

# Akili says video game therapy for ADHD works, but it'll need to get in with health insurers to get consumers on board

Article

**Akili Interactive** published full results of a clinical trial, 2020 STARS Adjunct, that **boast** the effectiveness of its video game therapy for children with ADHD, **EndeavorRx**.

- The study included **206** ADHD-diagnosed children ages **8 to 14**. One cohort took accompanying ADHD medications with the digital treatment, and another used only the digital treatment—both groups showed similar and statistically significant improvements on the ADHD Impairment Rating Scale.
- According to parents, **half** of participants **exhibited** stable improvements after one month using EndeavorRx, which increased with a longer duration: **68.3%** of children showed improvements in ADHD-related impairments after two months of using the video game therapy.

**Child psych experts say the stress of remote learning amid the pandemic is **exacerbating** ADHD symptoms and spurring new ADHD-related evaluations.** In March of last year, there was a **67%** increase in ADHD diagnoses in patients aged 13 to 17 compared with 2019, according to an Athenahealth study. And requests for providers who specialize in ADHD have jumped **60%** since March 2020.

**The rise of pediatric ADHD diagnoses means many parents will be seeking treatment options—and they're likely to seek out drug alternatives for their children's ADHD.**

- **Some parents are averse to giving their children drugs to ADHD, and meds aren't always the best option for treating the condition.** Common drugs for ADHD are **deemed** safe by many docs, but they still come with possible side effects like sleep problems and decreased appetite. And even if parents opt for traditional meds, recent studies **suggest** a hybrid approach that includes medication and non-medication treatments is best.
- **That means Akili has a solid chance of appealing to a large consumer base on the hunt for non-drug options.** Over **10%** of children have been diagnosed with ADHD in the US alone.

**However, Akili has yet to obtain any coverage by major payers—who will be key in helping stoke adoption via their digital health formularies:**

- **Payers are a major channel DTx devs get their tools to patients.** For example, **Blue Cross Blue Shield** North Carolina is **teamed up** with DTx vendor **Virta** to offer all members under 65 access to DTx for type 2 diabetes. A lack of insurance coverage means there will likely be a high price point for a DTx tool, which could deter some parents from trying it out: Due to a

lack of insurance, a 3-month membership for EndeavorRx **costs** \$450, while traditional ADHD medication **costs** \$85 for 60 tablets without insurance.

- **Payers will only partner with DTx startups pulling out receipts of clinical evidence—which means Akili could be gearing up to strike a deal with a massive payer like Cigna.** For context, payer execs **indicate** the more clinical evidence there surrounding the efficacy of a DTx tool, the higher chance it has tying up with a commercial payer. And considering Akili's latest clinical trial results and the growing demand for ADHD med alternatives, its clinical trial results could help it partner up with a commercial payer like Cigna: Its health services subsidiary **Evernorth** already **includes** DTx tools like **Omada's** and **Hinge Health's**, for instance.

## Akili's EndeavorRx Video Game Treatment for ADHD and Accompanying App



INSIGHT™  
**ADHD**  
our behavior tracking app

**AKILI ASSIST**  
our online support services  
and call center

**Endeavor™**

Source: Akili Interactive

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