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Supporting everyday cardiovascular disease self-care decision making: Are we there yet?

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Although some of the severe consequences of cardiovascular disease (CVD) can be minimized through vital signs monitoring and treatment adherence tools, the magnitude of CVD continues to accelerate globally, with high rates of mortality and hospitalization. The aim of this talk is two-folds: first to present various self-care decisions patients make in everyday life and second to explore the support available for everyday decision making. Focus group studies with CVD patients show that self-care can get quite complicated due to everyday decisions that range from routine ill-structured problems, e.g., “What to eat?” to uncertain symptoms-related decisions, e.g., “Is this pain related to heart burn or heart attack?” to time-constraint treatment-related decisions, e.g., “Do I go to the doctor or wait and see?” Patients should be able to address such ambiguities through the use of appropriate self-management systems by considering the cognitive and behavioural process involved in the choice of behaviours to maintain physiological stability including symptoms monitoring, treatment adherence, and response to symptoms. Literature shows that the current tools available for supporting self-care are based on clearly defined rules and procedures similar to supporting patients in an episodic or acute condition. As CVD is a long-term condition involving multiple patient attributes (knowledge, experience, situation recognition) and treatment attributes, patients need to understand the impact of their decision or of the symptoms in relation to their health condition for deciding an appropriate course of action rather than a rule-based solution to a problem.

Biography

Anandhi Dhukaram is passionate about combining multidisciplinary design approach, technology and cognitive engineering to create a state of the art solution. Her PhD at the University of Birmingham is funded by the European Union project titled “Pervasive Technology for Cardiac care”. She has been a speaker and presented in various conferences. Her recent work is published in the Journal of Medical Informatics. Before entering academia, she had a distinguished career for more than a decade working for various clients including Accenture, Barclays, and ACNielsen across the globe: India, Australia, Canada, USA and UK.

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