reviews
- Overall Rating

Demographics of the Sample



113 apps were found and included in this review

Treatment Integration: Of these, only **TWO** were designed explicitly for integration with standard treatment

CPT Coach

- Companion to standard CPT treatment
- Allows for clinicians and patients to create and adjust homework assignments
- Explicitly not for standalone treatment
- Includes psychoeducation, homework forms, reminders, and adherence tracking

PE Coach

- Companion to standard PE Treatment
- Allows for clinician and patient to create and adjust homework assignments
- In-session recording for homework use
- Includes psychoeducation, homework forms, reminders, and adherence tracking
- Clinician manual available

Γreatι	ments Used for PTSD at VA App Name	tor th	esigned the grait	type (ijses syryk	or and Treduction Outside	Profesional Outlike Pr	_{Bet} support	\$	5 Arr	groid	co ⁸	of App Res 1 105 S	Market Version Over	al thurther one	alios Raina Antioutors	Minimum Veri	Operat de	peril Cut d'Si
1	CPT Coach	X	х	x	X				х			0	7.1	6	3	NA	NA	NA	
2	PE Coach	х	х	х	х				х	Х		0	4.3	14	4	NA	95	4	
4	eCBT Trauma		х	х					х			0.99	3	7	2.5	NA	NA	NA	
5	ACT Coach		х	х	х				х			0	8	NR	NR	NA	NA	NA	
6	ACT Companion		1	х	х				х	х		9.99	7	10	4	4	62	4.4	
7	Anxiety Release Based on EMDR			х					х	х		4.99	5	8	4	4	41	4.5	
8	EyeMove X EMDR Trauma Therapy			х						х		0	NA	NA	NA	4.1	29	3.9	
9	EyeMove 1 EMDR Trauma Therapy			х						х		0	NA	NA	NA	4	50	3.6	
														NR = No Review	a Available		NA = Not Applic	able	

In Development: Five apps currently in development were found that met inclusion criteria.

Descriptions did not indicate integration with in-office treatment

	Unreleased Apps App Name	lart.	seiged heegdior	gjør dy	scies syndi	art and or products	sights Support.	PeerSupport	ů	5 Andro	a d	G.	te dans	Andre Versicht Operative of the A	unter Operation	S astros Whiterus Android	Software Merical August 1	d Android Raders	aires Could Si
1 V	/etChange		x	x	х		х		x	x		0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
2 T	rauma Recovery Coach			х					х	x		0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
3 S	TAIR Coach			х					х			0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
4 Ir	nsomnia Coach		х	х	х	1			х			0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
5 A	AIMS			х					х			0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
														NR = No Review	s Available		NA = Not Applicat	ble	

Limitations

The web search used to find relevant apps for this study may have missed relevant apps to this study

Apps specific to other conditions that still could still be useful for someone with PTSD, or in treatment for PTSD may have been excluded

• Apps for disorders whose symptoms overlap with PTSD (e.g., depression app to treat insomnia)

Information collected is only as current as the time of data collection.

Variables are subject to update

Metrics used were those made publicly available

Number of reviews and rating score may not represent the full extent of app usage.

RESULTS

Variation: Apps collected were from a variety of sources.

• Emergent themes were added during data collection (e.g., Anger)

Use: 111 of the apps were designed to be stand-alone in what utilities they offered.

- Standalone treatments for PTSD or its symptoms (e.g., PTSD Coach)
- Symptom management, skills training, psychoeducation, etc...

Cost: Almost all apps were free or inexpensive to download

Ratings: Mindfulness/relaxation apps were the most abundant, highly rated, and frequently rated.

Most mindfulness/relaxation apps offered the same features (e.g., meditation exercises)

J	Apps Specific to PTSD App Name	torte	seighed Headhid	the state of the s	cises Syruth	out and red the second	e Protesional	ge Peet Support	Ç	, pr	didoid	Control Control	of Address In Section 1985	Market Vacion Over	al hunders	alios Rains	Mr. in the state of the state o	Overall Acted Arcter	o Overall
1	PTSD Coach		х	х	х	х			х	х		0	8	115	4	2.1	607	3.6	
2	PTSD Eraser			х					х			5.99	3	32	4.5	NA	NA	NA	
3	Vital Tones PTSD			х					х	х		0	5.1.1	NR	NR	2.2	1	5	
4	Vital Tones PTSD Pro			х					х	х		9.99	5.1.1	NR	NR	2.2	NR	NR	
5	PTSD Symptoms & Suggested Treatment		х						х	х		2.99	6	NR	NR	2.3.3	NR	NR	
6	Fighting PTSD		х							х		0.99	NA	NA	NA	2.1	2	3	
7	Heal Post Traumatic Stress Disorder			х						х		4.99	NA	NA	NA	1.6	NR	NR	
8	PTSD Free			х					х			0	7	NR	NR	NA	NA	NA	
9	PTSD Stops Here			х						х		0	NA	NA	NA	2.3	12	4.6	
10	PTSD Checklist				x					х		0	NA	NA	NA	2.2	42	3.4	
11	PTSD Support		x				х			х		0	NA	NA	NA	2.2	2	3	
														NR = No Review	s Available		NA = Not Applica	ble	

Barriers to Accessibility:

Some apps required recent iOS or Android to be used, which may not be an option for older smartphones

E.g., PTSD Coach, iOS 8.1

While apps were generally inexpensive to download, several included in-app purchases or equipment

 This was especially prevalent for Mindfulness/Relaxation apps, in which lessons could cost up to \$20 each

Conclusions & Implications

While there are several smartphone apps that offer stand-alone clinical utility, very few apps include components specific to treatment integration.

- Given the potential benefits to treatment for PTSD by integrating smartphone apps, these results may imply that apps are an underdeveloped method of increasing access and continuity of care past regularly scheduled office visits
- There may be limitations to access to some apps (e.g., software requirements)
- This review did not find any apps in development that are being built specifically for treatment integration

The challenge of this conclusion is to determine how to best integrate information from apps into on-going treatment.