

MindTech Healthcare Technology Cooperative seminars: Purpose, process and ways of working

Purpose

The primary purpose of the seminars is to learn about, discuss and debate new scientific developments around technology for mental health. They include sessions on MindTech projects, other technology projects taking place at the University and Institute of Mental Health and also invited external speakers working on technologies for mental health in other settings.

As MindTech is a diverse, multi-disciplinary group, the seminars provide an opportunity to learn more about the wide range of interests and expertise relevant to development, evaluation and implementation of technology for mental health.

We're aiming for a friendly, informal atmosphere where the details of a particular technology, project or related issues can be discussed and debated by those taking part. We expect a dynamic conversation allowing new ideas to be generated and exchanged between participants.

In addition, the seminars provide opportunities for PhD students and other junior staff associated with MindTech to develop their presentation skills in a friendly and supportive atmosphere.

Process and ways of working

Location and frequency - Monthly seminars held at the Institute of Mental Health, Innovation Park, usually 4.00-5.30pm on the third Wednesday of the month.

Usual topics - Technologies for mental health, related research projects or discussions of overarching issues.

Expected audience - MindTech team, other interested University and Institute of Mental Health staff, MindTech Reference Group.

Chair - Members of the MindTech team take turns in chairing the seminars. Their role is to welcome the participants, introduce the topic and speaker and manage the discussion with contributions from the audience. The chair will aim to cover a range of issues during the discussion and may intervene to move the discussion on to another topic if that does not happen naturally. The range of issues discussed and the time spent on each aspect will vary according to the particular topic. It is likely to include:

- Technological aspects
- Ethics of the technology / research
- User-focus and clinical need
- Regulatory and governance issues
- Implementation in practice

Presenters – The presenters are usually members of the MindTech team, other University staff and students researching technology for mental health. Occasionally, people external to the University and Institute of Mental Health will be invited to present. Presenters are usually be invited to talk about their work for 20-30 minutes and allow plenty of time for discussion afterwards. It is helpful for the presenter to give some background information about themselves, for example, their discipline and all relevant experience (including any outside of research/technology). The presenters may also highlight specific questions or issues

about which they are seeking ideas and discussion. Presenters are asked to be mindful of the mixed audience and provided with guidelines for presenting to a lay audience. In particular it is important to explain any technical terms or jargon (e.g. acronyms).

Discussion and questions – Unless the presenters and Chair have arranged an alternative format, only questions for clarification are to be taken during the presenter's talk. In the open discussion after the presentation, it is expected questions and comments focus primarily on the content of the topic under discussion. We want to create a safe environment where people can develop their presentation style and confidence in participating in the discussions, therefore all participants are encouraged to ask questions and participate in the discussion. When doing so, it is important to:

- be mindful that the audience has varied backgrounds and in particular, explain any technical terms or jargon (e.g. acronyms)
- be aware the chair will be aiming to make sure a range of different issues are discussed during the session
- give any feedback on the style of presentation and dynamic of the discussion in person at the end of the seminar (see final section below).

General principles for conduct

- Meetings start promptly and finish on time.
- Respect and value that everyone is different and will think differently about things.
- Do not expect that all the content of the seminars will be of direct interest to everyone attending – but we hope 'earwiggling' into the range of discussions will be engaging and informative.
- No question is a 'stupid question' – given the range of backgrounds and experience with technology, if you are puzzled, others in the room are likely to be too!
- If you don't understand what someone is saying – ask them to explain or repeat it.
- Use plain and simple English, avoiding jargon and abbreviations.
- While it is the responsibility of the chair, to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute to the discussion, it is the responsibility of the participants to support the chair in this role.
- Only one person to speak at a time - please try not to interrupt another person when they are speaking.
- Be aware that covering your mouth when speaking might make it difficult for others to hear what you say or to read your lips.
- Switch off mobile phones.

Keeping the process under review

At MindTech we want to ensure the seminars are useful, productive and pleasant experiences for all participants. Therefore, we are keen to receive feedback to improve the process and conduct of these seminars. Evaluation sheets are available for any participants to give us feedback. Alternatively, participants can feedback to the seminar Chair or other MindTech team in person either directly after the session or at the next available opportunity.