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USING MOBILE PHONES TO DETECT, TREAT, AND MANAGE ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH: A RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIAL OF THE MOBILETYPE PROGRAM IN RURAL AND METRO PRIMARY CARE

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The mobiletype program is a cell/mobile phone mental health assessment and management tool designed specifically for young people aged 14-24 years to assist in detecting, managing, and treating of youth mental health problems. The mobiletype self-starts 4 times per day and the patient completes a brief survey of their current mood, stresses, coping, alcohol and cannabis use, exercise, sleeping and eating patterns. This data is transmitted in real-time to a website interface which collates it and produces individual reports for young people to share with their doctor.

Methods: 118 young people identified with mild or more mental health symptoms were blindly randomly allocated at the individual level, to either the intervention group (mobiletype plus usual care) or the comparison group (abbreviated mobiletype plus usual care) according to CONSORT guidelines. Participants and doctors completed baseline and follow-up questionnaires measuring mental health, patient-doctor relationship, and pathways to care (i.e. referrals, medication, and testing). Participants were followed-up at 6 weeks and 6 months.

Results: Results from fixed effects analyses of covariance examining the differences between the experimental and control groups on the main outcome measures, with the baseline values as the covariates will be presented. The extent to which the mobiletype program reduces mental health symptoms, enhances the patient-doctor relationship and assists patients in pathways to care will be explored in detail.

Conclusions: Mobile and new information and connected technologies have much to offer clinical care in terms of increased efficiencies in data collection, increased engagement of participants and overall enhanced care.