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Mobile Psychiatry

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In psychiatry, diagnosis and prognosis are essentially based on patient report and clinician observation (subjective parameters). Additionally, neither biomarkers nor physiological measures (objective parameters) highlighted in research studies are currently applied in everyday psychiatric practice. Annually, 38% of the European population fulfills diagnostic criteria for at least one mental disorder, corresponding to 164.8 million individuals. Mobile technologies are growing exponentially and their widespread use provides an unprecedented means of administering personalized interventions in real-world conditions. This presentation will review the state-of-art in mobile psychiatry, outlining relevant issues in this field as follows: 1) proactive mental health where psychiatric conditions could be detected and managed before any major complications develop the potential to provide more effective interventions, as well as how smart technologies could detect and support the needs of the psychiatric patient in independent living; 2) the opportunity of using mobile technologies to gather data from multiple sensors and modalities including divergent physiologic, behavioral, environmental, and self-reported factors that can be simultaneously linked to other indicators of social and environmental context; 3) the potential of personalized monitoring of psychiatric patients leading to better outcomes at a lower cost, toward changes in mental healthcare delivering systems; and 4) the emerging research problems of using mobile technologies in psychiatry, such as regulatory environment and security. Leveraging novel technologies to empower patients and extend the benefits of traditional psychiatric services may represent a new direction for translational psychiatry. Research is needed in furthering progress in this emergent field.