You’re Never Too Old to Rock and Roll: Developing a Simple Music Player for People with Dementia

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Approach

• Explore the issues that were important to people with dementia and their carers, particularly with regard to their quality of life and well-being.

• Shift focus away from the “problems” of old age and dementia.
• Project examined how participation in a variety of everyday activities can contribute to a person with dementia’s sense of well-being, subsequent quality of life

• Created a “wishlist” for technology development
• Identity and personal history:
  – assist reminiscence using valued objects and images.
• **Enabling relationships:**
  – Encourage personal interaction between a person with dementia and a personal carer in care settings.
• Encouraging social engagement:
  – Help people to interact and engage with the wider community outside the home.
• **Holding a conversation:**
  
  - Help people maintain their train of thought during a conversation by provide prompts at appropriate times.
• **Music:**
  
  – Enhance emotional responses of people with dementia by providing stimulation through music.
• **Supporting activity sequences:**
  – Assist with tasks that involve sequences of operations, such as making a cup of tea, encouraging the user through a series of step-wise prompts.
• **Access to nature:**
  
  – Encourage and enable easier access to the natural environment, or bring nature into the home.
• Creative activities:
  – Help people to continue with valued creative activities such as painting and drawing, and other leisure activities such as knitting.
Technology Development

• A simple music player
• A “window on the world”
• Conversation prompter
• Activity Sequencer
Everybody likes music

• BUT…..
• You might forget that you like music
• You might forget what sort of music you like
• You may forget how to operate the music player
- Many and duplicate controls
- Control Placement is confusing
- Controls look similar
- Labels hard to understand
- Lots of things to go wrong
Simple CD Player

- Automatic start
- High contrast labels

Power indicator

Rocker switch

Lifting tab

Volume

• Automatic start
• High contrast labels
Sessions in care homes
• Tried the music player out in a number of nursing homes
• Very positive response
• Some interesting observations
http://www.e2l.uk.com/SMP/
Thank You

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