

Abstract Title: An App Based Mental Health Screening Initiative in the Outpatient Pediatric Setting

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Abstract:

Nearly one in five children lives with at least one mental health disorder [1]; however, about 50% of children diagnosed with at least one treatable mental illness do not receive appropriate treatment and care [2]. The increasing prevalence and growing awareness of the burden of mental health disorders in pediatric populations has made the need for universal mental health screening in pediatric populations evidently clear [3]. Integration of behavioral health into primary care settings has been identified as a model for increasing access to mental health services and has been associated with improved patient outcomes [4].

To address this need, the Child Mind Institute Healthy Brain Network, in collaboration with the Office of the Staten Island Borough President, piloted the Pediatric Mental Health Screening Assessment (PMHSA) in seven practices in Staten Island, New York, in 2016. The PMHSA's core set of questions, derived from the Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC-17) [5], the Patient-Health Questionnaire (PHQ-2) [6], the Eating Disorders section of the Kiddie Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia (KSADS) [7], and the CRAFFT [8], screen for a variety of mental health issues, such as suicidality, attention problems, and substance use. As of August 2022, nearly 5,000 children and adolescents have been screened via the PMHSA and preliminary analyses further advocate for the need of behavioral health screening on a wider scale.

In 2022, the PMHSA transitioned to MindLogger, a digital platform developed by the MATTER Lab at the Child Mind Institute, to offer increased customizability, flexibility, and usability. As rates of psychiatric illness rise in children and adolescents, it is increasingly important that proper services and tools, such as the PMHSA, are integrated into pediatric primary care settings to better help our youth populations.

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