



# Digital Approaches to Supporting Student Mental Health: Key Considerations for Michigan Community Colleges

*Mental Health Improvement through Community Colleges*

MITRENDS  
Resource  
Highlights

As community colleges navigate how to support increasing rates of student mental health challenges amidst limited institutional resources, many colleges are exploring innovative approaches to enhance mental health service availability. One strategy for expanding student access to mental health support is the use of third party mobile mental health apps and web-based resources, commonly referred to as Digital Mental Health Interventions (DMHIs).

As DMHIs have gained popularity among colleges and other organizations, the market of available DMHIs has grown exponentially, with new platforms and features appearing regularly. It is important for colleges to critically consider if a DMHI is right for their campus and to thoughtfully evaluate which DMHI might best meet their needs based on the services provided, likelihood of student engagement, and cost. This resource is designed to help colleges assess if a DMHI could be a good fit for their campus and navigate the fast-changing landscape of available tools.

## Key Takeaways



DMHIs offer several potential benefits in terms of increasing equitable student access to mental health care, but are not a one-size fits all solution and have several limitations.



DMHIs should be considered as part of a comprehensive approach to supporting student mental health, and do not replace the need for in-person individual counseling.



When determining whether a DMHI may be a fit for their campus needs, colleges should evaluate the mental health needs and preferences of their students, and assess for how a DMHI might fit within any existing gaps in the current landscape of available campus and community mental health services.



Colleges should critically assess data on individual DMHI's cost, effectiveness, utilization, and technical standards when selecting a DMHI vendor.



Thoughtful and strategic implementation is critical for successful student usage of a DMHI.

## Determining the DMHI for Your Campus



What services are offered by the DMHI?



What platform does the DMHI use?



If the DMHI provides counseling services, what does this counseling entail?



What service requirements or wait times will students face when using the DMHI?



What is the DMHI vendor's pricing model?



What usage limits exist, and what does this mean for students?



Does the DMHI have proven effectiveness?



What data is available on student utilization and student perspectives of the DMHI?



What data does the DMHI share with colleges?



What is required to implement the DMHI?

## Continued Reading

Access the full version of this toolkit, available at [MITRENDS.org](https://mitrends.org), for further information on DMHIs.



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