



## **mySMART Diary: The first online app to support therapists in managing patients with eating disorders has been launched.**

- ***It is the first international online app that uses artificial intelligence to treat patients with this type of disorder.***
- ***The online app was created in collaboration with Microsoft Italia and Almawave. The first to implement it will be the psychotherapy department of the Psychiatric Services of the Graubünden Canton (Switzerland) and the UOC of Child and Adolescent Neuropsychiatry unit of Bologna's regional healthcare system.***

**Rome, October 1, 2024** - The [Foundation for Digital Sustainability](#), the first recognized research foundation in Italy dedicated to exploring the environmental, economic, and social impacts of digital sustainability, presents [mySMART Diary](#), **the first international online app of its kind**, developed to help psychologists, psychiatrists, and child neuropsychiatrists improve the condition of patients suffering from **eating disorders**.

In recent years, eating disorders have shown a worrying increase, more and more frequently affecting children between the ages of 12 and 14. It is more common among girls than boys, with a ratio of about 9 to 1, but the number of male adolescents suffering from these disorders is also rising. In Italy, it is estimated that approximately 3 million people suffer from eating disorders. In 2023, 3780 deaths were recorded related to this condition, making it the second leading cause of death among young people, right after road accidents. (Source: Ministry of Health).



*“mySMART Diary was created as part of the Digital4Aid program, a charitable initiative promoted by the Foundation with the support of partners from the States General for Digital Sustainability. The objective is to develop innovative solutions on an annual basis that, through digital sustainability, are able to tackle the challenges posed by the 2030 Agenda’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), demonstrating how digital technology, when approached correctly, can be an essential tool for sustainability,”* said **Stefano Epifani, President of the Foundation for Digital Sustainability**.

*“This project demonstrates how it’s possible to develop social initiatives by harnessing the enthusiasm and expertise of employees within our companies who, when connected with one another, are able to generate enormous social value. With Digital4Aid, we’ve channeled positive energy towards a common, tangible, and measurable goal,”* emphasized **Francesco Castanò, Deputy Director General of ACI Informatica and member of the Foundation for Digital Sustainability’s steering committee**.

[mySMART Diary](#) is the first project that this ambitious program has delivered to the community.

*“mySMART Diary is a digital diary designed to support individuals suffering from eating disorders, allowing them not only to track their eating habits, but also highlight underlying emotional and relational issues,”* explained **Giuliano Castigliero, Scientific Director of mySMART Diary as well as a specialist in psychiatry and psychotherapy and a member of the Foundation for Digital Sustainability**. *“The app is a very useful tool for therapists (psychiatrists, psychologists, and child neuropsychiatrists) because it provides us professionals with a wealth of medical and psychological information at a glance, freeing up time and resources for better patient care, and invites patients to improve their ability to understand their own emotions and those of others. I’m truly happy to have seen my proposal so enthusiastically received, both by the community of the States General and, of course, by the Foundation,”* concluded **Castigliero**.

The project, which uses artificial intelligence tools and mentalization models, is aimed at therapists working in centers for eating disorders. It was created in collaboration with [Microsoft Italia](#), which provided the AI platform, and [Almawave](#), which developed the application, the conversational interfaces on its platform, and the analysis dashboard. The project was also made possible thanks to contributions from [Deda.Next](#), [DXC Technology Italia](#), [R1 Group](#), and [Sopra Steria](#), partners of the [States General for Digital Sustainability](#), an initiative of the Foundation for Digital Sustainability which assists the CIOs of large public and private companies in understanding how digital transformation can support sustainability.

*“Artificial intelligence is transforming our society in extraordinary ways, and its ethical and responsible use can create unprecedented opportunities across all sectors and fields. mySMART Diary is a tangible example of how this technology can have a positive impact on people's lives. We are proud to have contributed our solutions and expertise to this important project,”* commented **Matteo Mille, Chief of Sales Enablement & Operations for Microsoft Italia**.

