Reviewer’s report

Title: Suicide prevention and depression apps’ suicide risk assessment and management: a systematic assessment of adherence to clinical guidelines

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Reviewer: David Gratzer

Reviewer's report:

In this paper, Laura Martinengo et al. consider suicide prevention and depression apps in terms of their adherence to clinical guidelines for suicide prevention advice. They do a search of Google Play and the Apple App Store, finding almost 2700 apps, and then narrow the search down to 69 apps that are reviewed. The vast majority fall short of adherence to the six suicide prevention strategies. "A systematic assessment of 69 depression management and suicide prevention apps revealed that only five apps offered all six evidence-based strategies for suicide prevention, with comprehensive and holistic support."

Overall, this is a strong paper, and there is much to like here.

1. The authors do a nice job of framing the work in terms of the global burden of suicide, as well as providing concise information on apps.

2. The methodology looks solid, and the number of apps studied (69) is reasonable.

3. They present the information in a clear and intelligent way.

4. While the findings aren't surprising (Shen et al. did similar work for depression apps, for example), the information on the crisis helpline is noteworthy.

A few minor suggestions:

1. The conclusion seems short and a bit underdeveloped. Unless there are word count limitations, it would be nice to see the authors push their comments further. Are there current public-private efforts that they could highlight for apps? Is the APA's App Evaluation Model a step in the right direction? What about the FDA's approval of several mental health apps?

2. Would it be possible to profile one or more of the apps that was adherent of all six strategies - say in a box? This would enliven the text.

3. The Shen et al. paper should be cited.

depression app: a review and content analysis of the depression app marketplace. JMIR Mhealth Uhealth. 2015 Feb 16;3(1):e16.
Overall, this is a strong paper and is deserved of publication.

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Not applicable

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
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Yes

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