



Promoting young people's mental wealth in the digital age

Abstract:

In the 21st Century, youth education, health and mental health organisations are all under increasing pressure to grow the 'mental wealth' of this generation. All are asked not only to provide more services but also to provide better quality services that work in genuine partnerships with those affected to achieve more substantive health, social and economic outcomes.

Most areas of education and health services operate without the necessary IT infrastructure to facilitate optimal two-way partnerships with young people. While the digital technology revolution has transformed other major industries, its impact on traditional education and health care environments is more limited. However, there are now rapid developments in digital education, health and mental health, and linked service innovations.

While Australia has been a world-leader in academic developments in digital mental health and wellbeing, we are yet to make best use of these new capabilities.

A large-scale example of the way in which digital systems work in partnership with those with lived experiences, clinicians and service organisations, can potentially transform service delivery is now underway through the Australian Governments support for Project Synergy.

The processes of identifying key population needs, co-designing technology support tools with service users and clinicians, creating shared treatment plans, using real-time data to track the impact of care and transparent reporting of service quality and efficiency will be outlined. These principles will then be illustrated with specific youth service and suicide prevention examples initiated by the Brain and Mind Centre of the University of Sydney.

Key messages:

1. In the 21st Century, we need to engage with the power of new digital technologies to grow the 'mental wealth' of young people.
2. Australia needs to move from pilot projects to national implementation in education and health.