

A Stepped Care mHealth-Based Approach for Obesity with Type 2 Diabetes in Clinical Health Psychology

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Abstract : Diabetes could be defined as a new global epidemic of obesity and being overweight with many complications and chronic conditions. Such conditions include not only type 2 diabetes, but also cardiovascular diseases, hypertension, dyslipidemia, hypercholesterolemia, cancer, and various psychosocial and psychopathological disorders. The financial direct and indirect burden (considering also the clinical resources involved and the loss of productivity) is a real challenge in many Western health-care systems. Recently the Lancet journal defined diabetes as a 21st-century challenge. In order to promote patient compliance in diabetes treatment reducing costs, evidence-based interventions to improve weight-loss, maintain a healthy weight, and reduce related comorbidities combine different treatment approaches: dietetic, nutritional, physical, behavioral, psychological, and, in some situations, pharmacological and surgical. Moreover, new technologies can provide useful solutions in this multidisciplinary approach, above all in maintaining long-term compliance and adherence in order to ensure clinical efficacy. Psychological therapies with diet and exercise plans could better help patients in achieving weight loss outcomes, both inside hospitals and clinical centers and during out-patient follow-up sessions. In the management of chronic diseases clinical psychology play a key role due to the need of working on psychological conditions of patients, their families and their caregivers. mHealth approach could overcome limitations linked with the traditional, restricted and highly expensive in-patient treatment of many chronic pathologies: one of the best up-to-date application is the management of obesity with type 2 diabetes, where mHealth solutions can provide remote opportunities for enhancing weight reduction and reducing complications from clinical, organizational and economic perspectives. A stepped care mHealth-based approach is an interesting perspective in chronic care management of obesity with type 2 diabetes. One promising future direction could be treating obesity, considered as a chronic multifactorial disease, using a stepped-care approach: -mhealth or traditional based lifestyle psychoeducational and nutritional approach. -health professionals-driven multidisciplinary protocols tailored for each patient. -inpatient approach with the inclusion of drug therapies and other multidisciplinary treatments. -bariatric surgery with psychological and medical follow-up In the chronic care management of globesity mhealth solutions cannot substitute traditional approaches, but they can supplement some steps in clinical psychology and medicine both for obesity prevention and for weight loss management.

Keywords : clinical health psychology, mhealth, obesity, type 2 diabetes, stepped care, chronic care management

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