

# Conversation tool to help cancer patients with treatment choices

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Researchers at the Leiden Institute of Advanced Computer Science (LIACS) are collaborating on the development of a conversation tool for patients with breast, prostate and skin cancer. The aim is to create a conversation tool that can support cancer patients in their care and help them make decisions. The conversation tool will soon be available to patients from different countries.

To this end, the researchers are collaborating with a team of researchers from nine different countries. The LIACS team combines the knowledge of computer scientists and [language](#) scientists.

## **Capturing patients' experiences through language**

LIACS researchers are working on the part of the project that combines the knowledge of computer scientists and language scientists. The researchers apply different methods to analyze the language use of [cancer patients](#). In this way, they try to discover patterns and structure in language.

"What we are doing in the project is extracting information from patient experiences, so that other patients can learn from them. For example, in a project that has just finished, we developed methods to deduce from data on patient forums in what ways patients deal with side effects of medication. Doctors can use that information as advice to other patients," says Suzan Verberne, LIACS researcher.

## **A better future for cancer patients**

The information the researchers collect will help improve the interview tool, as they capture patient experiences and turn them into actionable knowledge. In addition, they hope to develop techniques that bridge the gap between the language used by patients and specialists. In this way, it will be possible to further develop and refine the interview tool.

The [4D Picture project](#) is a consortium of 16 organizations in eight countries. For the development of the interview tool, the existing methodology [MetroMapping](#) is being extended.

Provided by Leiden University

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