

DTx Expert Perspective



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Industry Expert Interview



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Chief Scientist

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What are you looking forward to at DTx West 2020?

One thing I love about Digital Therapeutics is that it moves as a field. Even though many of us heard updates at DTx East last Fall, we've all taken those insights away, implemented them, and now have completely different problems and successes to share. The DTx conference series is how I stay on top of this field, and I look forward to hearing the latest advances at DTx West.

What conversations need to happen now for the DTx industry to move forward?

At DTx East, many of us shared our recent experiences with FDA around their research expectations. We were starting to learn that FDA wants to see how Digital Therapeutics perform

not against treatment as usual, not against a wait list, but against a sham digital therapeutic. We've all had six months to sit with that information and I am eager to hear how other companies are approaching this challenge.

In your opinion, what's the most exciting piece of DTx industry news we have had in the past year?

I'm a research nerd, so for me it's any headlines that tell me what other companies are doing from a research perspective. The recent press around Akili's new study really piqued my interest. We've all heard similar things from FDA about what they want to see from our research, but each of us is responding in different ways, and I love watching that unfold.

Where are we seeing progress across the industry?

I enjoy seeing how the different business models for prescription Digital Therapeutics are unfolding. Companies are starting to pass the FDA hurdle, or are starting to see themselves passing it soon, and now they have to figure out, "how am I going to get paid for my product?" There's no single right answer, and I've followed with interest the different news items around Pharma partnerships, Breakthrough Designation and potential pathways to reimbursement via CMS, and digital formularies. Progress is happening

Where do you see the DTx industry in 5 years time?

In some ways, I think the shape of the DTx industry in five years is something that would be incomprehensible to us now. Five years is a long time in the technology world, and everything can be changed by a single, unexpected technological advance. That said, certain things are, I think, predictable -- the terms "digital therapeutics" or "prescription app" will become household names. Medical schools will include digital therapeutics in their training. This could be especially powerful in the mental health arena, but also to empower non-psychiatric specialties to be able to offer their patients suffering from depression and anxiety.

Hear more from Acacia at DTx West where she will be leading the workshop "Clinical Trials - Separating the Digital from the Traditional", giving her presentation "Is there a Bar of Validation for Digital Therapeutics" and chairing Track 1 of the conference on the 18th.