RESILIENCE AND INCLUSION
FOR THE MILITARY

ANALYSIS REPORT

APP PILOTING

"FREEDOM FOR ARMY"

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Digital Application Piloting

" FREEDOM FOR ARMY "

- ROMANIA, ITALY, CYPRUS -

Partners:

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I. Introduction

The piloting of the application intended for the management of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) for active, veteran and military personnel with disabilities in Romania, Italy and Cyprus was carried out to validate its effectiveness, accessibility and usefulness in supporting mental health. This innovative app has been developed to address the unique and critical needs of military members exposed to traumatic experiences, supporting them in the process of awareness, assessment, and management of PTSD symptoms. In the context of a demanding military mission, the app aims to provide a safe space for self-awareness and for connecting users with valuable resources, thus contributing to improving the quality of personal and professional life.

The piloting allowed the collection of data and direct feedback from active military users , veterans and military personnel with disabilities in the three countries, thus providing a solid basis for analysis on the performance of the application. This report provides an overview of the piloting results and identifies strengths and areas for improvement, based on user ratings and suggestions. Given the sensitive nature of the topic, the effective implementation of an accessible app with tailored functionalities is essential to support mental health and reduce the stigma associated with PTSD among military personnel.

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II. Analysis by main categories and common conclusions

1. Usefulness of the app in understanding PTSD

Conclusions

The app has received very positive reviews for its usefulness in facilitating the understanding of post-traumatic stress disorder. In all three countries, respondents rated the app as extremely useful for identifying and raising awareness of PTSD symptoms. In Romania, 90% of users found the app "very useful", and similar percentages were recorded in Italy and Cyprus (between 88% and 90%). This trend indicates that most users have perceived the app as not only a beneficial but also essential tool for understanding and managing PTSD symptoms. This feedback underscores the app's success in addressing an important challenge for military personnel by providing them with support and education resources.

Detailed observations

- Clarity of information – Users have noted that information about PTSD is presented clearly and concisely, helping them to better understand the nature and symptoms of the condition.

Recommendations

To improve user understanding and provide a more personalized experience, we recommend:

- Expanding educational resources – by including materials that explain the symptoms and mechanisms of development of PTSD.

2. Effectiveness of the self-assessment test

Conclusions

The self-assessment test was evaluated as an element of great value for users. In all three countries, the majority of respondents (between 83% and 84%) said that the test helped them "to a great extent" to identify their symptoms. This highlights the usefulness of the test as a self-awareness tool, making it easier to recognise PTSD symptoms without stigma. Many respondents expressed interest in a periodic reassessment option, which would allow them to monitor the evolution of symptoms over time.

Detailed observations

- Monitoring the evolution - In Romania and Italy, the military indicated that they would like to have the possibility to periodically repeat their test to observe changes and developments in PTSD symptoms.
- Interpreting the scores – A common feedback was appreciating the detailed interpretation of the scores obtained, so that users better understand the meaning of the results.

Recommendations

- Implementation of a reassessment functionality - so that users can retake the test at regular intervals, monitoring the progress and effects of the management methods applied.

3. Navigability and user interface

Conclusions

In all three countries, the app's interface was rated positively, with between 84% and 88% of respondents finding navigation to be "very easy." Users appreciated the intuitive interface, which allowed them to quickly access the app's functionalities and

resources. However, about 16% of users mentioned that they encountered minor difficulties in accessing some of the functionalities, which suggests opportunities for improvement in overall navigability.

Detailed observations

- Clarity of the main menu – In Cyprus and Italy, a few respondents reported difficulty finding specific sections of the main menu.

Recommendations

- Implementation of a section with details about the structure of the management of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

4. Relevance and usefulness of psychologists' contacts

Conclusions

The Psychologists' Contacts section was rated as highly relevant in all pilot countries. Between 77% and 84% of respondents found contacts "extremely useful", highlighting the importance of accessibility to specialised resources for users who may need additional support. This section provides users with an accessible solution, thus removing barriers to accessing psychological services and reducing the stigma associated with seeking help.

Detailed observations

- Accessibility of resources - In Romania and Cyprus, the military stressed the importance of contacts as an accessible and reliable solution.
- In Italy, respondents proposed including the names and contacts of psychologists for accessing psychological services.

Recommendations

- Maintaining and expanding the contact list of psychologists, including clear information on how to access the services offered.

