

Providing Emotional Support to Children under Long-Term Health Treatments

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Abstract : Patients under health treatments that involve long stays at a hospital or health centre (e.g. cancer, organ transplants and severe burns), tend to get bored or depressed because of the lack of social interaction with family and friends. Such a situation also affects the evolution and effectiveness of their treatments. In many cases, the solution to this problem involves extra challenges, since many patients need to rest quietly (or remain in bed) to their being contagious. Considering the weak health condition in which usually are these kinds, keeping them motivated and quiet represents an important challenge for nurses and caregivers. This article presents a mobile ubiquitous game called MagicRace, which allows hospitalized kinds to interact socially with one another without putting to risk their sensitive health conditions. The game does not require a communication infrastructure at the hospital, but instead, it uses a mobile ad hoc network composed of the handheld devices used by the kids to play. The usability and performance of this application was tested in two different sessions. The preliminary results show that users experienced positive feelings from this experience.

Keywords : ubiquitous game, children's emotional support, social isolation, mobile collaborative interactions

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