*“The application of AI to projects like mySMART Diary clearly shows how digital technology can make a difference, not just in terms of efficiency, but also in terms of human and social impact. Thanks to AI, it’s possible to provide personalized support to individuals dealing with eating disorders, making it a valuable ally for both therapists and patients while also freeing up time and resources for more compassionate and in-depth care. Almawave and its parent company Al maviva have always been*

*committed to technologies that put people at the center,”* explained **Valeria Sandei, CEO of Almawave.**

On the one hand, mentalization - the technique on which mySMART Diary is based - is increasingly proving to be a scientifically grounded and validated psychological and psychotherapeutic methodology, capable of having a significant positive impact on major mental health disorders. On the other hand, the most advanced artificial intelligence systems are proving to be extremely useful in the medical and psychological fields as well. While they cannot replace therapists, these tools support, integrate, and refine professional practice. Furthermore, by incorporating gamification, they make accessing diagnostic and therapeutic processes more attractive, especially to younger patients.

### How mySMART Diary works:

The [mySMART Diary](#) project is, first of all, based on the principle of tracking eating habits in the treatment of patients with eating disorders. The primary feature of the online app is to allow users to digitally record their eating habits in a digital food diary. Patients can use their smartphone to record their food-related behaviors and to make a note of the event which they believe triggered or influenced that behavior (for example, an argument or an inner conflict) and what emotions they experienced at the time.

The type of eating behavior, the prompting event, and the emotion felt create a “trigger” that activates the artificial intelligence. The AI then suggests a specific story for users to read, selected based on the previously provided information. These stories may come from fables or episodes of TV shows that talk about the subject or that resonate with today’s youth. It invites users to grasp the main message of the story and, subsequently, to identify with the characters, reflecting on what they would have done in that character’s place, what thoughts they would have had, and what emotions they would have experienced when taking certain actions.

Through this dialogue, the artificial intelligence develops an understanding of the narrative provided by the patient and, thanks to this interaction, is able to develop a mentalization profile in order to assess the individual's ability to understand their own thoughts and emotions, as well as those of the people they interact with. The mentalization profile is then made available and displayed on the therapist's dashboard, allowing him to compare it with his own impressions and clinical evaluations and thereby facilitating his work.

Thanks to artificial intelligence, [mySMART Diary](#) also makes it possible to develop a meta-profile for that patient in order to understand whether, in a given period of time, there have been any improvements or setbacks in their ability to mentalize.

The online app will soon be tested by the psychotherapy department of the Psychiatric Services of the Graubünden Canton (Switzerland) and by Bologna’s regional healthcare system.

Great care has been taken with two specific aspects: user privacy and the overall sustainability of the application. In relation to the first point, mySMART Diary uses a “stateless” artificial intelligence engine, meaning that it does not retain memory or context from past interactions during a session or between different sessions. Each request or input is handled in isolation and independently, without keeping track of what has been said or done previously. In relation to the second point, the

application was developed in accordance with the UNI 147:2023 guidelines developed by the Foundation itself for UNI, the Italian Standardization Authority.

*“mySMART Diary is an innovative tool that helps patients easily and effectively track their eating habits. This app serves as a valuable complement to treatment by promoting self-evaluation. mySMART Diary is a cutting-edge tool that helps both therapists and patients achieve the best results and significantly improve care,”* said **Rahul Gupta, Director of the Center for Psychiatric Disorders in Chur.**

*“In recent years, mental health issues among children and adolescents have increased dramatically, both in number and complexity. This has imposed the need for greater collaboration between various institutions in an effort to identify new methods and strategies for the early detection of needs and innovative courses of treatment. Connecting with the Foundation, being a part of this network, and participating in this innovative project provides incredible opportunities to Bologna’s regional healthcare system, and in particular the complex Child and Adolescent Neuropsychiatry unit. With the help of artificial intelligence, support will be provided to therapists in order to optimize treatment for users, in this case focusing on nutrition and eating disorders. Especially for those who work with patients in the developmental age, having access to innovative digital tools that use modern communication channels well known to children, makes it possible to connect more deeply with their world and understand it better,”* emphasized **Simona Chiodo, Director of UO NPIA Territorial Activity (SC) of Bologna’s regional healthcare system.**

