

Q&A from Zoom chat for the iDEAS Stakeholder Summit (Wed 8 Feb 2023)

1. Have you compared this app (in terms of functionality/elements/and in terms of impact/outcomes), to other apps (e.g. the Drinks Meter app) which is endorsed on its website by a UCL staff member, or the old PHE Change 4 Life Apps

We have not directly compared Drink Less to other apps though we have previously analysed the content of alcohol reduction apps in terms of the behaviour change techniques (<https://www.jmir.org/2015/5/e118>) and the theoretical basis of digital alcohol interventions more broadly (<https://www.jmir.org/2018/2/e69/>). Drink Less is the first alcohol reduction app for the UK population of drinkers to report a systematic and transparent approach to its development and refinement. And the iDEAS trial is the first RCT of an alcohol reduction app for the general population in the UK, thereby starting to build a strong evidence base on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of alcohol apps.

2. Could we get digital alcohol interventions to the same level [as link shared in the chat for digital mental health interventions recommended by NICE -

<https://www.nice.org.uk/news/article/digital-mental-health-tech-for-children-and-young-people-recommended-by-nice-in-first-rapid-healthtech-guidance>]?

It would be great to get digital alcohol interventions to the same level and hopefully evaluations like the iDEAS trial can provide a good rationale for recommending the use of evidence-based alcohol reduction apps in the NHS based on being both an effective and a low-risk option.

3. How do you plan to sustain the availability of the app?

We have been working with Evidence to Impact (a not for profit organisation) to develop a business plan for the sustainability of the app and there were three main recommendations:

1. Download fees (£1.99 per use)
2. Core funding from charities/organisations on a 'collective' basis
3. Ongoing research funding

They also recommended setting up a 'Task and Finish' group to implement the recommendations in the report and when considering licencing the app and IP to a third party, identify the best partners to manage Drink Less on an ongoing basis.

4. What was the attrition rate?

We had a follow-up rate of 80% meaning the attrition rate (at 6-month follow-up) was 20% and this did not differ significantly between groups.

5. Which instrument did you use for your primary outcome?

We use the AUDIT-C for our primary outcome (self-reported weekly alcohol consumption, in UK standard units, at 6-month follow-up). Weekly alcohol consumption is derived from the extended quantity-frequency questions of the AUDIT, adjusting for heavy episodic use (question 3 of the AUDIT) and therefore allocating an individual to a category of consumption that is closest to their actual consumption. Please see the published protocol (<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/add.15287>) or the latest version of the protocol (<https://fundingawards.nihr.ac.uk/award/NIHR127651>) for further details.

6. Did you also look if engagement resulted in better outcomes

This will be part of our engagement paper from the trial which will answer the following two research questions:

1. Through what psychological measures does engagement with Drink Less change drinking behaviour?
2. What is the extent of user engagement with Drink Less and does user engagement moderate these outcomes?

7. Does the app provide info on the frequency of use?

We do have data on the frequency of use. Among trial participants who were randomised to be recommended to download and use Drink Less, and did so, there was a mean number of 42 sessions (SD=66.51) with a range from 1 to 535.

8. Which features in the app were the most used by participants?

We do have data on this which we will be analysing in relation to the trial participants using Drink Less. From previous work we know that the Self-monitoring and Feedback module have the most viewed pages and engagement with this (in part due to the way the app is designed to make recording drinks and seeing progress as easy as possible).

9. How many downloads?

Drink Less has had over 70,000 unique users who have entered data and engaged in some way with the app.

10. What is a session in the context of using the app? And can we see patterns of usage/engagement over time (e.g. weeks)?

A new session was defined as a new screen view after 30 minutes of inactivity (Google Analytics. How a web session is defined in Analytics. Available from: <https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/2731565?hl=en>). We are planning on looking at patterns of engagement over time and conducting some more detailed modelling on how this relates to outcomes. A colleague has previously analysed engagement data from Drink Less users and done some data visualisation for how engagement changes over time, available here: <https://www.jmir.org/2020/12/e23369>