

Giving voice

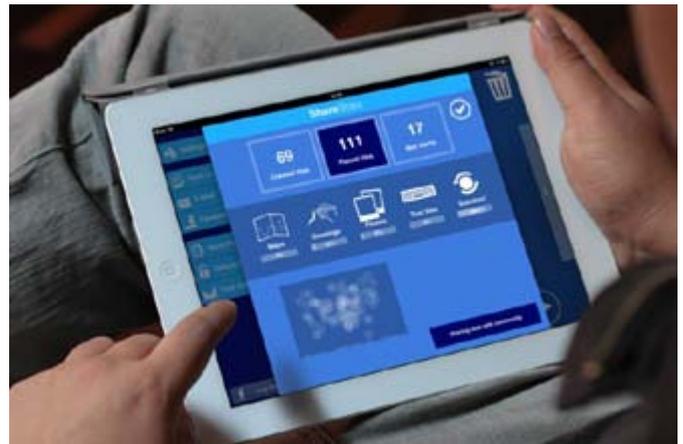
Sebastian Sjöberg

I run a startup dedicated to making difficult communication easier through mobile solutions, by building apps that are anchored in medical practice but founded upon the needs of users and patients.

As no one has failed to notice, mobile apps have become integral to people's lives and this does include healthcare as well as selfcare. Apps that are good and successfully solve a genuine problem are however harder to find, and it has been the endeavour of our startup to make meaningful contributions to the range of medical apps out there. It has been a journey of trials, tribulations and countless iterations.

Mobeoo has built a technology platform that enable patients with aphasia and other language disorders as well as speech and occupational therapists to more easily initiate and maintain rehabilitation. Through mobile apps sprung from the platform, people who have lost parts of their language can start communicating again at the start of treatment. Further on, the apps function as truly mobile communication aides for extended use.

The first insight that struck us in late 2011 when we began the journey was that existing apps of this kind were considerably lacking in either functionality or usability. We set out to deliver both, and took our first steps together with speech therapists and patients from day one and has continued to do so. By listening and learning what established, albeit analog, methods of rehabilitating language disorders consist of we were able to translate that value into a digital form and thereby lowering the thresholds considerably.



If anything, it was a constant process of building new functions only to have them ripped apart by patient testers who were not satisfied. Just like it should be.

Through Sara Riggare and Selfcare Academy we have come to develop new solutions for people with PD, of which the Academy will be telling more soon. As readers of this magazine are well aware, there is an abundance of apps available also here. Many are instruments for measurement and self quantification, but often ownership of collected data is not given to the user. That is an area where a lot of work remains to be done, and something we are privileged to be spending our time on.

Judging by currents from communities such as Parkinson's Movement and others like it, mobile solutions can no longer depend on merely solid functionality and good design (though they are pivotal). Transparency and having the right to one's own data are now becoming crucial factors, as patients demand to not only know what data is collected from apps they use but also being able to view it and use it themselves. Whether it's an app for measuring tremor through tapping tests or medication reminders, patients must own the data and actively choose whether to share it with their physician and the community. Anything less will not be sustainable in the coming years.

With our latest adaptation of our platform we have made our technology accessible to a wider international range of users with language disorders, their speech therapists and relatives. It is called 'Share Voice' and just came out of closed beta testing. We are currently looking for more users to help evaluate our solution, and we would welcome readers of this magazine and PD patients to try it out and give us your feedback. One new feature is data visualization and optional data sharing, and we are looking forward to hearing your thoughts on it. You can download 'Share Voice' to any iPad through its dedicated website, <http://appsthatgivevoice.com/>. It is a free download with inapp purchases, and we would love the opportunity to hand out access codes that unlock the app to those of you who are interested in testing it in a clinical environment