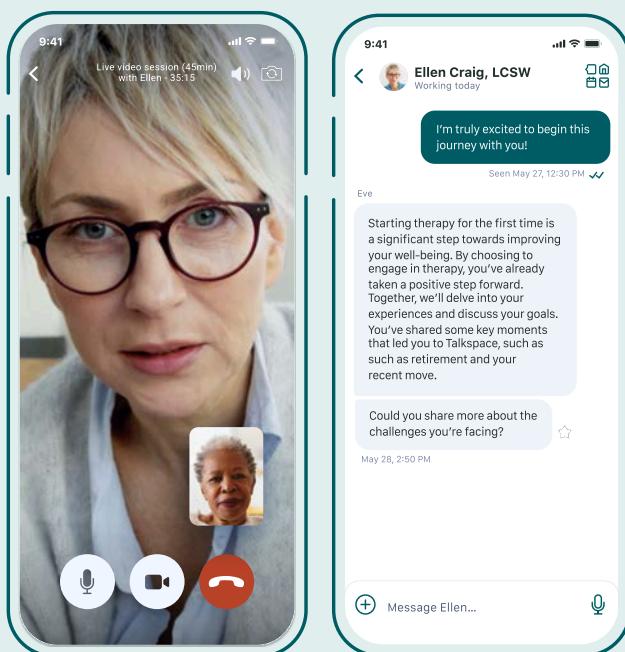


# Older adults are especially responsive to modern therapy

Research demonstrates that older adults efficiently achieve positive outcomes through virtual mental health care.



When they receive virtual therapy, older adults can achieve the same or better outcomes in treating depression and anxiety as younger individuals, but with a lower time commitment. This highlights a key benefit of online mental health care for seniors: the ability to attain impactful results efficiently and effectively.

Despite positive strides in virtual mental health, a significant gap persists in meeting the needs of older adults. Many seniors, who face a high prevalence of mental health challenges, are unable to access traditional care due to barriers like transportation issues, cost, and a shortage of providers specializing in older adults. Talkspace offers a crucial alternative, addressing these long-standing obstacles by providing the convenient and discreet support necessary to empower a vulnerable population that has been historically underserved.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

How do older adults compare to younger adults in engagement and improvement on the Talkspace platform?

Talkspace examined how online therapy is used by people in different stages of life. As part of their care on the Talkspace platform, a group of 1546 clients aged 65 and older and a matched group of 25-36 year olds self-reported their mood and anxiety every 3 weeks for 15 weeks. We used widely-accepted clinical questionnaires, including the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 and the Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7. Talkspace also examined patterns of engagement with therapy between the two groups.

## RESULTS

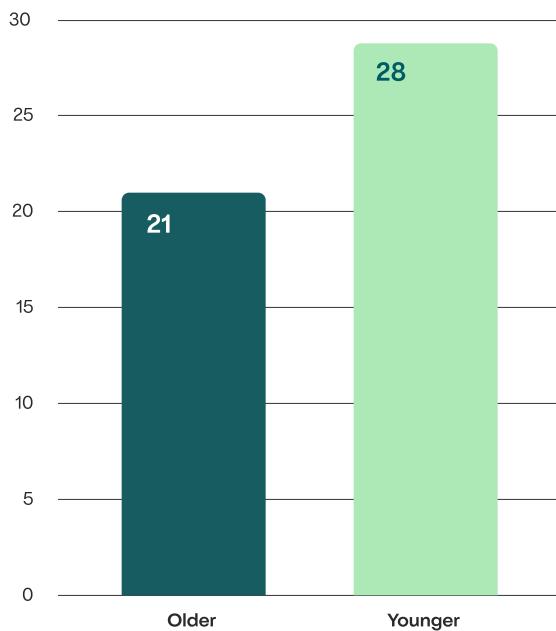
Over the 15 weeks evaluated, older clients spent significantly less time on the platform and actively messaged their therapists on fewer days than younger clients did.