### The roadmap:

[mySMART Diary](#) does not develop or manage any therapeutic approach with patients; rather, it serves as a tool for therapists to improve patients' progress and monitor their developments. In a later phase, the application may evolve, in a controlled manner, to allow users to identify potential risky behaviors early on, increase their awareness about eating disorders, and connect them directly with the most suitable local structures within the National Healthcare Service.

Therapists who are interested in joining the program can send an e-mail to: [mysmartdiary@sostenibilitadigitale.it](mailto:mysmartdiary@sostenibilitadigitale.it)

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### **Contributions from project partners:**

*Deda Next has always been committed to making a positive impact on society through technology. Participating in DIGITAL4AID and contributing to the mySMART Diary project was a natural step in this direction. We believe that technology should be a tool for building stronger and more inclusive communities. mySmart Diary, developed within the framework of the States General for Digital Sustainability, is a solid example of how digital innovation can be used to tackle social challenges and improve people's quality of life,”* said **Fabio Meloni, CEO of Deda Next.**

*"I'm honored to be part of the launch of mySMART Diary, a revolutionary initiative that leverages technology to improve the treatment of eating disorders. This innovative online app represents a significant advancement in providing therapists with real-time tools to monitor patients' progress and address both physical and emotional challenges. By collaborating with leading partners like Microsoft Italia, Almaxwave, and others, we aim to improve the quality of care and make a real difference in the lives of those affected by these complex conditions,"* said **Nicola Mangia, General Manager of the Italy Public Sector for DXC Technology Italia.**

*"R1 Group has always been sensitive to technological, environmental, and social issues. That's why, for the past two years already, we've voluntarily prepared a Sustainability Report. It was natural for us to join the States General for Digital Sustainability established by the Foundation for Digital Sustainability, as we firmly believe in the importance of responsible and sustainable technological innovation. Our active social involvement reflects the group's ongoing commitment to working towards a more inclusive and sustainable future. Supporting the mySMART Diary project demonstrates our desire to enthusiastically continue on the path towards an increasingly ethical and sustainable business model,"* said **Alessia Monteleone, CEO of R1 lease.**

*"The mySMART Diary project represents a significant contribution to promoting and maintaining psychological well-being, particularly in preventing and improving the condition of patients with eating disorders, which unfortunately continue to affect an increasing number of young people. At Sopra Steria, we firmly believe in the potential of artificial intelligence not just as a driver of technological innovation, but also as a tool with which to tangibly improve people's quality of life. Our active participation in social initiatives reflects the group's ongoing commitment to helping to build a more inclusive and sustainable future. It's with this vision that we've joined the Foundation for Digital Sustainability's network, certain that a responsible approach to technological innovation is the key to addressing the challenges of tomorrow,"* said **Stefania Pompili, CEO of Sopra Steria Italia.**

For more information or additional details, please visit: [www.bilitadigitale.it](http://www.bilitadigitale.it)

**About the Foundation for Digital Sustainability:**

The [Foundation for Digital Sustainability](http://www.bilitadigitale.it) is the first research foundation in Italy that analyzes the links between digital transformation and sustainability with the objective of supporting institutions and businesses in building a better future. Its mission is to study the dynamics driven by digital transformation, especially with regard to the impacts on environmental, cultural, social, and economic sustainability. Within this context, the Foundation conducts research, provides insights and interpretations regarding digital transformation, offers practical guidance for the stakeholders involved, identifies the trends of change, and analyzes the impacts of these trends with respect to sustainable development. The Foundation operates through a network of independent experts, institutions, businesses, and universities.

