

## CASE STUDY

### NLP Enabled Mental Health Chatbot

## THE CHALLENGE

The demand for access to mental health services is currently higher than capacity to service it, so effective triage is vital. Currently clinicians triage using questionnaires when a person presents to an NHS service.

When they present, their frame of mind will typically be stronger than it normally is, as they need to have the courage to present themselves with a potential condition that carries with it social stigma. It was felt a tool that people could use to answer relevant questions outside of a clinical setting would be worthwhile.

## THE COLLABORATION

To meet the challenge, we developed an easy-to-use automated Chatbot to gather information from patients.

A senior clinician in the area of mental health guided the development of the Chatbot from a clinical perspective.

Staying within NICE guidelines the clinician worked with the system architect and developers to design, and test the bot.

The Chatbot provides a free, open source solution to augment clinical practice across the country.

"We have the largest GP network in London and triage 100,000 potential mental health patients per year. The time we expect it to save is significant.

The benefits of getting more clinically relevant data about patients condition are clear"

Dr Aumran Tahir, General Practitioner

## BENEFITS

The bot replicates existing practice and meets NICE guidelines. It provides clinicians with a scalable means of gathering relevant data in a way that has benefits for the patient too. A person concerned about their mental health no longer needs to attend a NHS site to share clinically relevant data. We estimate that the chatbot will save two hours of a patient's time, and one hour of a clinician's, for every instance of triage.

It has been recognised that a chatbot can be used to engage potential patients in a clinically relevant dialogue. Talking therapies are key to the delivery of mental health solutions. Clinicians recognise that keeping people well using bots is an option worth exploring if they can be seen to replicate socratic dialogue.

View the Chatbot - <http://mhchatbot.code4health.org>

