

## 5 Useful Apps for Pulmonary Rehab - TRANSCRIPT

Happy New Year everyone! On this episode, I wanted to talk about some apps that you may find helpful to use in your pulmonary rehab practice. I'm going to tell you about 4 that I know well, and one that I've never used but plan to! Two are useful for getting connected with the pulmonary rehab community, two are useful for clinical practice, and one has utility for both! [And for full disclosure, I'm not financially associated with these apps, although an app I developed is hosted on one of these tools].

The first one is from a company called QxMD. This is a medical app company that is based where I am, in Vancouver, Canada, and the app is called **Read by QxMD**. This app searches the literature for research articles based on categories that you create when you set up your account. It will then display articles that match your search, are published, and then format them in a way that makes it easy to read on your phone, tablet, or computer. The articles you can read will depend on what kind of access you have already in your professional setting. If you are affiliated with a university, then you can provide the necessary details in the app and you'll be able to access any article that you normally could through your library. If you don't have access through an institution, then you'll be able to read open-access articles through the app.

When you first set up the app, it will ask you to select categories of interest. For the most part, these are medically-based. Select as many as you wish, but later on you can also create keywords that will help to identify research that is more relevant to you. You can create keywords such as "pulmonary rehabilitation", "COPD", "patient education", "telerehabilitation", whatever. You can also select favourite journals, and receive all the articles for those journals for each issue.

What I like about this app is that it gives you a quick snapshot of the current research being published in pulmonary rehab. Even if you only have time to read the title and abstract, you'll get a sense of the latest research. But for me the big plus is that the article is re-formatted to be readable on a smartphone – that means that you can easily read an article without the hassle of downloading, printing etc. I know that the chance of me reading it goes way up if I can make it a bit more accessible for myself. You can also save or tag articles for future reading.

The next app I'd like to talk about is --- **Twitter!** I know that Twitter has been around a long time. But its relevance to pulmonary rehab may not be that clear at first look. Twitter is a great way to get connected with the pulmonary rehab community. So many clinicians, researchers and policy makers share their knowledge about pulmonary rehab via Twitter. The QxMD Read app is focused on published research, but if you want to connect with pulmonary rehab beyond the research community, Twitter is great. People do post about research papers recently published, but you'll also hear about what people are doing with their program to boost awareness in their community, or they will share resources they have found helpful in delivering pulmonary rehab. If you are wondering to who to follow, a good place to start is to follow the American Thoracic Society - Pulmonary Rehabilitation Assembly's twitter account, which is @PR underscore Assembly. I'll put their handle in the show notes. Then, see the people that the Assembly's Twitter account is following, and select those who you think are relevant. And of course, feel free to look at my account as well, which is @UBCPulmRehabRes. I've been pretty quiet on Twitter lately but it's a New Year's Resolution to post more! So I hope to see you there.

The next two apps are for clinical practice. The first one, I haven't used, but when I posted to Twitter asking for app recommendations, Prashna Singh, a PT in pulmonary rehab from Toronto, suggested the

app called **iWalkAssess**. The app was developed via a collaboration between the University of Toronto and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada. I haven't used it, but from what I can see, it has the instructions for conducting the six minute walk test and the 10 meter gait test, including the ability to record the patient results and compare the results against reference norms. You actually use it during the test, so it has the specific instructions and encouragement for the patient displayed during each part of the test. There are also demonstration videos you can view, which are really helpful. Even though it was developed for patients with stroke, it is very relevant for pulmonary rehab. Check it out!

The other clinical app is from the QxMD company as well. This one is called **Calculate by QxMD**. This one is more relevant for the general medical community rather than being specific to rehab in any way, but there are some helpful tools on there. The app I developed for AECOPD-Mob, the clinical decision-making tool for exercise for people with an acute exacerbation of COPD, is on there – in both the Physical Rehabilitation and Medicine section, and the Physiotherapy Section. There are also tools related to calculating BMI, or the BODE index. The BODE index is a prognostic tool in COPD that provides a better indication of overall status beyond just lung function. There are also many COVID tools on there, including screening tools and guidance documents. There's a frailty assessment tool (in the Geriatrics section). There are mental health screening tools. There is even a tool on work-life balance. Have a look, you may find something useful in there, especially if you work in clinical areas other than pulmonary rehab.

And the fifth one I'd like to suggest to you is one that you may be sick of by now given how we have all had to communicate for the last couple of years! And that app is **Zoom** (or really, any secure video-conferencing system). But I'd like you to think more broadly about how you can use it to connect with patients, the public, and your rehab community. As you probably know, Zoom offers free videoconferencing up to 40 minutes, so you can use it even if you don't have a license, with up to 100 participants. 40 minutes is plenty long enough to do most things! So what could you do? Where permitted, you can use it to facilitate pulmonary telerehabilitation. Even if you don't have the capacity to offer the exercise portion of rehab via Zoom, you could use it for education sessions. You can also host public webinars or collaborate with your local lung association to host an info session about pulmonary rehab. People may not know much about the benefits of rehab, where the program is, and how to be referred. You could use Zoom to link with other rehab programs and build your own "community of practice". You could do this with really any program worldwide – as long as its convenient for you to meet. You could work with your local physicians and host a rehab information session with them. They are more likely to attend if they just need to sign on and listen in, versus travelling somewhere. And, of course, with your account you are also able to access the wide array of resources related to rehab that are available to you, including webinars or seminar series. If you know of universities with medical schools, often they have seminars which are open to everyone via zoom. It just takes a bit of exploring to find something that is a good fit for you. But I do want to mention that as great as Zoom is, it is also pretty easy to shut your camera off, do something else, and not engage. So I would encourage you to make that extra effort, when you can, to participate when you attend any online events. Introduce yourself, ask questions, make comments, and meet others working in the area. It will be a lot more fun and you will build a true community of practice going forward.

I hope you feel inspired to check out these apps and see how they fit with your clinical practice. Of course, there are thousands more out there to explore, many of which are free to use, or require a

nominal fee. Where there's a need, there's probably an app to address it. So be curious! Try out these suggestions and feel free to contact me through the lungFIT website if you have other suggestions.

Until next time, stay well everyone!