

Integrating ChatGPT: Enhancing postpartum mental healthcare with artificial intelligence (AI) support

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Abstract

We are writing to extend the discourse on the innovative work published in digital health on the feasibility of videoconferencing-based therapy groups for postpartum depression and anxiety. The pragmatic evaluation demonstrated promising outcomes in terms of acceptability, appropriateness, and group process, suggesting that this modality is a viable alternative to traditional in-person therapy, especially in addressing the challenges faced by new mothers. Building on this study, we propose considering the integration of artificial intelligence (AI)-driven tools such as ChatGPT2 into such group therapy settings. ChatGPT, a large language model developed by OpenAI, has demonstrated considerable potential in generating therapeutic dialogs, offering empathetic responses, and assisting in therapeutic guidance. It can be employed as a supplementary tool to enhance the therapeutic process by providing personalized, real-time responses during or between sessions.

Keywords

ChatGPT, AI integration, Digital health, large language model, videoconferencing therapy

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Dear Editor,

We are writing to extend the discourse on the innovative work¹ published in *Digital Health* on the feasibility of videoconferencing-based therapy groups for postpartum depression and anxiety. The pragmatic evaluation demonstrated promising outcomes in terms of acceptability, appropriateness, and group process, suggesting that this modality is a viable alternative to traditional in-person therapy, especially in addressing the challenges faced by new mothers. Building on this study, we propose considering the integration of artificial intelligence (AI)-driven tools such as ChatGPT² into such group therapy settings. ChatGPT, a large language model developed by OpenAI, has demonstrated considerable potential in generating therapeutic dialogs, offering empathetic responses, and assisting in therapeutic guidance. It can be employed as a supplementary tool to enhance the therapeutic process by providing personalized, real-time responses during or between sessions.

Moreover, ChatGPT could aid in overcoming the common barriers of postpartum therapy, such as scheduling conflicts or immediate access to mental health support. It can be configured to deliver supportive dialogs outside

of scheduled sessions, ensuring that participants have continuous access to therapeutic interventions, which is crucial during the vulnerable postpartum period. Additionally, ChatGPT's ability to facilitate reflective practices through guided journaling or cognitive behavioral therapy-based interventions³ could be invaluable in enhancing the therapeutic experience for postpartum women. However, it is essential to approach this integration with caution. The ethical considerations, particularly around privacy, the quality of AI-generated responses⁴, and the potential for over-reliance on AI, must be carefully managed. A hybrid model, where AI supports but does not replace human therapists, could strike the right balance, ensuring that the core interpersonal connection of therapy remains intact.

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To that end, despite Hussain-Shamsy et al.¹ offering valuable insights into the implementation of virtual therapy groups, integrating AI tools such as ChatGPT could further enhance the accessibility, continuity, and overall effectiveness of postpartum mental healthcare. Future research should explore this hybrid model to assess its feasibility and impact on clinical outcomes.

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