

New app will help people with serious mental illness develop a crisis plan

8 October 2020, by Glenn O'neal



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A new mobile app, My Mental Health Crisis Plan, allows individuals who have serious mental illness to create a plan to guide their treatment during a mental health crisis. The app was developed by SMI Adviser, an initiative administered by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The app provides an easy step-by-step process for individuals to create and share a psychiatric advance directive (PAD). A PAD is a [legal document](#) that includes a list of instructions and preferences that the individual wishes to be followed in case of a mental health crisis. My Mental Health Crisis Plan allows individuals with serious mental illness to:

- Clearly state treatment preferences, including treatments, such as medications, to use and those not to use; preferences for hospitals; and preferences for doctors and other mental health professionals.

- Decide who can act on their behalf by designating a trusted person (sometimes referred to as "health care agent," "proxy," or "health care power of attorney") as a decisionmaker on their behalf. Some states require appointment of a decisionmaker to carry out the PAD instructions.
- Identify who should be notified in the event of a [mental health crisis](#).
- Share the plan with others, including doctors, other members of the care team, and family and friends.

The app includes state-specific requirements for completing the PAD (such as signatures, witnesses, notary public), and allows it to be shared via PDF or QR code with whomever an individual chooses.

"A psychiatric advance directive is an important tool for individuals with serious mental illness to be able to plan ahead and have some control over their treatment at a time when they may not be able to make decisions," said APA CEO and Medical Director Saul Levin, M.D., M.P.A. "The My Mental Health Crisis Plan app provides a simple, convenient and effective way to create and share a psychiatric advance directive. We are pleased to partner with SAMHSA in creating this important technological tool for people with [serious mental illness](#)."

More information: My Mental Health Crisis Plan is available in the [Apple App Store](#) and [Google Play](#). View videos on [What is a PAD?](#) and [How to Use the App](#). More information at: <http://SMIadviser.org/mymhcp>.

Provided by American Psychiatric Association

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