Abstract:

Mobile apps are an evolving trend in the medical field. To date, few apps in an oncological context exist. The aim was to analyze the attitude of health care professionals (HCPs) toward telemedicine, mHealth, and mobile apps in the field of oncology. We developed and conducted an online survey with 24 questions evaluating HCPs’ general attitude toward telemedicine and patients using medical mobile apps. Specific questions on the possible functionality for patients and the resulting advantages and disadvantages for both the patients’ and HCPs’ daily clinical routine were evaluated. A total of 108 HCPs completed the survey. In all, 88.9% (96/108) considered telemedicine useful and 84.3% (91/108) supported the idea of an oncological app complementing classical treatment. Automatic reminders, timetables, and assessment of side effects and quality of life during therapy were rated as the most important functions. In contrast, uncertainty regarding medical responsibility and data privacy were reasons mostly named by critics. Most (64.8%, 70/108) were in favor of an alert function due to data input needing further clarification, and 94% (66/70) were willing to contact the patient after a critical alert. In all, 93.5% (101/108) supported the idea of using the collected data for scientific research. Moreover, 75.0% (81/108) believed establishing a mobile app
could be beneficial for the providing hospital. A majority of HCPs are in favor of telemedicine and the use of oncological apps by patients. Assessing side effects can lead to quicker response and thus lower inconvenience for patients. Clinical data, such as life quality and treatment satisfaction, could be used to evaluate and improve the therapy workflow. Eventually, a mobile app would enhance the patients' relationship to their treating department because they are in permanent contact.