There was **no statistically significant difference** between groups in:

- Client messages sent
- Weekly word count
- Live sessions booked
- Live sessions completed

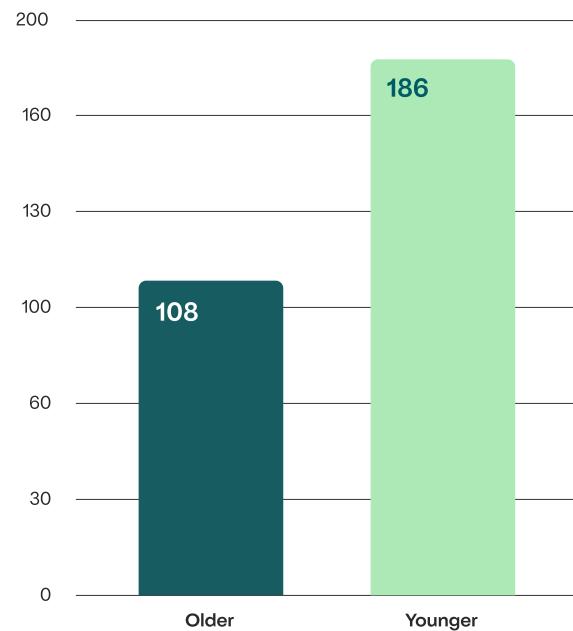
