

The Open Digital Health initiative – Extending the life of digital health tools

**Dominika
Kwasnicka**

SWPS University, Australia

The not-for-profit Open Digital Health initiative (www.opendigitalhealth.org) has started to

encourage health scientists, practitioners, and technology developers to share evidence-based digital health tools. We are creating a searchable database of descriptions of evidence-based tools, apps, websites, devices, to allow digital health to grow faster, be cheaper and more transparent across the countries. And here is why are we setting it up.

A story about evidence-based tools that die too early...

Here is a story (and you may have heard a very similar one before): A group of researchers in the UK gets a funding grant to develop an app. Their aim is to promote physical activity in older people. They outsource a company to code the app. They review literature, design the app and test it with the users. They run a study with 150 people who use the app and with 150 who do not, and they show that this app was somehow effective. After a year, they publish an article and they put the app aside. It does not get much publicity or downloads, does not get updated and it dies after the funding period. Sad times. But does this sound familiar?

An alternative ending: Open, Transparent and Shared Digital Health

And here is an alternative ending to the story you just heard: The same group of researchers is keen to share their work. They have the codes for the app, the content and all anonymised user data they've gathered. They don't have time or money to take it forward but they list the descriptions of the app, code, content and data gathered on the Open Digital Health platform where other users can see it.

A group of researchers in Spain wants to promote physical activity in older people. They browse the Open Digital Health platform and locate the app created by the first group. They get in touch with the authors and ask for the permission to adapt the app considering appropriate licensing (<https://osf.io/t3kp2/wiki/Licenses/>). They get it granted, translate the app to Spanish, use it with 300 people, get feedback, modify it, test it, and then show that the new app is even more effective than the original version. They publish the results, acknowledge the original authors and list the information about the app back on the Open Digital Health platform together with more information about new translated content. Then a group of researchers in Chile finds the app on the platform and the story goes on...

Tell us what you think!

We are passionate about digital health and we aim to make it more accessible for all. Sharing

digital health tools will provide cost-effective opportunities for faster breakthroughs. Please email us if you have any comments/suggestions or if you would like to submit any of your work to be published on the platform in the future. Keep in touch if you have any comments/questions: info@digitalhealth.eu or dkwasnicka@swps.edu.pl. The Creators Team of the Open Digital Health initiative is led by Robbert Sanderman, Dominika Kwasnicka, Rik Crutzen, Gjalt Jorn Peters and Gill ten Hoor.

**Dominika Kwasnicka**

SWPS University of Social Sciences
and Humanities, Australia

dkwasnicka@swps.edu.pl

Dominika Kwasnicka

On behalf of the Open Digital Health Team

*This article was previously published elsewhere.