

Empowering Patients and Families with a Consult Recording App

Linda Watson, RN, PhD, CON(C) and Patrick Curley, MPH, PMP-Alberta Health Services-Cancer Control Alberta (CCA)

The Issue

Patients forget up to 80% of health care information discussed verbally after their clinic visit. Cancer patients have particularly poor recall at their first consult due to the highly emotional nature of learning they have cancer. Poor recall of health care information is a significant barrier to self-management, informed decision making and a patient's ability to partner in care.

The Opportunity

Research shows that patients who record their clinical consult have:

- Better recall of visit information
- Clearer understanding of treatment options
- More active engagement in treatment decisions
- Enhanced wellbeing
- Higher levels of satisfaction with care

The Innovation

Funding was secured from the Alberta Cancer Foundation (ACF) to build a smartphone audio recording app to provide a pragmatic, cost effective, and efficient strategy to empower cancer patients in their own recall and decision making.

The Design

The App aligns with AHS's Patient First Strategy by putting the choice to record their consult in the patient's hands, as evidence shows the desire to record consults is based on personal preference.

Key AHS privacy, legal and communication design principles informed the App design along with specific guiding principles outlined by the Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA).

Making it Happen

User acceptance testing was conducted with a test version of the App which allowed for basic functionality and responsiveness on the participants' own phone or tablet. This simulated functionality allowed participants to move through simple App tasks and functions. Based on patient feedback, revisions were incorporated into the design prior to the actual App build.

Patient Advisors

Feedback in Initial Testing Phase

"Something all patients should have access to"
"Better than just a voice recording, has a place for notes and questions for future appointments"

43% of Patient Advisors said they found their appointments had **"Much too much information to remember and understand"**

66% of Patient Advisors said they would be **"very likely"** to download a free AHS cancer audio recording app

Key Lessons

Patient input throughout the design and build led to valuable modifications.

The patient friendly design had to also have low impact on clinic process.

Alignment of the App with AHS's recording policies enabled a safe environment for audio recordings for both clinicians and patients.

Continuous engagement with clinicians was pivotal in securing their support.

Next Steps

Clinical validation is being completed to understand the key teaching points for both patients and clinicians. Once completed, these points will be delivered to CCA staff and to all new and existing cancer patients.

The App will be made available as a free download. Evaluation of the app's uptake and the impact on clinical practice will be conducted after it is widely available.

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