

A tablet-based device for substance use and physical activity screening: spontaneous use in primary care waiting rooms

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Background

- Screening and brief intervention for unhealthy substance use in primary care is challenging.
- Electronic devices may help clinicians to deliver screening and brief interventions to their patients, but spontaneous use in waiting rooms may be limited.

Aim

- Evaluate the spontaneous use of a tablet-based device for substance use and physical activity screening

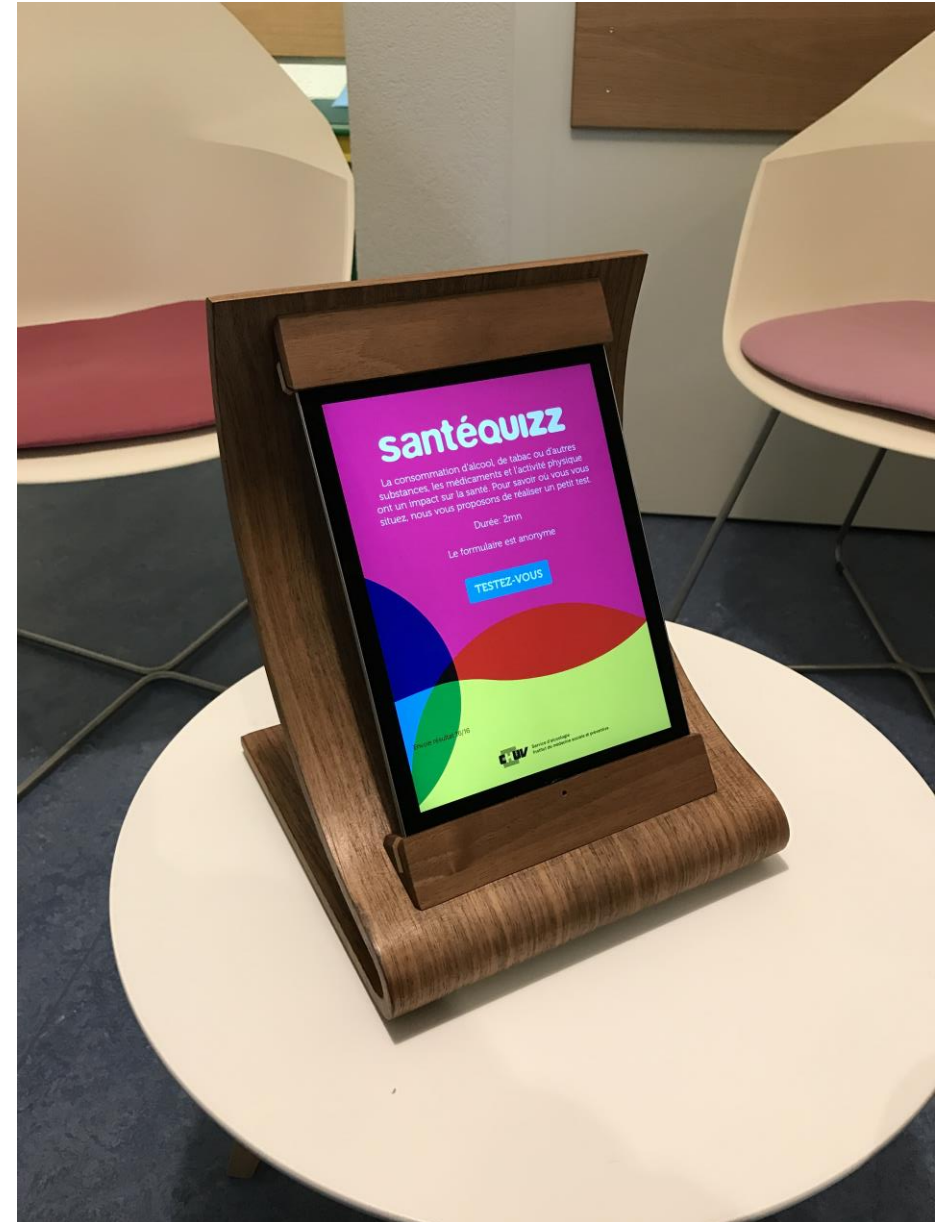
Methods

- We developed a tablet-based device specifically designed for primary care practices waiting rooms.
- The device offers screening for tobacco, illicit drugs, prescription drugs, physical activity
- Those screening positive for unhealthy alcohol use have the option of completing an electronic brief intervention.

Methods

- In February 2017, we recorded the number of patients attending 4 primary care practices, the number of patients completing the screening and screening results.
- On random half-days, a research assistant was present to offer patients to use the device, allowing for comparison between spontaneous and assisted use of the device.
- When the research assistant was not present, a poster invited patients to use the device.

Device





1781 patients attended the practices



1501 patients attended while the RA was not present



Used the device: n=243 **(16.2%)**



280 patients attended while the RA was present



Used the device: n=99 **(35.4%)**

Differences in users profile

	<i>N</i>	ALL	SD/%	NO RESEARCH ASSISTANT	SD/%	WITH RESEARCH ASSISTANT	SD/%	DIFFERENCE PRESENT/ ABSENT
	342							
FEMALE GENDER		208	60.6%	154	63.1%	54	54.5%	0.14
MEAN AGE		46.1	17.2	44.5	17.1	49.9	16.9	0.009
POSITIVE SCREEN TOBACCO USE	328	124	37.8%	95	41.3%	29	29.6%	0.04
POSITIVE SCREEN UNHEALTHY ALCOHOL USE	324	180	55.6%	132	58.4%	48	49.0%	0.11
POSITIVE SCREEN DRUGS	323	30	9.3%	26	11.5%	4	4.1%	0.04
POSITIVE SCREEN PRESCRIPTION DRUGS	320	75	23.4%	59	26.3%	16	16.7%	0.06
UNSUFFICIENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	310	158	51.0%	113	52.3%	45	47.9%	0.5

Access to brief intervention

	ALL	SD/%	NO RESEARCH ASSISTANT	SD/%	WITH RESEARCH ASSISTANT	SD/%
DETAILS ON BRIEF INTERVENTION ACCESS:						
UNHEALTHY ALCOHOL USE	180		132		48	
REFUSED TO ANSWER	37	20.6%	30	22.7%	7	14.6%
COMPLETED THE QUESTIONS BUT DID NOT LOOK AT FEEDBACK	49	27.2%	30	22.7%	19	39.6%
BRIEF INTERVENTION COMPLETED	94	52.2%	72	54.5%	22	45.8%
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY						
UNINSUFFICIENT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	158		113		45	
DID LOOK AT FEEDBACK	71	44.9%	54	47.8%	17	37.8%

Conclusion

- Spontaneous use was lower compared to assisted use
- There was a self-selection of patients with tobacco and drug use who appear more likely to use the device.

Next steps

- Further (ongoing) testing in additional practices (total of 10)
- Focus group with participating physicians