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Lean Assessment Process methodology for evaluating the clinical need and assessing technology acceptance in the context of adopting a new digital therapeutic for depression in routine clinical practice in the NHS in England

Objectives



The objectives of the feasibility study were to evaluate the unmet clinical need, stakeholders' perspective, user requirements and barriers to adoption of a novel digital therapeutic (DTx) for depression in the depression care pathway in the NHS in England using the Lean Assessment Process (LAP) methodology as an early health technology assessment.

Introduction



The LAP methodology is a structured process consisting of both qualitative and quantitative observations to help innovators understand the NHS requirements as early as possible in the product development process. Findings from LAP can help innovators inform their decision-making around development, commercialisation and requirements for adoption of the innovation. Here we used the LAP methodology to explore the potential usefulness of a digital therapeutic based on a novel cognitive task as a treatment for depression.

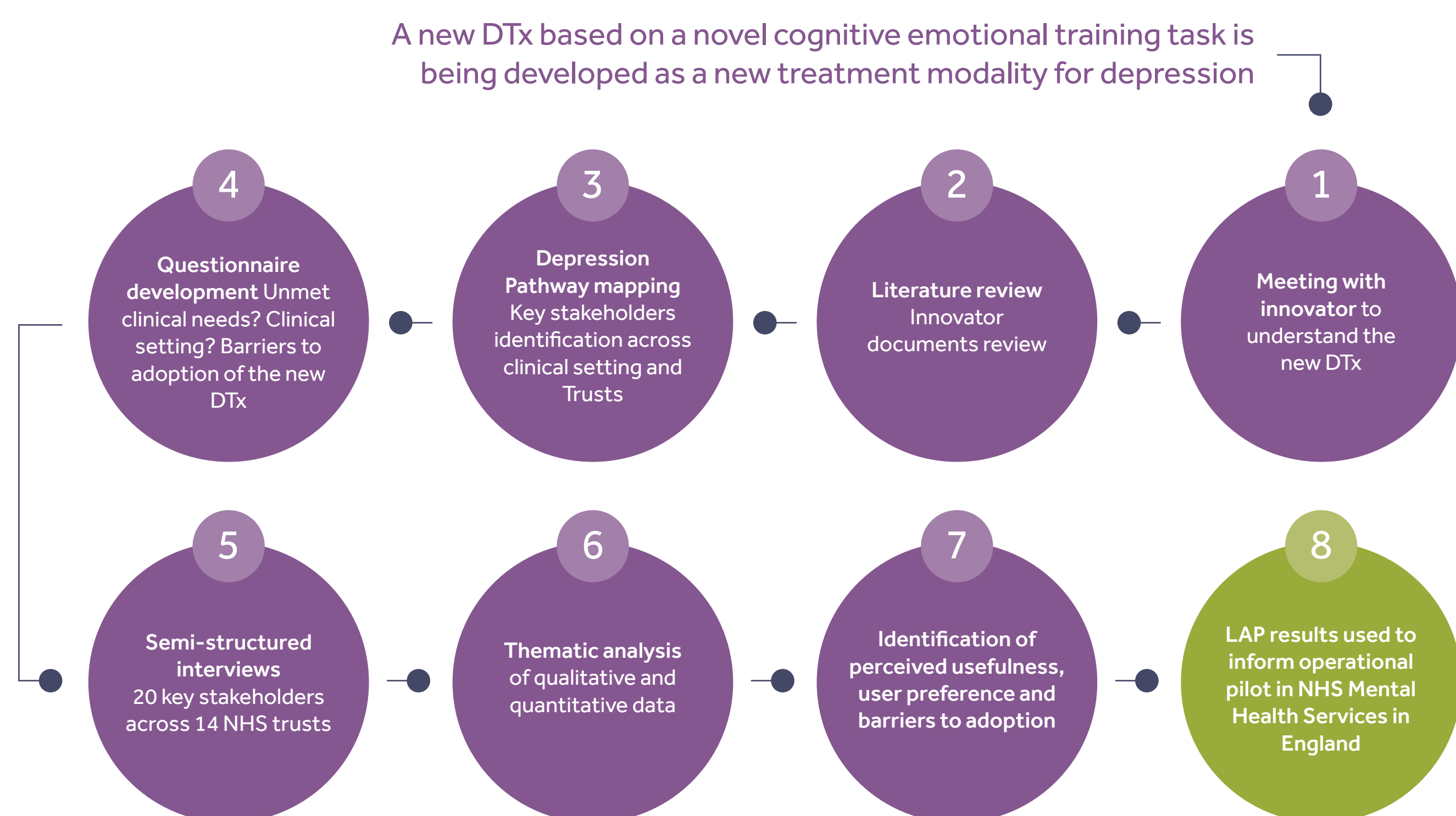
Methodology



The LAP methodology combines qualitative and quantitative data with human factors tools to assess the value proposition of a health technology early in its lifecycle. The first step involved mapping the depression care pathway using the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) clinical guidelines (1). Key healthcare professionals with relevant roles in the depression pathway were identified and contacted.

