

APTA Digital Health Formulary, powered by ORCHA

APTA and the [Organization for the Review of Care and Health Apps, or ORCHA](#), have developed a collection of digital health apps and other products for the physical therapy profession that ORCHA has independently and objectively assessed for safety and effectiveness. The APTA Digital Health Formulary, powered by ORCHA, is exclusive to association members and gives you a single source for choosing among quality-assured digital health tools to use and recommend to your patients and clients.

You'll find the formulary on APTA's website at <https://www.apta.org/your-practice/practice-models-and-settings/digital-health-in-practice/apta-digital-health-formulary-powered-by-orcha>. Once you've established a free account, you'll be able to choose, use, and recommend the formulary's apps — including Apple, Android, and web apps — by the click of a button. You also can send out text messages or emails to recommend apps to individual people and keep track of everything you recommend, as well as create lists of your most recommended apps.

Because your recommendations are tracked, you can review them to address any issues with recommending or using an app. You are protected from liability through a full audit trail, and before downloading a recommended app, you must agree to a disclaimer stating that you as the recommender are not liable for issues that may arise.

By recommending only the apps approved and listed within the formulary, ORCHA says risks are exceptionally low. Since 2015, ORCHA has yet to experience an issue of patient harm caused by an app that passed the assessment process and appeared on an ORCHA platform.

For technical support, email hello@orchahealth.com.

About the Assessment Process

Before adding any product, ORCHA assesses it against over 400 standards and regulations to see if it meets standards in these three main areas:

- Data and privacy — whether the app manages, shares, stores, and removes data securely, and who can access the data.
- Clinical assurance and safety — whether potential risks of harm to patient health have been accounted for, if appropriate professionals have been involved in developing the app, and if there is sufficient evidence collected to support its use.
- Usability and accessibility — whether people can use it easily and effectively, taking into account users' physical or mental needs, such as level of visual acuity or digital literacy.

Assessments are based on the Digital Health Assessment Framework, developed by ORCHA, the American College of Physicians, and the American Telemedicine Association. Digital health products must achieve a score of over 65% in all three areas to be eligible to appear on ORCHA platforms.

After receiving information about an app from its creators, ORCHA uses a combination of technology (its ORCHA Assessment Review Engine) and human assessors to review it. Once ORCHA shares the app's assessment score with the creators, they have 10 days to give feedback. After 10 days, if the app has passed the assessment, then it's eligible to be added to a formulary.

ORCHA reassesses health apps and digital health technologies annually plus every time they are updated. If an app has not been updated for 18 months, it is considered out of date and no longer safe for use, and ORCHA removes it from its platforms.

If you know of an app that you don't see in the formulary, you can find out its status. Email hello@orchahealth.com with the name of the app and a request to know if the app was assessed and, if so, the reason it wasn't added to the formulary. You can expect a response within three business days.

If the app has not been assessed and you would like it to be, ask to have it submitted for review, which takes approximately 20 days. There is a small fee to submit an app for assessment, but products can't simply pay to be included in a formula; they must pass the assessment.

About ORCHA

ORCHA has been assessing digital health products since 2015. These digital health products include iOS (Apple) apps, Android apps, and web apps. Through the assessment process, ORCHA helps digital health suppliers, such as app developers, create or improve their digital health products.

ORCHA also creates platforms, such as the APTA Digital Health Formulary, to share the assessment results and other information about digital health products. These digital health app libraries and formularies help give healthcare professionals and organizations the confidence to recommend digital health products to their patients and the public.

Use With RTM Codes

ORCHA is aware that the 2022 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule added five CPT codes for remote therapeutic monitoring, allowing PTs to bill these codes when they use RTM medical devices that meet the FDA definition of a medical device to collect non-physiological data.

APTA and ORCHA have highlighted apps with RTM code capability, so that users of the APTA Digital Health Formulary can optimize their use of such devices using the products in the formula.

Is there training available on how to use the formulary?

You can view a recorded session of our [ORCHA-APTA App Library Training](#) and/or request to have a group training session with customersuccess@orchahealth.com.