

DTx Industry Insights



Sep 16-18th | EST Timezone



Andy Blackwell
Chief Scientific Officer
ieso Digital Health

How has ieso responded to this pandemic?

ieso has a history as the largest provider of human-delivered online Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to England's National Health System (NHS). As we have historically delivered care in a virtual environment which the pandemic has now necessitated, our changes have been more in terms of scalability to ensure we can meet the ever-increasing demand. Scalability includes both the introduction of digital tools and specific therapist trainings that increase the efficiency and efficacy of the care we deliver, and also the ability to accommodate larger volumes on our platform.

What's most exciting for our future in digital therapeutics is the exponential increase in the amount of data available for us to analyze and uncover "what works" in mental healthcare delivery – in the first 6 months of 2020 we doubled the number of hours of therapy we deliver on a daily basis.

What impact do you expect Covid-19 to have on the long-term adoption of the digital therapeutics market?

The explosion of telehealth since the pandemic began has increased attention on all forms of digital health care. While the relaxation of certain regulatory standards has certainly increased the appetite for and accelerated the adoption of digital therapeutic products, the value and efficacy of some solutions is still unproven. We still believe that in the long-term, the solutions that engage patients and have real-world evidence of efficacy are those that will survive and ultimately shape the future of the market. We also believe that the insights a data-rich sector like digital therapeutics can generate, will help clinicians to make more accurate diagnoses, to optimize and

personalize treatment decisions and to eliminate unnecessary or ineffective practices. These technologies, that can "super-power" clinicians are especially applicable in a tech-enabled telehealth environment. The recent partnerships and acquisitions in the telehealth and digital health markets are a testament to this.

What has the data shown you about the impact of Covid-19 on your patients?

2020 has been an extraordinary period for all of us, but perhaps most markedly for patients experiencing mental health problems. Our team of scientists have been studying the data from the first half of 2020 and have observed a sustained 1/3 of our patients presenting for therapy, in part, due to Covid-19 – this tells us that while we may have seen a reduction in infection rates, that doesn't necessarily correlate with a reduction in the impact of Covid-19 on patients' mental health. We continue to closely monitor symptoms for all patients, and in those diagnosed with depression we are seeing a decrease in some of the symptoms.

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All digital health companies, including those developing digital therapeutics need to be better at understanding the power each of us have to provide equitable access to high quality care. And in doing so, recognize the inherent need for personalization beyond geographic and linguistic boundaries taking into account culture, past experiences and personal preferences. The beauty of digital care delivery is its ability to capture and store data – we have the ability, in fact we have the responsibility to do something with this data, to transform treatment beyond just making it more convenient.

At Ieso, our patients sit at the heart of everything we do. Our service has been built by clinicians with a passion for providing the very best in patient care and safety. Those clinicians work alongside human experience experts and user interface designers that continually look for ways to improve how we interact with each and every patient – and how the learnings from each therapy interaction can feed the future of better therapy and better health.

What are you most looking forward to at DTx East 2020?

It's always exciting to hear from others how deals are coming together and how they've navigated the complex regulatory and access environment surrounding digital therapeutics; we're especially interested future takes on reimbursement. But we're equally excited to share new ways of thinking, and our progress and vision for reshaping the perspectives – for the industry and for each and every person who needs our help - around what "better" mental health care delivery looks like.

You can hear more from Andy when he gives his presentation "Using Real-World Data to Decode "What Works" in Digital Care Delivery" on Thursday, 17th September at DTx East 2020.

Find out more about Ieso Health and the work they are doing with online cognitive behavioural therapy on their website at iesohealth.com and to learn more about their Eight Billion Minds research interests please visit 8bminds.com

While this may seem counterintuitive, literature tells us that during major events that bring communities together, depressive symptoms do subside.

Sadly, the literature also tells us that as these events come to an end these symptoms, including suicide ideation, increase – so we, as an industry, need to be ready for this future mental health crisis coined as the 'second pandemic'.

How should digital therapeutics companies be working with patients to ensure that these products truly deliver on their promise of better care?