IN INVOLVING CLINICAL STAFF IN THE DESIGN OF A SUPPORT TOOL TO IMPROVE DENTAL COMMUNICATION FOR PATIENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

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DENTAL COMMUNICATION
• Communication is fundamental to successful dental and clinical practice.
• Interaction between the clinician and patient allows the exchange of information.

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES
• Patients may not understand or have little control over their own dental care.
• Strategies include providing simplified written information and using symbols.

STORIES AT THE DENTIST PROJECT
• Investigation of dental communication.
• Aims to develop a computer-based system to support patients with intellectual disabilities when visiting the dentist.

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CONTEXT

A design workshop was conducted as part of a user-centred design process, including multiple stakeholders. Participants were invited to provide feedback and ideas to inform the design of an interface for a software tool to improve communication between dentists and patients.

PARTICIPANTS

Eleven clinical dental staff (four dentists, six dental nurses, one dental therapist).

PROCESS

STIMULUS
A 30-minute interactive presentation entitled "Communication in the Dental Surgery" was given by a Senior Dental Officer, to stimulate discussion. Three stop-motion prototypes were presented by the researchers. (See figure 1).

IDEA DEVELOPMENT
Participants were split into 3 groups and given 30 minutes to design and interface, supported by researchers where appropriate. Paper, coloured pens and Post-it™ notes were provided. (See figure 2). Participants were encouraged to be as creative as they wish and to contribute blue-sky ideas.

IDEA FEEDBACK AND DISCUSSION
Each group presented their interface to the other groups. Participants were encouraged to critically evaluate both their work and the work of other groups. This led to design developments which were noted using Post-it™ notes.

RESULTS

Participants focused on:
• Use of the system before arriving at the dentist, on arrival and during the dental appointment;
• The information exchange between the patient and clinician;
• The customisation of both the information presented and the presentation style.

THE FINAL PROTOTYPE

An iPad interface showing how staff members might access information about a patient’s carer, their likes and dislikes, and treatments that they are due to have.

Figure 1: A stimulus prototype

Figure 2: A prototype developed by participants

Figure 3: The final prototype, showing screens from (left to right) patient-at-home interface, dentist interface and patient consultation interface.

REFERENCES