### Active days on platform

$p < 0.001$



### Days on platform

$p = 0.02$



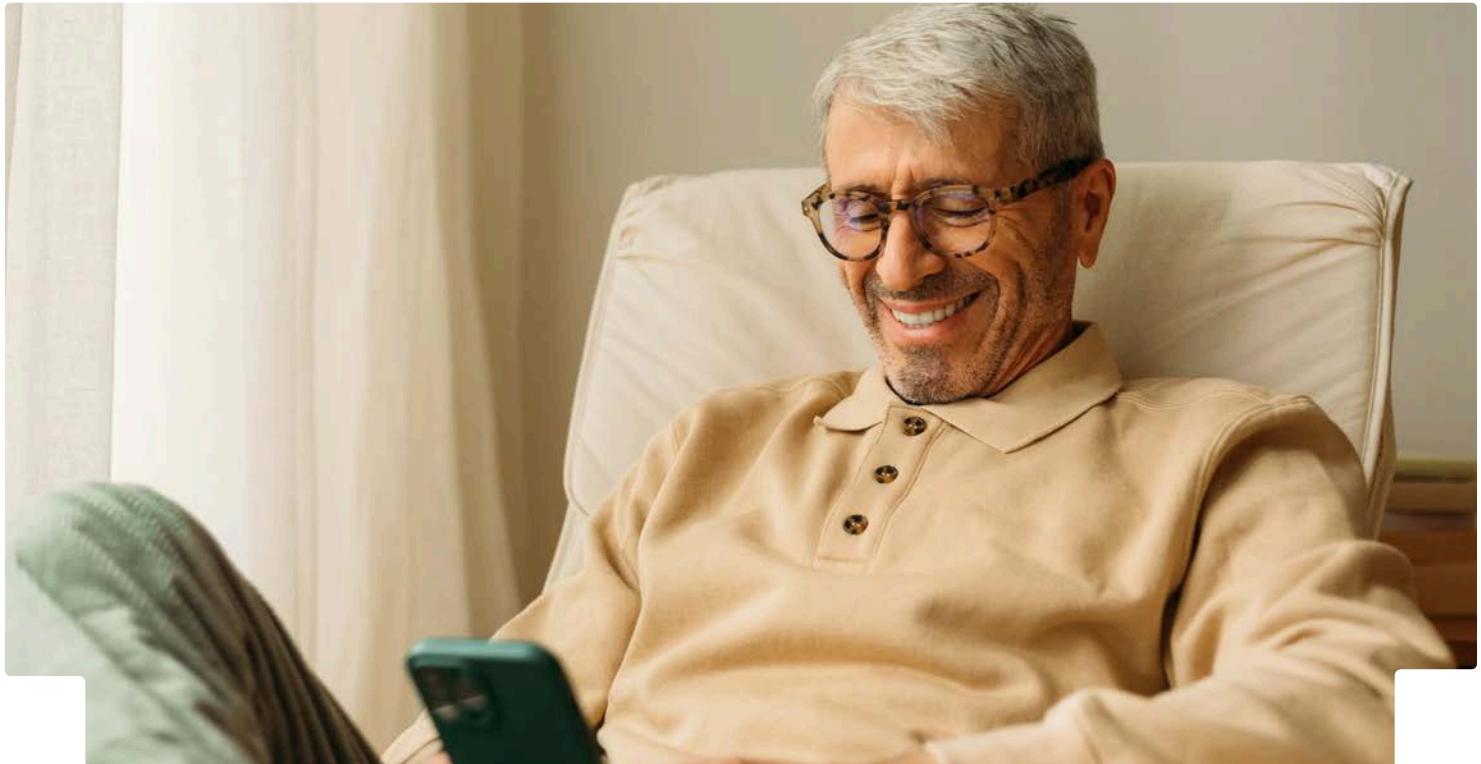
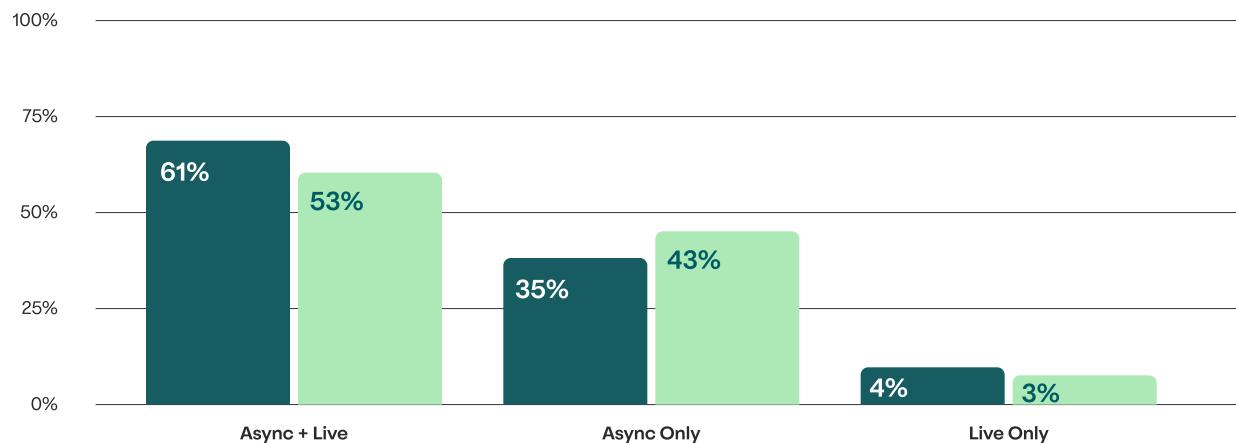
## OLDER ADULTS

