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Conference Abstract

Stroke Association Self-Help Assistant (SASHA)

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Abstract

We are creating a personalised, interactive, self-management web application to support stroke survivors along every step of their journey of recovery following the devastation of stroke. It will address huge unmet health and social care needs. There is nothing as pioneering as this available – for stroke or any other long-term-condition.

We are creating SASHA so that a stroke survivor need never be alone in their recovery. It will provide the practical tools to help them self-manage their recovery, alongside peer support to combat isolation – 24 hours a day. SASHA (accessed via mainstream technical platforms e.g. tablets, Macs, PC's, smartphones) will hold trust-worthy information about stroke, in a number of formats. At its core are goal-setting and progress tools that make SASHA personalised and interactive. Peer support is central, with an online forum and stroke survivors' videos populating the package. Family, carers and professionals can also monitor progress, taking note of setbacks and activity as necessary. We have already developed and adapted a prototype following extensive consultation with stroke survivors and commissioners of health and social care services. We are now in the content creation, design and build phase. With user testing mapped out and scheduled for June, the product launch is anticipated for September.

Stroke survivors are the primary beneficiaries for this project. However, once fully developed and evaluated, SASHA could pave the way for the creation of similar tools for any long-term-condition (e.g. arthritis, diabetes, heart disease) - benefitting the UK's 15 million people with long-term-conditions. Following November 2013's NHS Mandate, the NHS must now enable patients with long-term-conditions to self-manage - and specifically to use technology to do this. So, SASHA will help meet one of the UK's most pressing health and social care challenges – i.e. how to effectively support ever-increasing numbers of people living with long-term-conditions, on limited resources.

Stroke survivors will be given the tools to self-manage their recovery. In general self-management helps people achieve realistic health goals and increases peoples' confidence and ability to care for themselves. With SASHA every user will set their own goals and measure their progress based on their specific needs, so outcomes will be different for every stroke survivor. For one it may mean that they no longer feel alone, for another it will help increase their mobility, for another improve their diet and therefore reduce their risk of another stroke. We will measure how SASHA benefits stroke survivors using the same measures as we currently use for our existing Life After Stroke services – i.e. patient-reported outcomes in areas such as 'choice and control', 'health and wellbeing', and 'quality of life'. In addition, SASHA's inbuilt feedback mechanism will enable users to provide real-time feedback on the effectiveness of the tool and benefits they are experiencing. Stroke survivors have been central to the development of the concept and the prototype of SASHA

and told us (via online surveys, conferences, workshops, user-testing) that they will benefit from this product and that they want to use it.

Keywords

stroke; charity; self-management; online

References

SASHA. Available from: <http://bit.ly/1pyMeOS>

PowerPoint presentation:

https://www.conftool.pro/digital-health-care-2014/index.php?page=adminPapersDetails&path=adminPapers&form_id=67
