Computer-Aided Depression Screening: A Literature Review on Optimal Methodologies for Mental Health Screening

Authors : Michelle Nighswander

Abstract : Suicide can be a tragic response to mental illness. It is difficult for people to disclose or discuss suicidal impulses. The stigma surrounding mental health can create a reluctance to seek help for mental illness. Patients may feel pressure to exhibit a socially desirable demeanor rather than reveal these issues, especially if they sense their healthcare provider is pressed for time or does not have an extensive history with their provider. Overcoming these barriers can be challenging. Although there are several validated depression and suicide risk instruments, varying processes used to administer these tools may impact the truthfulness of the responses. A literature review was conducted to find evidence of the impact of the environment on the accuracy of depression screening. Many investigations do not describe the environment and fewer studies use a comparison design. However, three studies demonstrated that computerized self-reporting might be more likely to elicit truthful and accurate responses due to increased privacy when responding compared to a face-to-face interview. These studies showed patients reported positive reactions to computerized screening for other stigmatizing health conditions such as alcohol use during pregnancy. Computerized self-screening for depression offers the possibility of more privacy and patient reflection, which could then send a targeted message of risk to the healthcare provider. This could potentially increase the accuracy while also increasing time efficiency for the clinic. Considering the persistent effects of mental health stigma, how these screening questions are posed can impact patients' responses. This literature review analyzes trends in depression screening methodologies, the impact of setting on the results and how this may assist in overcoming one barrier caused by stigma.

Keywords : computerized self-report, depression, mental health stigma, suicide risk

Conference Title : ICNCDM 2021 : International Conference on Nursing Clinical Decision-Making
Conference Location : Montreal, Canada
Conference Dates : June 14-15, 2021