

New mobile app will find dementia friendly places

March 17 2015

A 'TripAdvisor'-style app is being launched which allows carers to locate and rate dementia-friendly places so they are better able to get out and about with their loved-ones.

Triggered by Dr Katie Brittain, a Lecturer in Social Gerontology at Newcastle University, the Dementia Friendly Places project is one of the first to use the App Movement platform to collectively develop an app that meets a community need.

'[App Movement](#)' turns computer programming on its head by allowing an idea or a 'need' to drive the development of an [app](#) rather than the other way around. And unlike most apps which gradually gather a groundswell of support after they are launched, App Movement needs the support first in order to get the project off the ground, much like the established crowdfunding platforms, such as Kick Starter.

The 'Dementia Friendly Places' app will be used to rate cafes, restaurants, shops and other public places anywhere in the world and the things that will be rated and seen as important will be chosen by the people who support the app.

Katie said: "Much research and policy has focused on places that are indoors, for example a person's home or a care home, and yet the outdoors has huge health and social benefits to the person enjoying them.

"So I asked the question how can we design or shape outside places, such

as our cities or our neighbourhoods, to support people with dementia to continue to use and enjoy them? The app is a really good way of gathering information from the community – asking people to feed in the breadth of knowledge and advice that is out there so that we can all share it and make use of it."

Dr Brittain was inspired to start the movement to help her 95-year old grandmother who is living with dementia. Through the app, she is hoping to create a listing of places that are 'dementia friendly', the places people with dementia and their carers enjoy to go, outside or inside.

Her idea was an instant success with the App Movement community, and within 24 hours of the app idea submission, Dementia Friendly Places reached over 100% support from the public and was ready to enter the next phase of development.

Sandra Hastings, Director of Silverline Memories, launched The Silverline Cafe last May to coincide with Dementia Awareness Week. The Silverline Cafe offers a weekly session for people living with Dementia and their loved ones to come along for a cuppa and a take part in a range of activities to share in. Sandra said of the app: "This is a really positive development for people living with Dementia and will go a long way to address the issues of social isolation and isolation so commonly experienced by people living with Dementia".

Dr Lynne Corner, Director of Engagement, FMS Newcastle University and Chair, NE Dementia Action Alliance, said: "This is a fabulous idea. People with dementia can be very isolated and anxious, and lose confidence about going out. Carers especially need help to find places they can go where they know people will be understand dementia and be helpful and supportive.

"This app will really help people living with [dementia](#) to find such places

in their communities, and therefore continue to enjoy activities and interests which many of us take for granted, but which make a huge difference to our well-being and quality of life."

"There's nothing out there like this at the moment but the huge support for the Dementia Friendly Places app just shows there's a real need for it," said Katie.

"Many of us wouldn't know where to start when it comes to developing an app but that doesn't mean we don't have a good idea for one."

Provided by Newcastle University

Citation: New mobile app will find dementia friendly places (2015, March 17) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-03-mobile-app-dementia-friendly.html>

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