

CASE STUDY 2 - SUPPORTING MENTAL WELLBEING IN LATER LIFE

MENTAL WELLBEING - CAN TECHNOLOGY HELP OLDER PEOPLE LEAD A HEALTHIER AND HAPPIER LIFE?

Two interactive workshops were held over 12 months as part of the THAW (Technology for Healthy Ageing and Wellbeing) project to explore topics relating to technology and mental well-being in later life. Each workshop comprised a tailored program of interactive activities.

Over 40 people participated in the first workshop which was four-hours long. It combined two activities - [technology interaction](#) and [scavenger hunt](#) - with brief presentations on the three THAW PhD projects. The workshop brought together people who would not normally meet and facilitated interaction and discussion about a range of issues relating to late life mental wellbeing. These included the need for more solutions to address the risks of people becoming lonely and isolated as they grow older. The potential of technology was recognised with many participants being pleasantly surprised by the currently available technologies. There was also feedback that there needed to be much greater development and availability of technologies for later life. Several participants highlighted the place of technology in the social context of the individual and that it cannot replace human interaction.

THAW WORKSHOP 1 - ACTIVITIES

TECHNOLOGY INTERACTION

The technology interaction session included various digital medication dispensers (Figure 1), a colour-changing mood lamp (Figure 2).



Figure 1 THAW workshop 1 Technology Interaction - digital medication dispenser.



Figure 2 THAW workshop 1 Technology Interaction - colour-changing light.

SCAVENGER HUNT

As this workshop focused on mental wellbeing the items in the scavenger hunt were selected for their potential relevance. They included an existing mood app, two online mood supports, a telepresence robot (Mantarobot) for interacting with others, and an online game (Scrabble) which could provide connection to other people.



Figure 3 THAW 1 workshop Scavenger Hunt - Rate my mood app



Figure 4 THAW 1 workshop Scavenger Hunt - Elefriends?

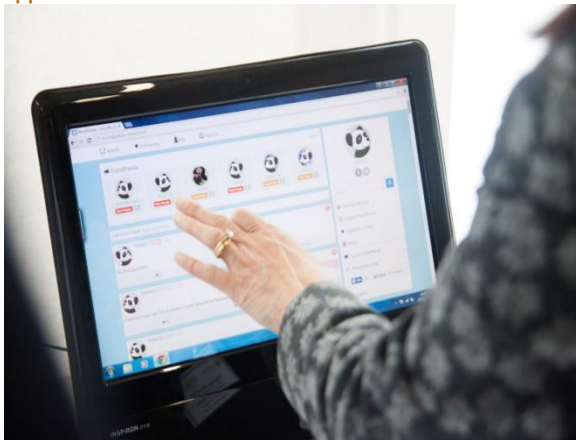


Figure 5 THAW 1 workshop Scavenger Hunt - Mood panda



Figure 6 THAW workshop 1 Scavenger Hunt - Mantarobot (telepresence robot)

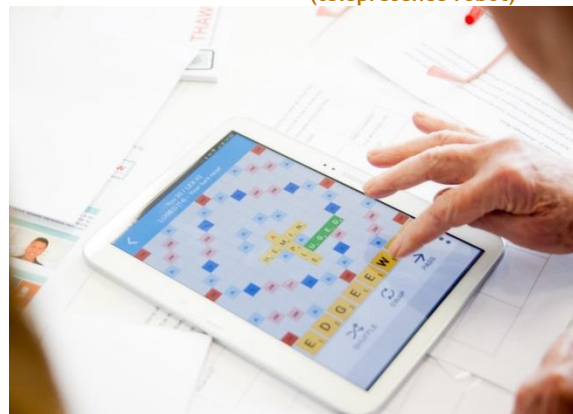


Figure 7 THAW workshop 1 Scavenger Hunt - Scrabble Live.