



About the Study

The use of digital technologies in healthcare is becoming standard practice, and using digital techniques to assess diets is no exception. A digital approach to dietary assessment could deliver the following benefits: (i) accurate estimates of nutritional intake, (ii) saving time conducting assessments during consultations, (iii) facilitate the remote monitoring of patients, (iv) improve patient self-management, treatment satisfaction and quality of life.

The aim of this study was to assess the usability and acceptability of myfood24® within a dietetic outpatient setting, funded by the British Dietetic Association.

Methods

Patients were asked to record at least 3 days of food diaries, at least 1 week before their appointment with their dietitian.

Patients were assessed for readiness to use new technologies and their ability to manage their health. They were also asked to complete questionnaires on system usability and acceptability.

Dietitians completed a questionnaire to compare myfood24 with usual care, including duration and content, as well as an acceptability questionnaire.



“Patients and dietitians were positive about the new type of consultation, which showed the potential to improve quality of care and save time.”

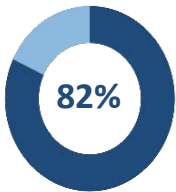
Patient Benefits

Empowerment and Personalised Care

The nutritional feedback provided directly to patients empowered them to feel more confident, motivated, better informed, reassured and more in control.

Patients felt that using myfood24 allowed their appointments to be more time efficient, personalised and gave them more time for discussion and education.

The patients also felt that future appointments could then be shorter or less frequent as a result.



patients used myfood24



minutes

time saved in one third of appointments



over half spent less time on assessments

Results

Food Diary Completion

82% patients completed at least 1 food diary, and 74% completed at least 3 diaries. All but one patient preferred using myfood24 compared to paper-based assessment methods.

Receiving the nutritional analysis reports and having the opportunity to discuss these with their dietitian was the main motivation for patients completing their food diaries.

Receiving tailored advice drove patients to accurately record their diet, of which the portion images and portion descriptions on myfood24 helped them to do so.

Dietician Benefits

Time Saving and Accuracy

On average, 13 minutes was saved in one third of all appointments. And in half of all appointments, time spent assessing diets was reduced, which meant more time was spent on patient education as a result.

Most believed that myfood24 provided a more accurate record and assessment of patients' diets compared to current practices.



Enhanced Features

Since the study was conducted, myfood24 has been tailored for a clinical setting, including the following enhancements:

- Patient food diary app
- Nutritional feedback provided in real time to patients and dietitians
- Reference values can be personalised for clinical need, age and sex
- Significant expansion of the food database
- Specialist enteral feeds have been added

Study Reference

Gianfrancesco, C, Taylor, C, Croot, L. Self-completed online dietary recalls as an alternative method of dietary assessment for dietetic outpatient appointments: A feasibility study. *J Hum Nutr Diet.* 2022; 1– 13. <http://doi.org/10.1111/jhn.13047>

"In addition to the tool being used for dietary assessment and education, it was also helpful for engaging people in self-care... which brought about a noticeable shift in self-management behaviours and motivation."

Better Care

Education and Self-Management

The nutritional feedback provided was used as an educational tool, and promoted discussions with patients about food swaps, portion sizes and sources of specific nutrients.

The dietitians also saw a positive shift towards patient self-management and motivation, due to being more engaged in self-care. Health literacy and ownership also improved with patients using myfood24.

Conclusion

Both dietitians and patients felt myfood24 could improve quality of care and save time. It was deemed feasible and acceptable to use as part of clinical care.

Key benefits to dietetic care were:

- More accurate dietary assessments
- Fast access to detailed nutritional analysis
- Shorter appointments
- More time for patient education.