A questionnaire was then developed to capture stakeholders' perspectives on unmet clinical needs, potential usefulness of the novel DTx, its level of acceptance and possible barriers to its adoption. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 stakeholders including general practitioners, medical directors, psychiatrists and clinical psychologists working in community mental health teams, inpatient setting, and talking therapies services. Interview transcripts were thematically analysed to extract insights regarding unmet clinical needs, users' level of acceptance and requirements, and potential barriers to the adoption of the DTx.

Using the LAP methodology as an early Health Technology Assessment process of a novel digital therapeutic (DTx) for depression



Results



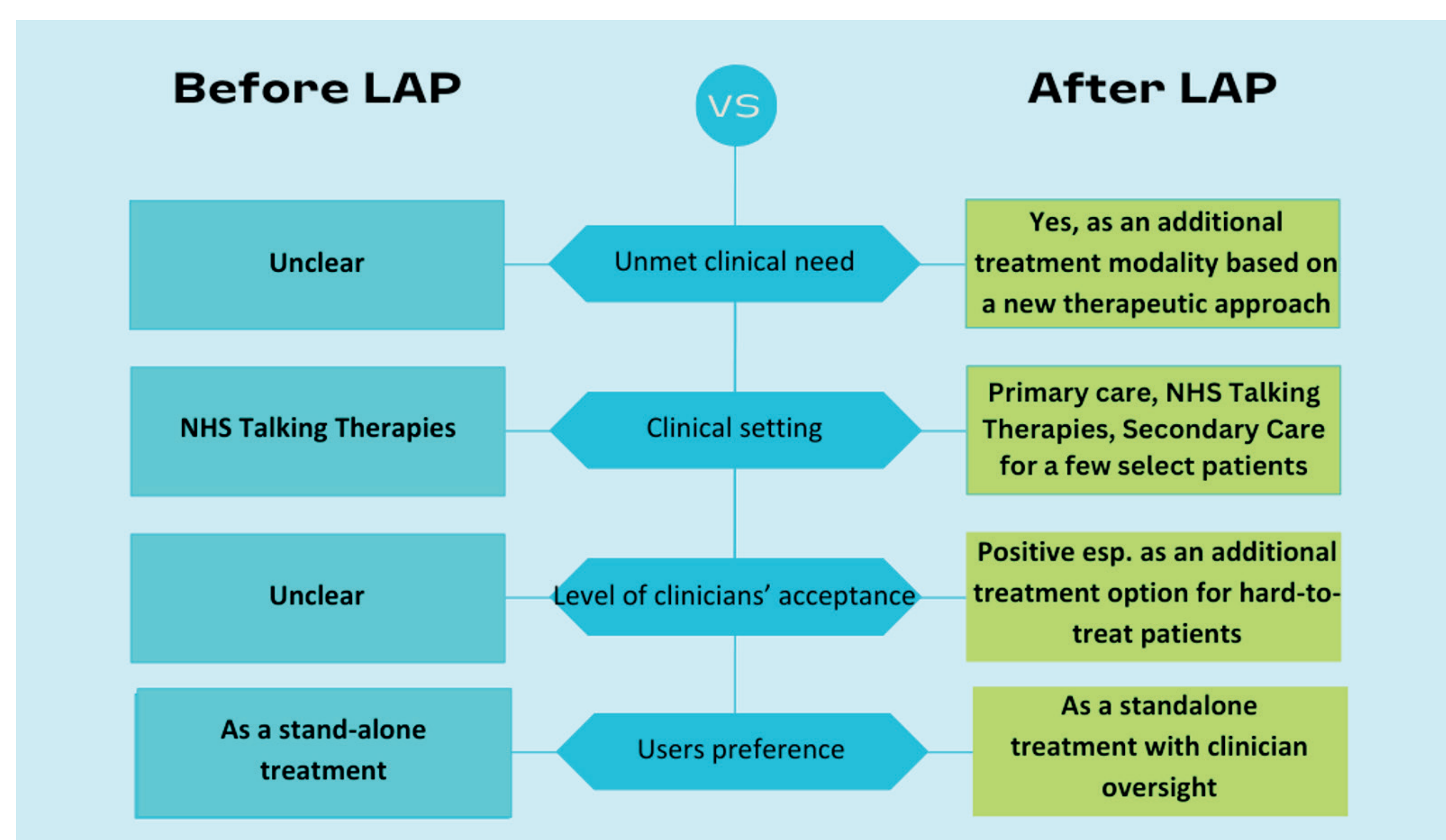
The LAP study found that stakeholders recognised there was a clinical need for a new digital therapeutic based on a novel cognitive emotional training task, particularly to support people whose needs are not adequately addressed by the treatment modalities currently available. The study identified the care settings where the new DTx would be best placed and highlighted the key barriers to adoption within each clinical setting, as well as user preference. These findings can help the innovator align their platform more effectively with the needs of the specific NHS care setting within the depression care pathway. Additionally, the LAP study results are being used to inform an ongoing operational pilot that will further evaluate the practicalities of implementing the platform in an NHS setting.

Conclusion



Using the LAP methodology, the value proposition of the novel DTx was assessed and key elements to consider were identified. Based on the results of this study, a pilot study is currently taking place and will inform the future economic evaluation and adoption strategies.

Assessing the perceived usefulness, level of acceptance and user preference of a new digital therapeutic for depression in the NHS in England using LAP



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References

References: Depression in adults: treatment and management NICE guideline [NG222] Published: 29 June 2022

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