Older clients showed a preference for both live sessions with asynchronous messaging (async) compared to younger clients.

## YOUNGER ADULTS

Younger clients showed a preference for asynchronous therapist interactions.

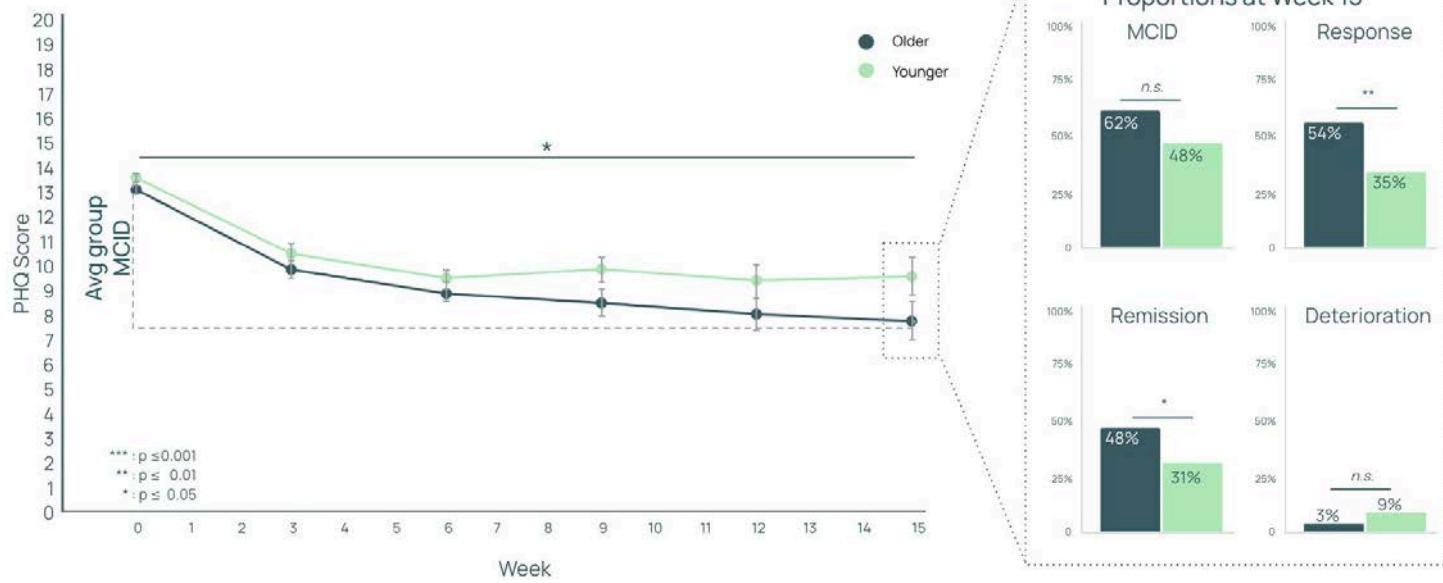
### Engagement type by age group



## DEPRESSION

● Older    ● Younger

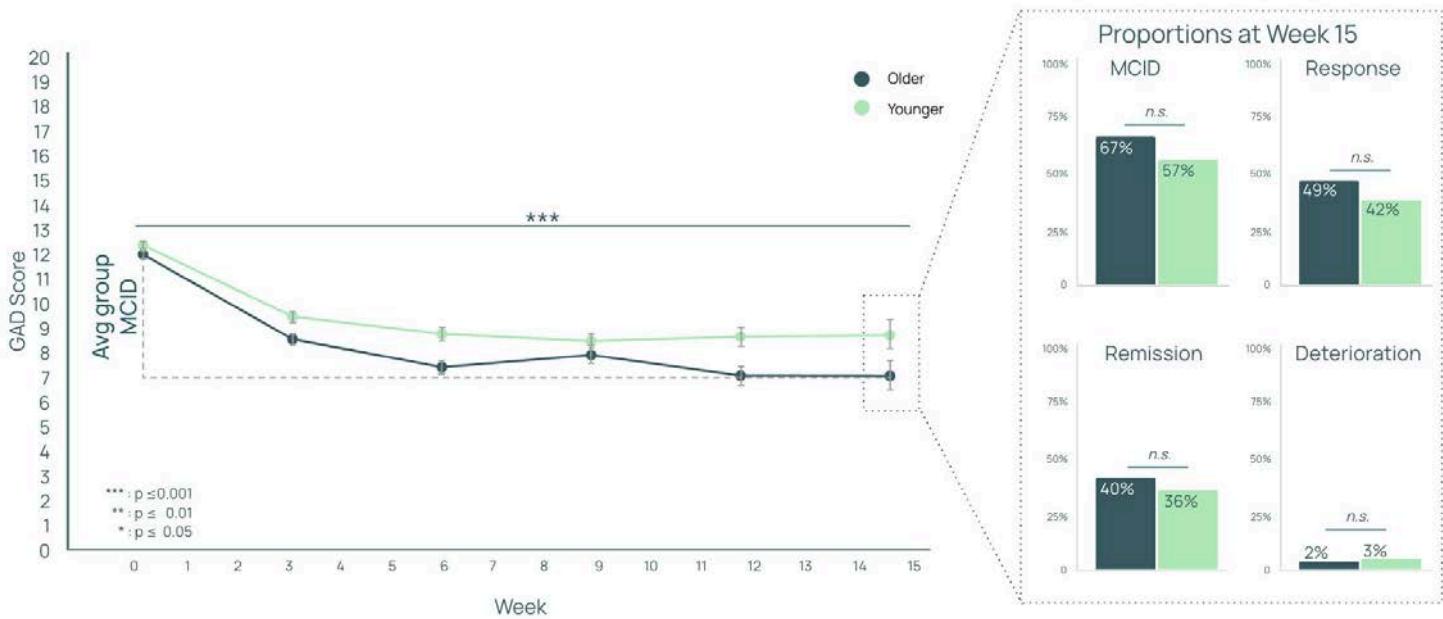
**Older adults show greater improvements in depression scores over 15 weeks than younger adults.** At week 15, a significantly higher proportion of older adults showed response and remission. There were no significant differences in the proportion of individuals who showed MCID or deterioration.



## ANXIETY

● Older    ● Younger

**Older adults show greater improvements in anxiety scores than younger adults.** There were no significant differences in the proportion of individuals who showed MCID, remission, response, and deterioration at 15 weeks.



**Minimal Clinically Important Difference (MCID):** A 5 or greater point improvement from baseline. **Response:** A score less than or equal to 50% of the baseline score. **Remission:** A score less than or equal to 5. **Deterioration:** A score of 5 or more greater than the baseline score.

## CONCLUSION

**Older adults demonstrate the same or better outcomes in depression and anxiety scores after 15 weeks of Talkspace therapy in comparison to younger adults, despite spending less time on the platform and engaging with care on fewer days.**

