

Obesity and Web 2.0: Psycho-educative Groups

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Abstract and Objective

We present a pilot research, that is in progress, by the Maugeri Foundation of Pavia, in collaboration with Department of Psychology of the University of Pavia. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of applying the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the treatment of patients with obesity. In particular we want to compare the effects that two different way of treatments product on the patients: on one hand psycho-educational group face-to-face and, on the other hand, the association between a psycho-educational group face-to-face with psycho-educational group on line.

Keywords:

Web 2.0, Obesity, Adherence evaluation.

Introduction

It is well known in literature that obesity treatment is characterized by a high rate of drop out. This phenomenon, particularly evident in the long term follow up, negatively impact on the weight loss and on the resilience and self-efficacy of the patients. It is reported that patients, followed on line, access to treatment platform more in the evening than in the morning, i.e. when the dedicated operator are not available. Our hypothesis is that, due to its easy accessibility and the re-call and help on line system, **ICT** could improve the adherence of the obese patients to the proposed treatment so allowing an appropriate weight loss and its maintenance

Methods

Thirty patients with obesity are shared, randomly, into two groups, after the administration of a Scale of ICT Literacy for the identification of skills, useful to use ICT:

- Experimental group: in this group, patients will attend the standard treatment for obesity (diet and education) under the supervision of the multidisciplinary team. Furthermore they will invited to follow the treatment on line, consisting in a chat session once a week with

the other members of the group with a dedicated psychologist, as moderator of the session. Furthermore they will also can use the web platform all day long. Finally, they will receive Help and Re-call, during the week, that remind them to log in the forum, the visits scheduled, and the monitoring of their food diary

- Control group: this group will receive only the standard treatment for obesity (diet and education) under the supervision of the multidisciplinary staff.

Expected results

- Evaluation of the adherence to the treatments
- Evaluation of self –efficacy and resilience, anxiety and depression in baseline condition and during the treatment;
- Evaluation of the weight loss.

Conclusions

The analysis of the results will allow to evaluate the impact of ICT in the treatment of chronic diseases such as obesity, and to identify which information better impact on the treatment outcome both in short and long term.

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