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PROJECT EXAMPLE: "IMANAGECANCER" – INNOVATIVE HEALTH APPS FOR CANCER PATIENTS

Starting situation

Advances in tumour therapy are increasingly making cancer a curable or chronic long-term disease. This poses major challenges for patients and their environment in managing their health, making therapy decisions with doctors and overcoming the illness. More than ever, patients and their relatives are required to assume an active role in the treatment.

Solution

The IBMT-coordinated EU project "iManageCancer" wants to support patients in this with an innovative smartphone platform especially tailored to their needs for health management and patient-empowerment. The iManageCancer platform helps patients to better manage certain aspects of their illness and to reinforce their role in decision processes regarding their treatment. The tools provide support, for example, in medication management; they warn about interactions and contraindication, help patients to understand and administrate clinical documents, evaluate the mental stress on the patient and his/her environment, provide accurate information on therapy decisions, recognize and warn against complications, or help with pain therapy and the necessary lifestyle adaptations. In addition to this, a special role is played by serious games to help, in particular, children to maintain a positive attitude to life and to their illness, or train and motivate adults in dealing with the consequences of the illness. Patients can also involve their doctors and share the self-collected data with them or make their data available for research purposes. The platform is rounded off by a forum for exchange between the persons affected. The work of the IBMT here is concentrated on the development of an expert system known as a "Care-Flow-Engine" that leads doctor and patient through the therapy.

Based on the concept of clinical pathways, the technology should allow oncologists to formulate treatment processes with integrated tasks, decision rules and aids for the user that the system can then personalize and execute for patients and their doctors.

Potential

"iManageCancer" researches and demonstrates how intelligent, informative and entertaining health apps and eHealth services can support the ability of chronically ill patients to manage their illness and take an active role in the treatment process. The apps provide a platform to healthcare providers, funders, patient organizations and health policymakers to provide instruments for the self-management of chronic diseases and to evaluate their efficacy in practice.

Project funding

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<http://imanagecancer.eu/>

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1 App iManageMyHealth (Photo: Bernd Müller).