



EMPOWER

BUILDING THE WORLD'S MENTAL HEALTH WORKFORCE

EMPOWER is a not-for-profit effort of Harvard Medical School's GlobalMentalHealth@Harvard initiative.

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Our mission is to empower anyone, anywhere, to master the delivery of evidence-based psychological treatments and behavioural interventions.

THE CHALLENGE

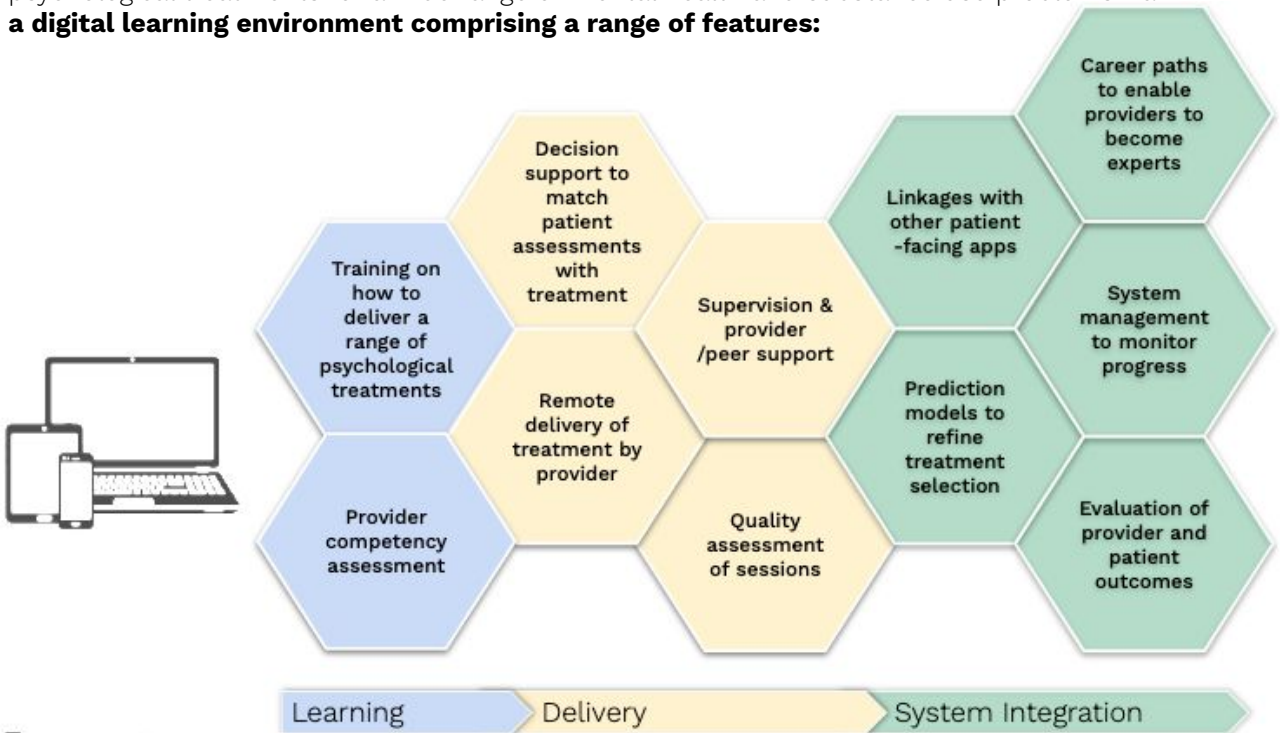
Over **1 billion people worldwide are currently living with a mental health or substance abuse problem**, and this number is expected to escalate as the economic implications of the **COVID19 pandemic leads to rising unemployment, increasing poverty and inequality**. Despite the abundance of evidence showing that psychological treatments are potent interventions for these problems, there is virtually **0% coverage globally**. Major barriers are the low numbers of mental health professionals, the high cost of psychological therapies and the reliance on in-person training and expert supervision which are very resource-intensive. This old-fashioned approach will not meet the massive and rising burden of mental health care needs in the wake of the pandemic. We need a radically different approach to address this crisis, which emphasizes science, scalability and equity.

THE OPPORTUNITY

- Mental health is recognized as an **area of need** in many countries and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
- Brief treatment protocols and training programs have been developed to **enable non-specialists to deliver treatments** and achieve impressive recovery rates
- **Digital training is effective** to build competencies and provide remote supervision
- **Non-specialists such as community health workers** are recognized frontline mental health care providers by the WHO and many countries
- **Peer-to-peer models** for supervision and quality assurance are highly effective

THE SOLUTION

EMPOWER will enable non-specialist health workers to learn, master, and deliver evidence-based brief psychological treatments for a wide range of mental health and substance use problems via **a digital learning environment comprising a range of features:**



Our initial offerings are focused on depression (including maternal depression), adolescent mental health problems, and early child development. Ultimately, the platform will offer training and delivery support for a wide range of evidence based psychological treatments, including for humanitarian crises, harmful drinking and autism.



For details, contact: sheena_wood@hms.harvard.edu or view our plans [here](#).