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An evaluation of digital intervention for perinatal depression and anxiety: A systematic review

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Abstract
Digital intervention has been shown to be helpful in improving perinatal mental health. However, the design characteristics of such interventions have not been systematically reviewed. Considering that a lack of support—especially from a partner—is one of the major contributing factors to perinatal depression and anxiety, it is crucial to determine whether digital interventions have included partner participation. In this review, we systematically examined the design characteristics of digital interventions related to perinatal depression and anxiety and aimed to determine whether partner participation was incorporated as part of the interventions. Based on the PRISMA 2020 guidelines, five databases (PubMed, EBSCO, Cochrane, ProQuest, and Scopus) were searched. Narrative results of design characteristics were developed to provide a framework for the design and evaluation of the studies. A total of 12 intervention studies from China, Sweden, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, Norway, and the United Kingdom were included. Across all studies, internet cognitive behavioral therapy and mindfulness therapy were overwhelmingly utilized as the major intervention approaches. While all studies reported reduced depressive symptoms after the intervention, only four studies reported subsequent decreased levels of both depressive and anxiety symptoms. Only one study included partner support in the intervention. Cognitive behavioral therapy and mindfulness therapy, two of the most common intervention approaches, were found to be effective in alleviating perinatal depression and anxiety. Partner participation should be prioritized in designing digital interventions to ensure comprehensive and easily accessible social support for persons in need. © 2024 the Author(s), licensee AIMS Press. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0)

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