



In Motion

Highlighting Articles Advancing Pain Research in Canada and the World

Featured article:

Laloo, C., Nishat, F., Zempsky, W., Bakshi, N., Badawy, S., Ko, Y. J., Dampier, C., Stinson, J., & Palermo, T. M. (2022). **Characterizing User Engagement With a Digital Intervention for Pain Self-management Among Youth With Sickle Cell Disease and Their Caregivers: Subanalysis of a Randomized Controlled Trial.** *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 24(8), e40096. <https://doi.org/10.2196/40096>

This study explores the engagement with the digital platform iCanCope with sickle cell disease (SCD), designed for managing pain in youth with SCD and their caregivers.

Key insights from the study:

- **User Engagement Diversity:** Among participants, engagement varied, with some youth and caregivers actively using the platform, while others did not engage significantly.
- **Platform Preference:** Youth showed a higher engagement with the mobile app compared to the website, citing ease of use and interactive features as major benefits.
- **Caregiver Involvement:** Caregiver engagement was less than youth, with a noted positive correlation between caregiver and youth engagement levels.



Quick Article Link: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9472047/>

What happened?

The study, conducted across multiple North American SCD clinics, involved a randomized controlled trial to analyze the engagement patterns of both youth with SCD and their caregivers with the iCanCope with SCD program. This program provided separate digital interfaces for youth and caregivers to educate and facilitate pain management strategies. Analytics and individual interviews assessed how these two groups interacted with the program components.

Why is it important?

SCD is associated with high pain burdens that can severely impact quality of life. Providing accessible digital tools that support pain management can significantly enhance daily functioning and health outcomes for these patients. Understanding how users engage with these tools informs the optimization of the platform to better meet their needs.

What now?

The study suggests the potential need for modifications to the digital platform to increase caregiver engagement and enhance the website's usability to match the app's appeal. By tailoring the digital intervention to better fit the usage patterns and preferences of its users, the efficacy and reach of the iCanCope with SCD program can be significantly improved. Health care providers and caregivers are encouraged to utilize and advocate for the use of such digital tools to augment traditional pain management strategies in SCD care.



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