Digital Tools for Mental Healthcare
Potential Benefits and Considerations for Patients and Caregivers

### Digital assessment tools

- **Potential benefits**
  - Allowing HCPs to make quick medical decisions
  - Collecting information without user input
  - Helping users monitor their health more accurately

- **For example, wearable sensors can be used to monitor for sleep disorders, which can affect mental health.**

- **Digital assessment tools include smartphone apps and mobile sensors that can track symptoms or monitor treatment effects.**

### Medication adherence tools

- **Potential benefits**
  - Improving medication adherence in people with mental health disorders
  - Allowing HCPs to monitor adherence
  - Reducing effort for tracking treatments

- **Medication adherence refers to taking medication as directed by an HCP.**

- **Technologies that can be used to monitor or improve adherence include:**
  - "Smart" pill containers that can measure when medication is accessed
  - Wearable sensors that can detect when medication is taken
  - Apps that can send automated reminders to take medication

### Telepsychiatry

- **Telepsychiatry is the process of receiving mental healthcare from a distance using technology such as videoconferencing.**

- **Telepsychiatry can offer services such as:**
  - Mental health evaluations
  - Education
  - Therapy sessions
  - Treatment management

### Digital intervention tools

- **Potential benefits**
  - Promoting positive behaviors and coping habits when needed
  - Delivering therapy using evidence-based practices
  - Showing users their progress in therapy by providing virtual rewards
  - Providing 24-hour treatment support

- **Digital intervention tools include smartphone apps that can provide mental health treatment or support.**

- **For example, smartphone apps can support mental health by providing guided meditation exercises.**

### Considerations for digital health tools

- The American Psychiatric Association made a checklist to help assess the risks of health apps by asking questions about evidence and data privacy.
- Users should note that digital tools can make errors, such as misjudging activity levels or when medication is taken.

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**Abbreviation**

HCP: healthcare provider.

**References**