

Interactive prototypes as props in workshops to trigger the design of services for dementia rehabilitation

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It is known that physical training can help people with Alzheimer's disease to show less physical limitations and better motoric skills (Neeper et al. 1995). Physical rehabilitation and exercises are included in the services offered by most eldercare organizations. In the CRISP project (ten Bhömer et al. 2012) we are developing new services for rehabilitation of people with dementia, with a focus on the combination of textiles and technology. In a workshop setting we used interactive prototypes to discuss the implications of embedding these new services in the existing services of the eldercare professionals. The prototypes helped to envision new scenarios and additional touchpoints necessary to implement the new service. Further, the different viewpoints of the eldercare professionals triggered new possibilities for the prototypes in different contexts with different target users.



Figure 1: The workshop setting



Figure 2: Future service by one of the participants

During the workshop, a design researcher, two therapists and a care manager evaluated two prototypes (Figure 1). The first one was a shirt that design to

make rehabilitation exercises more fun by using sound feedback, for people with early and moderate dementia. The second one was a blanket with integrated vibration elements that reacts on touch and is used to trigger new communication patterns between a person with severe dementia and another person (partner, family or caregiver). The workshop followed the phases of co-reflection (Tomico et al. 2009) and consisted of a reflection part, in which positives and negatives about the current prototypes were written down. During the ideation part these were used as input to let the participants envision and sketch out their future service (Figure 2). In the confrontation this future service was brought back to reality by creating a requirements list for the next iteration of the prototypes, and a concrete plan to test the prototypes with the indented user group to validate some of the assumptions.

References

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