5. Forum Experience

Conclusions

The app's forum was considered a valuable space for sharing experiences and community support, with between 80% and 84% of respondents rating the experience as "excellent". It demonstrates the role of the forum in promoting social connection and supporting users in managing PTSD. A smaller percentage of users (about 7-10%) suggested the need to improve the quality of information and support available on the forum.

Detailed observations

- Opportunities for interaction - In Cyprus, users suggested holding thematic sessions to encourage discussion on specific topics.

Recommendations

- Organizing thematic sessions, where the military can discuss relevant topics related to the management of PTSD.

6. Quality and organisation of the piloting process

Conclusions

The piloting process was consistently positively appreciated, with 87-88% of respondents considering it "excellently organized." The piloting was able to provide an effective framework for testing the app, allowing users to explore the functionalities

and provide detailed feedback. Organizing effectively contributed to an overall positive experience, which is critical to the success of future implementation.

Detailed observations

- Detailed planning - Feedback from Romania and Italy suggests that users were impressed by the well-structured piloting planning.
- Lack of training sessions – In Cyprus, a few users mentioned that additional training sessions could make it easier to get used to the app quickly.

Recommendations

- Continuing the well-structured approach in future implementation processes

III. Final Recommendations

Implementation of a periodic symptom reassessment option - Users expressed a desire to be able to track the evolution of symptoms over time. Such an option could provide a valuable tool for monitoring progress.

Promoting the forum as a support resource - Creating an active online support community and organising regular thematic sessions would encourage users to collaborate and share their experiences, thus increasing the sense of community support.

Monitoring and updating content - It is essential to constantly monitor the application to ensure that the information remains current and relevant to users, and the functionalities meet their changing needs.

IV. Overall conclusion

The piloting of the application for the management of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in Romania, Italy and Cyprus provided a clear picture of its effectiveness and positive impact on the mental health of active military personnel , veterans and military personnel with disabilities. The results show that the app is considered a valuable tool, managing to meet the unique and complex needs of military personnel affected by post-traumatic stress. In all three countries, the app was rated as not only useful, but also accessible, intuitive, and able to provide genuine support for users, without erecting barriers or accentuating the stigma associated with PTSD.

One of the key aspects observed is the proven usefulness of the app in facilitating the recognition and awareness of PTSD symptoms, a fundamental step for the military in search of the support they need. The self-assessment test was highlighted as a powerful tool, and the accessibility to specialized resources, such as psychologists' contacts and community support functionalities through the forum, contributed significantly to improving the quality of the user experience. The app has proven to be an effective and consistent support, providing practical and quick solutions that can be easily integrated into the daily lives of military personnel.

The app also manages to create a social support platform that is not only informative but also inclusive. The community forum was very positively received, and most users mentioned the importance of a space where they can share experiences and advice, thus helping to create an environment of mutual support. This type of interaction not only helps users better manage their PTSD, but also strengthens social connections and a sense of belonging, crucial factors in combating emotional isolation and stigma among military personnel.

Technological development was another success factor in this piloting. The simple interface, intuitive design, and quick access to functionalities allowed users to navigate without difficulty. These elements were particularly appreciated in all three countries, demonstrating that a well-designed app can be accessible to a wide range of users, regardless of their previous experience with technology. Moreover, the demand for re-evaluation options and audio guides highlights users' desire to integrate the app into their daily routine, consistently and progressively.

The piloting results highlight the long-term potential of the app to help improve mental health among active military personnel , veterans, and military personnel with disabilities, not only by providing information and self-assessment tools, but also by supporting a process of self-awareness, reducing stigma, and increasing confidence to seek help. Piloting has demonstrated that the app has the potential to become an indispensable resource for military personnel, being an important pillar in creating a healthier military environment that is more open to the individual needs of active soldiers and veterans.

To ensure maximum impact, applying the recommendations and expanding the app's functionalities are important steps. Implementing regular updates and ensuring that user feedback is continuously integrated will allow the app to remain relevant and effective. Piloting the app has proven that through constant adaptation and improvement, this digital resource can become an essential tool in supporting the mental health of military personnel around the world, facilitating a future where post-traumatic stress is addressed with empathy, support, and innovative technology.

Thus, the application piloted in Romania, Italy and Cyprus paved the way for a scalable and reliable solution, ready to meet the diverse needs of the military and promote a culture of positive mental health, supported by technology and community.

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