



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## How far is clinical assessment from the bullseye? Using MEmind to compare clinical assessment with self-assessment in patients with depression and anxiety diagnosis

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## KEYWORDS

Mood disorders;  
Anxiety disorders;  
Self report;  
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## Abstract

**Background and objectives:** Technology based assessments are being used for screening and monitoring in a wide scope of medical specialties, including mental health field. Depression and anxiety are common disorders in which e-health tools can be useful. We aimed to compare clinician assessment of illness severity in patients with depression and anxiety diagnosis with computer-based self-assessment within 24 h of clinician evaluation via MEmind ([www.memind.net](http://www.memind.net)), a novel web-tool.

**Methods:** From May 2014, adult patients attended in outpatient settings in Fundación Jiménez Díaz Psychiatry Department were registered in MEmind, a web tool designed for psychiatric assessment. During the recruitment, clinicians use CGI-S for patient assessment via MEmind and provide patients a code and password to use the web-tool. We selected those patients diagnosed with depression and/or anxiety who connected within 24 h of the clinical visit and complete in the web page GHQ and WHO-5 scales. We calculated a bivariate correlation for CGI-S, WHO-5 and GHQ-12.

**Results:** Of the 231 participants, 157 (68%) were diagnosed with anxiety disorders and 74 (32%) with depression. Using the Spearman Rho test for correlation, we found a low correlation between CGI-S and total WHO-5 ( $r = -0.192$ ;  $p = 0.006$ ) and between CGI-S and total GHQ-12 ( $r = 0.211$ ;  $p = 0.002$ ) and a good correlation between total WHO-5 and total GHQ-12 ( $r = -0.606$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ).

**Conclusions:** We found a low correlation between clinician assessment and patients' self-reports within 24 h of clinician evaluation. Factors that potentially influenced the degree of correlation related with patients, clinicians, measurements and technology are discussed.

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## Background

Technological developments and participatory health initiatives are expanding the scope of medicine from a traditional focus on disease cure to a personalized preventive approach.<sup>1</sup> Increasingly technology based assessments are being used for screening and monitoring in a wide scope of medical specialties. With this in mind, MEmind was developed to help clinicians optimize and personalize clinical psychiatric assessment and treatment.<sup>2</sup> Thereby, MEmind allows to improve communication among patients, support network and mental-health professionals; to monitor doctor's drugs prescription habits<sup>3,4</sup>; and monitoring patients through ecological momentary assessment (EMA).<sup>5</sup>

Anxiety and depression are common disorders, in fact more than 350 million people worldwide are affected by depression, making it the biggest cause of disability.<sup>6</sup> In 2010, the estimated number of persons affected by anxiety disorders and unipolar depression in Europe was 69.1

million and 30.3 million, respectively. Furthermore, depression represents 7.2% of the overall burden of disease, with 4,320,400 disability adjusted life years lost.<sup>7</sup>

An early diagnosis and treatment would result in improved personal functioning and reduce long-term costs.<sup>8</sup> Screening instruments for early diagnosis and monitoring are rarely used consistently; a technological approach could facilitate a consistent use. Combining validated screening instruments with the resourcefulness of tablet and phone applications that allow for EMA approaches offers the possibility to tackle these issues in a variety of settings, including primary care and specialty services.

In turn, clinical assessment, the tool to early diagnosis and optimal treatment in mental health, currently relies mostly on retrospective self-reports. The latter are inconsistent with interviewer judgments in as many as 60% of patients and correlate only modestly with informant reports (from clinicians or 7 friends/relatives).<sup>9</sup> Patients, caregivers and doctors may have differing perceptions of illness and yet

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