In addition to its members and partners, the Foundation is supported by a network of universities that provide the expertise essential for developing its projects. This collaboration serves as a virtuous example of cooperation between institutions and businesses in the development of projects and activities dedicated to digital sustainability. Among the universities in this network are: **Sapienza University of Rome, the University of Pavia, Ca' Foscari University of Venice, the University of Cagliari, the University of Palermo, the University of Florence, the University of Trieste, the University of Perugia, the University for Foreigners in Perugia, the University of Siena, Carlo Bo University of Urbino, the University of Turin, the "S. Pio V" Institute of Political Studies, and the University of Sassari.**

**Communications Department:**

Laura Castellazzi  
[laura@primapagina.it](mailto:laura@primapagina.it)  
mob. +39 351-8739212

Vilma Bosticco  
[vilma@primapagina.it](mailto:vilma@primapagina.it)

## **Microsoft**

Microsoft helps organizations implement their digital transformation projects with new innovation scenarios, such as cloud computing and artificial intelligence. The company's mission is to support people and organizations around the world in achieving more through technology and digital solutions. More information about Microsoft is available at <https://www.microsoft.com/it-it/>.

## **Microsoft Italia**

<https://news.microsoft.com/it-it/>  
Chiara Mizzi, Director of External Relations  
[chiararam@microsoft.com](mailto:chiararam@microsoft.com)  
Rita Di Antonio, Communications Manager  
[rdiantonio@microsoft.com](mailto:rdiantonio@microsoft.com)

## **Burson**

Marta Grassini  
[marta.grassini@bcw-global.com](mailto:marta.grassini@bcw-global.com) – Tel. +39 346-9565753  
Valeria Valenti  
[valeria.valenti@bcw-global.com](mailto:valeria.valenti@bcw-global.com) – Tel. +39 328-1932734

## **Almawave**

Almawave S.p.a is an Italian company, listed on the Euronext Growth Milan (AIW.MI) market, active in the Data & Artificial Intelligence field. The group possesses proprietary technologies, solutions, and services that harness the potential of AI in the digital evolution of companies and public administrations. The group serves more than 400 national and international clients in sectors such as government, finance, energy & utilities, tourism, and healthcare, operating both directly and through partners.

About 450 professionals are part of the Almawave team. The group utilizes AI technology laboratories dedicated to the development of products, platforms, and vertical solutions tailored to various market sectors. Almawave's technological assets, designed and implemented as a model of natural experience in human-machine interaction, enable the interpretation of text and voice in over 40 languages, interact across multiple channels, and analyze data and information with a focus on promoting knowledge and automation for decision support. Furthermore, the centers of excellence allow us to unlock the potential of data within complex contexts, combining expertise in key market frameworks applied to areas such as data management, machine learning, location intelligence, and understanding business processes within relevant vertical industries.

The Almawave framework, part of the Al maviva Group, includes the companies SisTer, The Data Appeal Company, Mabrian Technologies, Obda Systems, Almawave do Brasil, and Almawave USA. [www.almawave.com](http://www.almawave.com)

Almawave Contacts (External Press Office):

**Thanai Bernardini**, mob. +39 335-7245418, [me@thanai.it](mailto:me@thanai.it)  
**Alessandro Bozzi Valenti**, mob. +39 348-0090866, [alessandro.valenti@thanai.it](mailto:alessandro.valenti@thanai.it)

Al maviva Group Contacts:

**Ilaria De Bernardis**, Media Relations Manager, mob. +39 342-9849109, [i.debernardis@almaviva.it](mailto:i.debernardis@almaviva.it)  
**Mariagrazia Scaringella**, Media Relations, tel. +39 06-3993.1, mob. +39 340-8455510, [m.scaringella@almaviva.it](mailto:m.scaringella@almaviva.it)