

Digital disruption in Melbourne's South-East: A new Community Digital Mental Health Platform for a region with great unmet needs

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Psychiatry is on the cusp of a paradigm shift. Rapid advances in technology and information science promise to revolutionise both the way basic neuroscience research is translated into impactful interventions and the way people in need access mental health care. Cognisant of these developments, and inspired by similar initiatives at leading institutions in North America and Europe, the recently established Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health has developed a plan to roll out a Community Digital Mental Health Platform. This presentation outlines how this Platform will encompass the Turner's growing range of digital mental health capabilities, with assessment, monitoring and treatment delivered through a Virtual Assistant that leverages Monash's capability in artificial intelligence. The Turner's (a) history of clinical and commercial success in developing digital interventions (e.g., TALI Train©), (b) proposal to establish a community cohort as a test-bed for digital tools and (c) proactive approach to community co-design will be discussed as evidence of the Platform's feasibility. Related initiatives, including new horizons in social robotics and new educational pathways in digital mental health, will also be considered. The presentation will conclude with reflections on the challenges the Turner faces in its quest to improve community mental health in Melbourne's South-East and some possible ways forward for the Institute and its community, government and industry partners.