Mhealth and Privacy

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Promise of mhealth

• Offers opportunity to dramatically transform health care service delivery models while increasing quality of care in a manner that may reduce cost and increase value for a wide array of stakeholders

• Offers tremendous reach for health-related monitoring/therapeutic support, including for populations for whom current models of care are inaccessible or unacceptable

• Offers unprecedented models of health-monitoring, prevention, treatment, recovery support

• Evidence-base from scientific research for mhealth approach is strong.
Promise of mhealth

• Much of our work is with underserved, vulnerable clinical populations (e.g., individuals with substance use disorders, serious mental illness)

• Some of our work focuses on the behavioral health aspects of chronic disease management.

• Research in this field shows that mhealth approaches can produce a marked impact on health behavior

  (e.g., Significantly decreases illicit drug use among individuals with substance use disorders;

  Significantly enhances functioning among individuals with psychotic disorders)
Privacy Considerations in mhealth

• Challenges with cognitive functioning deficits, health literacy, etc.

• End users may not fully understand privacy risks; ways in which they can violate their own confidentiality, etc.

• Suggests privacy considerations should be contextualized and consider target audience

• Underscores importance of working with end users during iterative design process to best understand usability and patterns of usage

• Suggests opportunity for research focused on cost-benefit analyses; Mental models of risk and reward (including nature of probabilities of risk and reward); Considerations of privacy vs. self-management/autonomy
• Suggests importance of Informed Consent processes and Shared Decision-Making approaches

• Suggests importance of flexible models for various end users to control privacy/sharing as part of a larger focus on user-generated care (balanced with clinical and liability concerns)

• Education about privacy considerations across various types of technologies may also be useful.

• Models which are responsive to a given end user’s level of understanding may be particularly useful.