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Is There a Role for Apps in Veterans' Mental Health?

BACKGROUND

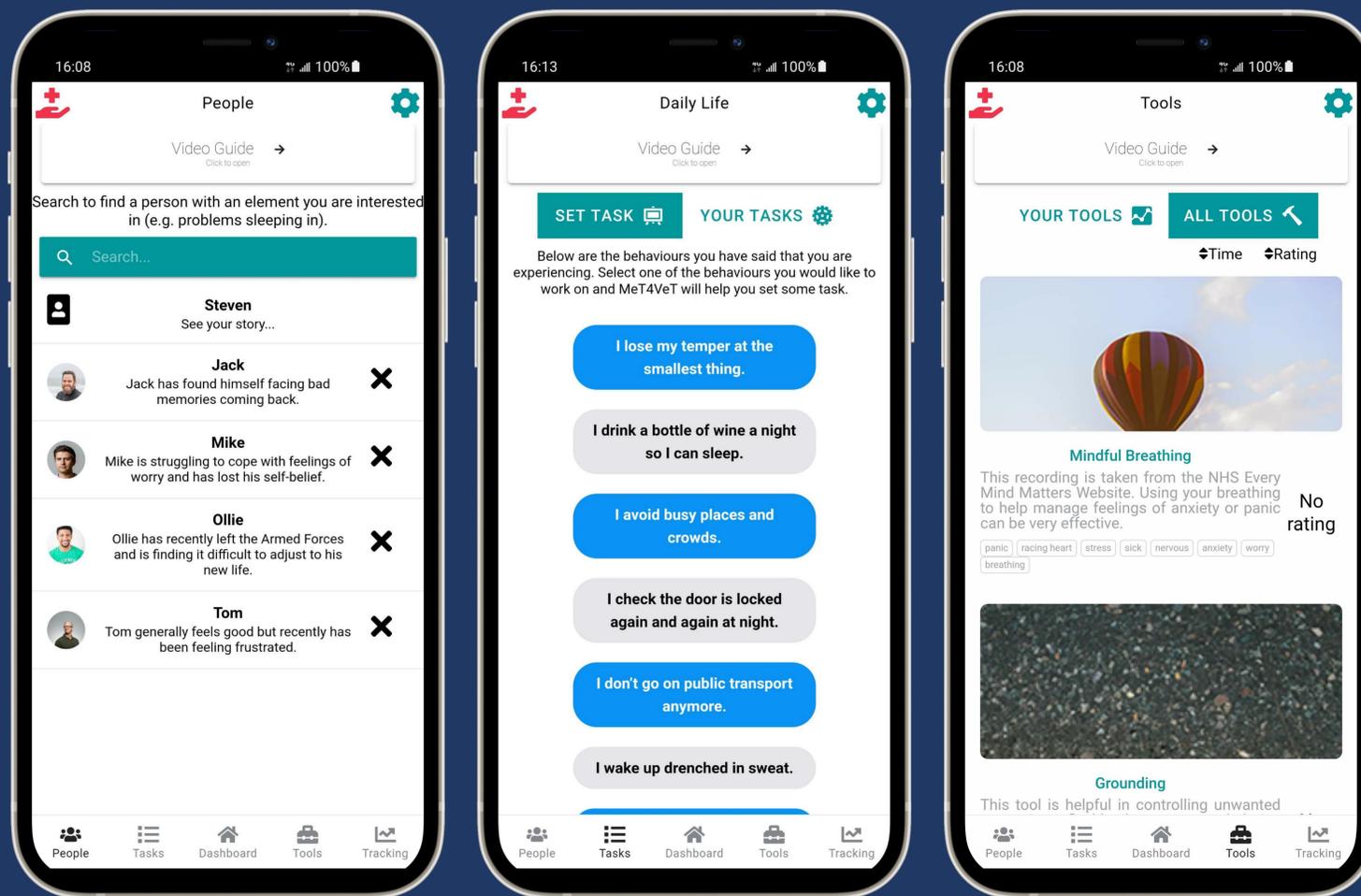
Veterans often struggle to **define** the problems they are experiencing as mental health difficulties. They tend not to **recognise** the need for help until reaching a crisis point and face difficulties identifying **support** services. This **feasibility trial** aimed to assess the acceptability and usability of a **smartphone app** designed to support **veterans** transitioning out of the UK Armed Forces to help with these issues.

METHODS

- N=50 male veterans recruited that had served at least 2 years in the UK Armed Forces and left within the past 2 years.
- Full app group n=24
- Control group (signposting app) n=26
- App usage data over a 1-month period was collected and semi-structured interviews were conducted with the full app group.
- All participants were asked to complete wellbeing measures at three time points: baseline; baseline + 1 month; baseline + 2 months.

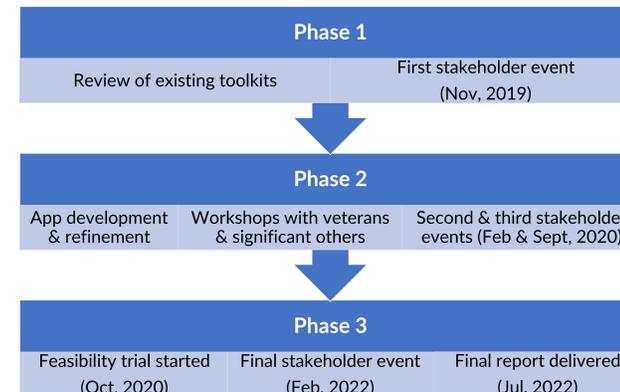
RESULTS

- App feasibility and acceptability for the full app was good (mean/SD=5.22, 1.48), mHealth App Usability Questionnaire (MAUQ).
- Preliminary qualitative analysis from n=10 interviews suggests participants found the app helpful and easy to use.
- After 1-month, psychological distress was significantly lower for both groups ($p < 0.05$) although more evident in the full app group, General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12).



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Timeline



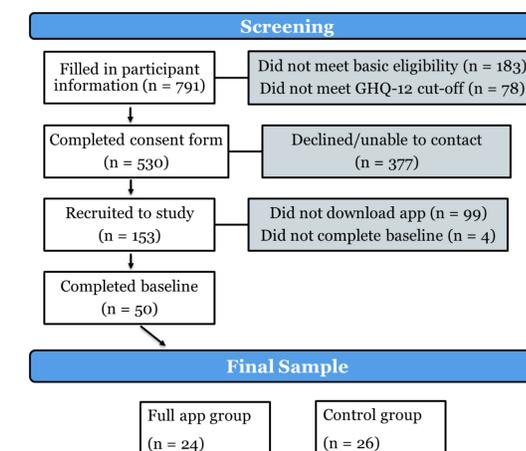
Eligibility

- Male
- Own a smartphone
- Served at least 2 years in the UK Armed Forces and left within the last 2 years
- Present with mental health difficulties (GHQ-12)
- Not currently undertaking mental health treatment

Measures

Baseline	• Demographics • Wellbeing measures: GHQ-12, PCL-C, WEMWBS, WHOQOL-BREF
Baseline + 1 month	• App feasibility & acceptability: MAUQ and app usage • Semi-structured interviews (full app group only) • Wellbeing measures
Baseline + 2 months	Wellbeing measures

Recruitment



Funding

This project has been funded by Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT), a charity founded in 2011 by a £35 million endowment from The National Lottery Community Fund to award grants, commission research, and support projects to help enable a successful and sustainable transition for the UK Armed Forces Community.

