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**American Telemedicine Association Partners with ORCHA to Launch Review Process
in the U.S. to Ensure Patients Have Access to Safe and Effective Apps**

85% of Health Apps in the U.S. Do Not Meet Quality Thresholds

WASHINGTON, DC and DARESBURY, UK, OCTOBER 15, 2020 – The [American Telemedicine Association](#) (ATA) today announced a new partnership with [ORCHA](#) (Organization for the Review of Care and Health Apps) to create a review process for the U.S. to enable healthcare providers, insurers, and employers to give patients access to safe and effective health apps. ORCHA’s automated, intelligent review engine allows healthcare organizations to assess thousands of apps against more than 300 measures in order to build and manage a health app program. The partnership was announced today during the [ATA’s special half-day event](#) at the [HLTH VRTL](#) conference.

“The proliferation of health apps has created challenges for healthcare providers and patients seeking to find the most appropriate, safe, and effective health apps to monitor their health and wellness, maintain a healthy lifestyle, and securely collect and transmit personal health information. We are delighted to partner with ORCHA to address this critical need and give both patients and providers greater confidence in selecting safe and effective apps,” said Ann Mond Johnson, CEO, the ATA. “Chat-based interactions and asynchronous tools are an important component of telehealth offerings and can help ensure that everyone has access to safe, effective, and appropriate care when and where they need it.”

The ATA will work with ORCHA to develop a review process and criteria that meet the specific needs of the U.S. market. App developers will be able to have their app reviewed against ORCHA’s more than 300 measures. If the app meets the criteria, it will be added to the ATA library of approved apps. Health providers, insurers and employers will be able to use this trusted platform to build their own dedicated health app library with high quality apps suitable for their patients.

“This partnership will enable healthcare providers to better spot the best health apps from the hundreds of thousands available in app stores. It can also arm clinical staff with the software that will enable them to connect the right apps with the right patients at the right time,” added Liz Ashall Payne, CEO, ORCHA.

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ORCHA has evaluated more than 4,000 health apps currently available in the U.S. against its criteria and found only 15% meet quality thresholds. Most apps fail to meet healthcare, security or usability standards established to safeguard patients. Such quality standards apply across apps for all health conditions, from fitness to heart conditions. For example, ORCHA has assessed 584 apps designed to support people with mental health conditions and found only 29.6% meet quality thresholds.

“There are many safe and effective health apps built by U.S. innovation companies that have the potential to help individuals create and sustain healthy habits, monitor health conditions, and share important personal health information with their providers, family members, and caregivers,” said Joseph C. Kvedar, MD, President of the ATA; Professor, Harvard Medical School; and Editor-in-Chief, npj Digital Medicine. “The mission of the ATA is to create access to quality care for all individuals and this is another important step, ensuring people have access to safe and appropriate digital health apps.”

Health apps offer immediate and convenient access to personalized and engaging health support. Thanks to the rise in smart phone ownership, 19% of Americans have downloaded or used health care apps and more than 8 in 10 rate health apps as either very or somewhat helpful. Yet, app stores have no regulation or criteria in place to help patients and providers select health apps that best suit their needs.

About the ATA

As the only organization completely focused on advancing telehealth, the [American Telemedicine Association](#) (ATA) is committed to ensuring that everyone has access to safe, affordable, and appropriate care when and where they need it, enabling the system to do more good for more people. The ATA represents a broad and inclusive member network of health care delivery systems, academic institutions, technology solution providers and payers, as well as partner organizations and alliances, working to advance industry adoption of telehealth, promote responsible policy, advocate for government and market normalization, and provide education and resources to help integrate virtual care into emerging value-based delivery models. Visit the [ATA COVID-19 Resource Center](#).
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About ORCHA

The [Organization for the Review of Care and Health Apps](#) (ORCHA) is the world’s leading, independent digital health evaluation and distribution organization. It helps health and care organizations to deliver the right digital health apps, to the right people, at the right time. Its unique insight, assessment, and implementation services are improving the health of the population, the health of our health systems and the health of the health app ecosystem. ORCHA conducts reviews for government organizations across Europe, the Middle East, and Australasia. In the UK, ORCHA conducts reviews for the NHS and is part of the NHS National Innovation Accelerator Programme.