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End-users' perspectives of an eHealth platform to promote physical activity in COPD: a qualitative study

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Abstract

Introduction: eHealth platforms can be used as a tool to promote physical activity (PA) in patients with COPD. When developing such platforms, a bottom-up approach is needed to ensure that patients' and healthcare professionals' (HCP) needs and expectations are addressed.

Aim: To assess patients' and HCP' perspectives on the ideal eHealth platform (web application - app - for HCP + mobile app for patients) for PA promotion in patients with COPD.

Methods: One focus group with 5 patients (68±8 yrs, FEV1 44±21pp) and 6 individual interviews with HCP (physicians and physiotherapist, 39±10 yrs) were conducted using a semi-structured interview guide. Interviews were recorded and transcripts were analysed using the Grounded Theory approach.

Results: Participants considered an eHealth platform to promote patients' PA valuable. Both groups suggested that PA should be individualised according to patients' characteristics. The main features for a mobile app included: shared goal setting, PA progress graphs, motivational messages and goal badges, notifications, a bi-directional communication system to support patients and information on breathing exercises. Both groups highlighted the importance of measuring steps, PA duration, SpO2, and dyspnoea on exertion. For the web app, the HCP highlighted the importance of a notification system to signal PA changes or non-compliance (e.g., colour scheme),

as well as tabs for PA goal setting and monitoring. HCP recommended this platform for patients with stable or mild disease and/or those attending pulmonary rehabilitation.

Conclusion: Findings provide guidance to the design of future eHealth platforms for PA promotion in COPD.

Chronic diseases Monitoring Physical activity

Footnotes

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