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Feel partners with University School of Medicine to drive mental health research forward

Executive Summary

The neurology and psychiatric clinics of the **University of Athens in the Aiginiteio University Hospital** are innovators and a great supporter of healthtech initiatives that promote new ways of managing and preventing mental illnesses.

The 1st Department of the Psychiatry Clinic collaborated with **Sentio Solutions** on various research projects to validate the hypothesis that a combination of objective data based on biosignals and online mental health support can transform the way we prevent, diagnose and care for mental health.

Here's how Feel proved the effectiveness of their innovative program and the impact it had on the participants' life satisfaction.

About the University of Athens Aiginiteio Hospital

The University of Athens Aiginiteio Hospital was founded in 1904. It is the largest neurological and psychiatric hospital in Athens, Greece and a pioneer in the field of medical research. Since 1963, the hospital has also housed the neurology and psychiatric clinics of the 1st Department of Psychiatry of the University of Athens which is famous for its leading research.



Technology has made it easier than ever for people to receive mental health support from the safety of their homes. Our clinic has been a pioneer and great supporter of such initiatives and we have worked with various technology teams over the years. Feel was one of the programs that we have successfully collaborated with for research purposes. It is very important to feel that we are not alone.



said Dr. Charalampos Papageorgiou, Professor and Director of the Department of Psychiatry of the University of Athens

The Challenges

Mental healthcare is one of the most pressing issues globally, and there is an **urgent need for easily accessible mental health support**. Demand already outstrips supply as a shortage of therapists means individuals are experiencing up to 4 months delay to receive treatment.

On top of that, there is a **lack of objective and continuous data** in the mental health field that would allow for better treatment methods and real-time interventions.

The Aiginiteio University Hospital was looking for an **innovative solution** to incorporate technology to drive better outcomes for mental health patients. They also wanted to **test** whether providing **real-time interventions and online mental healthcare** to people suffering from chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes would drive better life expectancy outcomes.

The Collaboration

The **Psychophysiology Lab** was interested in including the **Feel Emotion Sensor** in their protocols and guidelines so that **they could enhance the data they collect**, leverage Sentio Solution's biomarker expertise and explore **how the conditions** they are studying **are correlated with biosignals**.

Sentio Solutions wanted to leverage the hospital's psychiatric expertise and gain access to study populations of interest.

Together the teams have built a **recruitment process** and **assessment protocol**, which will highlight Feel's outcomes, and are currently running **multiple research projects** that are studying the impact of different conditions and protocols and guidelines on physiological data.

Also, in April 2020, during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Psychiatry of the University of Athens joined forces with Feel, to develop a useful guide to help people prioritize their mental health, manage their excessive worry and insecurity about the future. The guide included practical tips and advice for a healthy state of mind and was followed up with a series of free webinars on diverse topics hosted by licensed therapists.

Their joint vision is to be able to find ground-breaking correlations between physiological data and various cognitive & mental health conditions.

What is Feel?

Feel is a comprehensive, **16-week mental wellbeing program** for those experiencing **chronic stress, anxiety**, or **mental health challenges**. The program consists of 4 components:

- **Feel Emotion Sensor**

The Feel Emotion Sensor is a wristband that monitors the person's physiological signals throughout the day and learns to recognize your emotional patterns.

- **Feel Provider**

Weekly, 15-minute online sessions with a dedicated mental health expert, are included in the program. The Feel Provider will have reviewed the user's Feel Emotion Sensor data to provide tailored support.

- **Feel Mobile App**

The Feel Mobile App connects to the Feel Emotion Sensor and responds, in real-time, to changes in emotional state. It also provides access to emotion journaling, exercises, and resources.

- **Lifetime Mental Health Resources**

Unlimited lifetime access to original educational resources that have been tailored for this program. This useful material is based on neuroscience, biopsychology, and evidence-based techniques such as Mindfulness. Every week users will receive new, customized resources such as exercises, reading material, and helpful techniques to support you in strengthening your motivation, gain awareness and build resilience.

The Study

In conjunction with the Aiginio University Hospital, Feel's Research and Development team conducted various studies.

A group of volunteers, who were **over 18 years old** and recently **diagnosed with mild or moderate Major Depressive Disorder (MDD)** and/or **Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)** took part in the 16-week pilot study.

Exclusion criteria for participation were; severe MDD and/or GAD, bipolar disorder, psychotic disorders, personality disorders, comorbid disorders, psychotropic medication, substance abuse, and any other medication affecting the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS), i.e. Medicine for cardiovascular disease, etc.

The study was looking to:

- Show that the bio-signals strongly correlated with the functioning of the ANS and a person's emotional status can be measured
- Establish that evidence-based techniques are as effective when administered digitally as traditionally
- Measure participant engagement levels
- Evaluate the impact of the program on the participants' life satisfaction
- Validate the effectiveness of the program and its effectiveness to reduce the depressive symptoms

Key results & insights

The results to date are promising.

Both the therapists' feedback and the testimonials of the participants showed that **Feel helped the participants** and they were grateful about this solution.

The psychotherapists were able to receive continuous data on their client's emotional state meaning that **they could personalize their guidance** based on real-time objective data, which allowed them to be up to **four times more efficient** at managing issues.

Also, the user engagement with the Feel app was 5 times higher compared to traditional evidence-based techniques, while life satisfaction levels improved by more than 35%.



What program participants said



Feel has helped me get to know myself better and become more aware of my feelings.



The program has many interesting and helpful aspects. It helped motivate me, define my emotions precisely and break through negative thought patterns.



Everyone can benefit from Feel. I think that every participant can take something from it for themselves.



In my opinion everyone who works in a stressful professional field can benefit from the program.

About Sentio Solutions

Sentio Solutions is a San Francisco based company, which develops **biomarkers and digital therapeutics** to **change** the way we **diagnose, manage** and **care for mental health**. The company's premier offering Feel, combines its proprietary Feel Emotion Sensor with evidence-based techniques to bring a **data-driven approach** to the field of mental health for the very first time while providing **real-time interventions** to those in need of emotional and mental health support. Sentio Solutions is backed by top VC firms and has kicked-off deployments with large Health & Life insurers in the USA and Germany. Feel is also involved in many active research projects in collaboration with universities.

To arrange a demo contact us: feelbd@feelprogram.com

Note: *The results of this study are preliminary and do not guarantee that the final result will be the same. The results are based on a study that was conducted in Athens, Greece between Jan 2019 and Sep 2020 along with the 1st Psychiatric clinic of the Aiginiteio University hospital. The findings below relate to a sample size [n=20].*

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The final results will be published separately, once the study is finalized. If you have any questions about this publication or the study, please contact us at info@myfeel.co.