
Consumer Engagement in Health Technologies Special Interest Group

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Abstract

How do we keep consumers engaged in using health technologies? We welcome all researchers and practitioners who are interested in this question to join us for a spirited discussion, hosted by the CHI Health Community.

Keywords

Health; Medicine; Wellness; Fitness; Health Informatics

ACM Classification Keywords

J.3 Life and Medical Sciences: Health; K.4.1 Public Policy Issues: Computer-related health issues, ethics, human safety, privacy

General Terms

Human Factors, Legal Aspects, Management, Design

Introduction

The wide availability of technologies in the health and wellness domains offers new opportunities for consumers (including patients, caregivers, and people who are seeking to stay well) to become active participants in the management of their own health. For example, diabetes management systems allow diabetic patients to track their own blood sugar levels [4], and activity monitors, such as the FitBit, allow patients and consumers to track their levels of physical activity [2] without direct interaction with providers.

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Numerous websites and smartphone applications allow patients to record, store, and access a variety of health and wellness indicators e.g., [1, 3, 5, 8, 11]. In addition, patient portals in electronic medical record systems, as well as personal health record systems, empower consumers by providing them greater access to their health information [7, 10, 12].

The positive impact of these technologies on consumer health, however, depends on consumers being motivated to use the technologies and remaining engaged with them. A 2011 Pew Research Center survey found that, among American adults who download apps onto their smartphones, only 29% have downloaded any kind of health app [9]. And though, nearly 40% of a convenience sample of online users reported that they would be willing to use a health app more than once a day, 74% of users stop using most apps after the 10th use [6]. Some of the main reasons for app abandonment are poor usability and finding another app. Other reasons include lack of understanding, when designing consumer health technologies, of how these would be used in people's day-to-day lives over the long term[13].

The issues of consumer engagement fit well within the expertise and domain of the CHI community. Building on our collective experience in the social-behavioral and computing worlds, the CHI community can make significant contributions to this area of consumer engagement.

Goals of the SIG

The purpose of this SIG, then, is to bring together members of the CHI Health Community to share experiences and brainstorm ways to increase

engagement among consumers of health technologies. We expect that this SIG will attract a diverse group of CHI researchers and practitioners working on a range of health and wellness projects. Attendees will come from a variety of backgrounds, such as computer science, medicine, medical informatics, and related fields.

Expected outcomes of the SIG include increased dialogue about consumer engagement in health technologies, discussion of how to leverage existing CHI Health Community resources to support work on consumer engagement as it moves forward, and an online report of what was discussed in the SIG.

Examples of Topics to be Covered by the SIG

- Motivation of consumers
- Self-management of chronic conditions
- Relationship with providers
- Usefulness of technology
- Usability
- Designing for unique consumers
- Privacy of data

Format and Schedule of the SIG

To encourage participation and to facilitate attendees getting to know one another, we will use a combination of large group discussion and small group discussions.

Background of Organizers

Karen Cheng is senior research scientist in the Department of Informatics, University of California Irvine and assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry, Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science. Her research focuses on mobile systems of

health interventions and behavior change. She works with underserved populations and in the areas of mental health, maternal and child health, and HIV/AIDS.

Kelly Caine is assistant professor in the human-centered computing division of the school of computing at Clemson University. Her health-related research focuses on privacy-enhanced health technologies, patient empowerment, collaborative health and designing for special populations.

Wanda Pratt is an associate professor in both the Information School and the Division of Biomedical & Health Informatics in the Medical School at the University of Washington. Her published papers span a wide range of topics whose central theme is to understand the problem of information overload in a variety of health contexts and to develop new types technology to address those problems.

Kay Connelly is an associate professor in the Computer Science Department at Indiana University and co-director of CLEAR Health Information. Her research emphasizes health and wellness applications to empower both the ill and the healthy to manage and improve their own health and make healthy choices.

Conclusion

Consumer engagement is critical to the successful adoption and use of health technologies. As increasing numbers of the CHI community are involved in health-related work, this SIG will provide a forum for a timely discussion on this topic.

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