

# **Mental Health: Is there an app for that?**



## **Webinar Handout**

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# App Evaluation Sites

## American Psychiatry Association App Evaluation Model

<https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/mental-health-apps/the-app-evaluation-model>

Step 1: Access and background (the 'sniff' test and 'CrApp Detection')

Step 2: Privacy and security

Step 3: Clinical foundation

Step 4: Usability

Step 5: Data integration towards therapeutic goal

### ***App Evaluation Model Screener***

1. On which platforms/operating systems does the app work? Does it also work on a desktop computer?
2. Has the app been updated in the last 180 days?
3. Is there a transparent privacy policy that is clear and accessible before use?
4. Does the app collect, use, and/or transmit sensitive data? If yes, does it claim to do so securely?
5. Is there evidence of specific benefit from academic institutions, end-user feedback, or research studies?
6. Does the app have a clinical/recovery foundation relevant to your intended use?
7. Does the app seem easy to use?
8. Can data be easily shared and interpreted in a way that's consistent with the stated purpose of the app?

## **Mental Health Commission of Canada and CIHR: Apps: How to Make an Informed Choice**

<https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/resource/mental-health-apps-how-to-make-an-informed-choice-two-pager/>

Key criteria to consider:

1. **Effectiveness:** What is the app's intended purpose? Can it actually do what it says it will? Is there proof?
2. **Usability:** Is the app user-friendly and engaging enough to make people want to keep using it?
3. **Security and privacy:** Does the app clearly state how it will collect, store, use and protect personal health information?
4. **Functionality:** What functions does the app offer (e.g., journaling, mood tracking, guided exercises)?
5. **Target users:** Who is the intended audience for the app? Is it clear who should or should not be using it?
6. **Inclusion:** Does the app consider the needs and preferences of diverse people? How appropriate is the app for people from a variety of cultures?
7. **Price:** Is the app upfront about its cost or are there hidden/extra fees?
8. **Transparency:** Does the app clearly state the individuals or organizations involved?

## **One Mind Psyberguide – apps and digital health resources reviewed by experts**

<https://onemindpsyberguide.org/>

- Evaluation approach:
  - Credibility
  - Transparency
  - User Experience
  - Professional Reviews
- Taxonomy/Types of apps
  - Can often be organized by 'specified condition or disorder' (e.g. depression, anxiety, substance use or substance reduction/cessation, insomnia) vs. apps focused on particular treatment types/principles or primary function (e.g. 'nagware' to help with medication adherence, mindfulness, symptom tracking/self-monitoring).

### **Alberta Health Services Addiction and Mental Health Mobile Apps Directory**

- <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/res/mhr/if-res-mhr-kt-mobile-app-directory.pdf>
- <https://airtable.com/shrNQrikDryszb8Ea/tbl4Ao6uJkCmoUAli>

### **MIND – M-Health Index & Navigation Database**

- <https://mindapps.org/>

### **CAMH-Canada Health Infoway – Digital Mental Health Tools: Resources to Support Mental Health Clinical Practice (April 2020)**

- <https://camh.ca/-/media/images/all-other-images/covid-19-professionals/final-digital-mh-resource-document-april-2020-pdf.pdf>

### **McMaster Student Wellness Centre**

- <https://wellness.mcmaster.ca/resources/apps/>

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## Apps Mentioned in the Webinar

### Therapist-Guided Internet CBT (iCBT)

- **MindBeacon** <https://www.mindbeacon.com/>
- **AbilitiCBT** <https://abiliticbt.com/>
- Ontario Structured Psychotherapy Program
  - <https://www.ontariohealth.ca/getting-health-care/mental-health-addictions/depression-anxiety-ontario-structured-psychotherapy>

**BounceBack**® from CMHA - <https://bounceback.cmha.ca/>

**MindShift**® CBT - app from Anxiety Canada

- <https://www.anxietycanada.com/resources/mindshift-cbt/>
- Also available through iOS App Store for Apple and Google Play for Android devices

**MoodMission** - <https://moodmission.com/>

**PTSD Coach Canada** - developed by Veterans Affairs Canada with others

- <https://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/resources/stay-connected/mobile-app/ptsd-coach-canada>

**QuitNow!** - <https://quitnow.app>

- Smoking cessation app

**Saying When app – CAMH** – app to help with the goal of lower-risk alcohol drinking

- <https://www.camh.ca/en/camh-news-and-stories/introducing-the-saying-when-app>
- Also available through iOS App Store for Apple and Google Play for Android devices

**Headspace** <https://www.headspace.com/> and **Calm** <https://www.calm.com/>

- Both very good apps for mindfulness and meditation, but pricey vs. other options

**Bearable** - track multiple symptoms and activities (exercise, medications, etc.) in one app

- <https://bearable.app/>

**Insomnia** – there is a good list of resources and apps on the Sleepwell site

- <https://mysleepwell.ca/>

### **Apps Recommended by Student Wellness Centre**

- <https://wellness.mcmaster.ca/resources/apps/>
- **TAO** - Access to over 150+ video sessions that provide scientifically researched content to help you build life skills, engage in professional development, and explore common concerns, such as stress, anxiety and depression.
  - <https://www.taoconnect.org/index.php>
  - Use your McMaster email to register (or purchase a paid subscription)
- **Recovery Record** – free app based on CBT for eating disorder management.
  - <https://www.recoveryrecord.com/>
- **Be Safe** – create a safety plan; find local resources for support. <https://besafeapp.ca/>

**MindMate** – daily activities plan to help support brain health

- <https://www.mindmate-app.com/>

**iGeriCare** – free dementia education for family/friend caregivers by McMaster University

- <https://igericare.ca>

## **Apps to help reduce your smartphone use**

- **One Sec** and **Opal**; as well as a range of non-app approaches (including 'lock boxes' and others)

## **Paper Apps – High-Quality CBT-based Self-Help Books**

- All available through Amazon and most booksellers
- See also our e-Learning lesson handout on anxiety for additional resources for anxiety disorders, including more self-help books: [anxiety.mcmasteroptimalaging.org](http://anxiety.mcmasteroptimalaging.org)
- **For Anxiety**
  - 'MAP' Series – *note that there are both Client Workbooks and Therapist Guides.*
    - Mastery of Your Anxiety and Panic
    - Mastery of Your Anxiety and Worry
  - 10 Simple Solution Series
    - 10 Simple Solutions to Panic
    - 10 Simple Solutions to Worry
- **For Depression**
  - Mind over Mood
- **Chronic Pain**
  - Managing Pain Before it Manages You
- **Insomnia**
  - Quiet Your Mind and Get to Sleep
  - Overcoming Insomnia
  - Say Good Night to Insomnia

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## Other Service-Oriented Resources

### Government of Canada

- On this page you'll find access to generally free mental health resources across all provinces and territories. Services and resources may vary by location—they include: internet-CBT, CBT applications, telephone support, referrals to other resources, and more.

### 211

- Connects people with the appropriate information and services to enhance Canada's social infrastructure and enable people to fully engage in their communities.
- <https://211.ca/> or call 211.

### ConnexOntario

- Free 24/7 access to healthcare services information related to mental health, addiction and problem gambling services. Web, app, text, chat, email, or phone.
- <https://www.connexontario.ca/>

### Ontario's Health811

- Connect with a registered nurse day or night for free, secure and confidential health advice.
- Call 811 or visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/your-health> for more info.