

Immersive Virtual Reality

Impact on recall for adults with learning disability in the
context of capacity to consent

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Background

- Mental Capacity Act 2005 requires decision-specific consent and evaluation of capacity
- The Cognitive Interview (CI) is a researched instrument for getting best evidence from vulnerable witnesses but its use in capacity interviews is untested
- People with learning disabilities recall up to 63% more witness information with the CI compared with a structured interview (SI)
- Multi-modal learning improves recall significantly in adults with learning disabilities
- People with learning disabilities have the poorest access to health care of all care groups and receive the least comprehensive service

Context

- Government drive to increase access to health care for people with learning disabilities through Health Action Plans (HAPs), hospital liaison nurses and GP awareness
- MCA emphasis on autonomy through valid assessment of capacity and use of best interests where capacity is lacking
- Lord Darzi's 2008 report detailing inclusion ('NHS for everyone'), the importance of consent, dignity and patient control in shared health efforts

Proposal

- Using Second Life (SL), an existing 3D platform, to evaluate the impact of an immersive virtual environment (IVE) on recall of a simulated hospital admission for adults with learning disabilities.
- To evaluate the impact of the cognitive interview in eliciting recall of the exposure experience.
- To gather qualitative experiential and satisfaction data for each condition in terms of engagement with the learning experience (participant questions asked) and view of the process.

Co-Workers

- Prof. Val Hall (University of Brighton)
- Dave Taylor (Programme Lead, Virtual Worlds and Medical Media, Imperial College)
- Eva Jarvis, Chris Bland and users of the Grace Eyre Foundation service

Study Plan

- To expose a small group of adults with learning disabilities to a simulated hospital environment in which they will be able to move around as avatars and interact with equipment and other avatars.
- To gather qualitative data about their engagement with this process, its ease of use and reality impact.
- To use the CI to elicit recall of this experience.
- To gather qualitative data about the impact of the CI, its acceptability to clients as an interview tool.
- To evidence the hypothesised usefulness of the IVE/CI package in enhancing the capacity of vulnerable groups to make decisions about their care.

Anticipated outcomes

- Development of IVE approaches to information giving for adults with learning disabilities and other vulnerable groups
 - Health procedures such as injections, scans, breast, cervical & testicular examinations
 - Treatment options including interviews, psychometric assessments, psychological therapy, & other profession-specific encounters
- Consideration of the use of Second Life for community based interventions such as skills development, support to give evidence, budgeting, social independence and other opportunities that often require health input.

Key references

– Virtual reality research

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– Cognitive Interview

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– Learning Disability

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So far so good, but what's an IVE exactly?

- Introducing the 3D environment
 - Changing faces – and clothes and shape and skin and gender...
 - Local links
 - A Second Health operating theatre

- Second Life is one of a small number of IVEs. OpenSim, still in development, may be a better option for the NHS eventually.

When do we hear about funding?

TOMORROW!!!

Dr Suzanne Conboy-Hill: Sussex Partnership NHS
Foundation Trust