



How the NHS in Scotland captured patient voices

At the start of 2011 NHS Scotland conducted interviews nationwide to gather feedback from patients, with the aim of improving operational aspects of healthcare services in areas such as admission and check out procedures, facilities and staff treatment.

Towards the end of 2011 the Scottish Government, through (Healthcare Improvement Scotland [HIS], which is responsible for delivering high quality, 'person centred' care), set out to formalise this process by creating a national patient experience measurement tool. The simple aim was to find the best way to capture as much patient feedback as possible, but in such a way that it could be readily organised and analysed.

“We had been using paper based spreadsheet questionnaires to gather feedback on patients’ experiences, but these provided just a static snapshot from a limited number of patients, and the effort to collate and produce meaningful analysis was enormous. We knew we needed something better, firstly to capture more, richer feedback from a wider range of patients, then better tools for the analysis of that feedback.”

(Richard McLennan, *Former National Patient Experience Programme Development Manager, HIS*)

HIS appointed Miituu Ltd to create a **user-friendly feedback solution** that really brought the issues to life.

The feedback solution had **three key strands**.

Firstly, HIS invested in an **App** that has been **developed to capture digital stories**, enabling people to express themselves in different ways. The App is called **miituu** (and pronounced 'me – too') and allows video based interview questionnaires to be created, and for people to record their responses in text, audio or video.

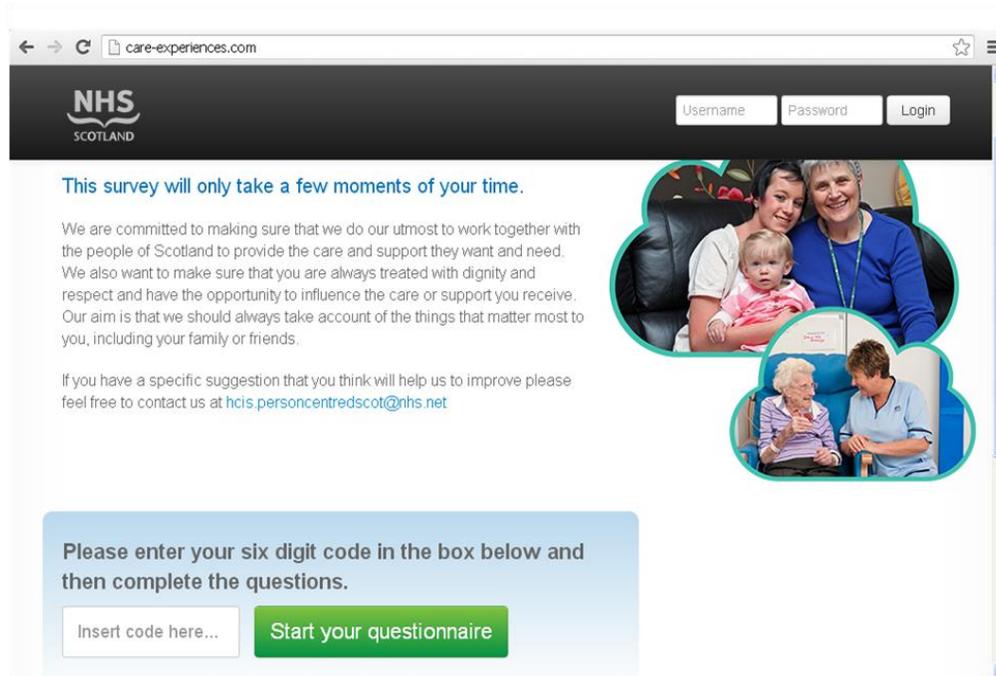
- Questions are pre-programmed and can be amended quickly and simply to match circumstances.
- Respondents are left alone to answer in their own time, minimising the external influences that an interviewer (or an external film crew) might bring.
- Interviewees are able to re-record their responses until they are.

The miituu App has also been used by front line staff in direct contact with patients at Yorkhill Children's Hospital. The App can be pre-programmed with the same questions that are on the NHS web site (www.care-experiences.com), or with any additional questions. Patients are free to record their responses on their own or with someone present.

Getting people to talk freely can be difficult; the fear of saying something 'wrong' acts as a natural inhibitor to the natural expression of comments, opinions and criticisms, so the ability to re-record answers is critical.

The image shows a screenshot of the miituu.com website. The browser address bar displays 'miituu.com'. The website header includes navigation links for 'Partner Programme', 'Contact us', and 'Sign in', along with a star icon and a menu icon. The main header features the 'BETA miituu™ Your voice matters' logo, a 'Request a demo' button, and a 'miituu pricing' button. Below the header is a navigation menu with links for 'Home', 'What is miituu', 'How to use miituu', 'Case Studies', 'Products & Services', and 'Contact us', and a search bar. The main content area has a green background and features the text: 'miituu is a pioneering video research and opinion gathering tool which gives organisations a much richer understanding of their audience.' Below this text is a dark button with a right arrow and the text 'How you can use miituu'. To the right of the button are images of a smartphone and a tablet displaying the miituu app interface. The bottom of the page has a dark footer with the text 'Available for' followed by icons for a smartphone, tablet, laptop, and desktop monitor. To the right of these icons are two buttons: 'Available in the App Store' and 'GET IT ON Google Play COMING SOON'.

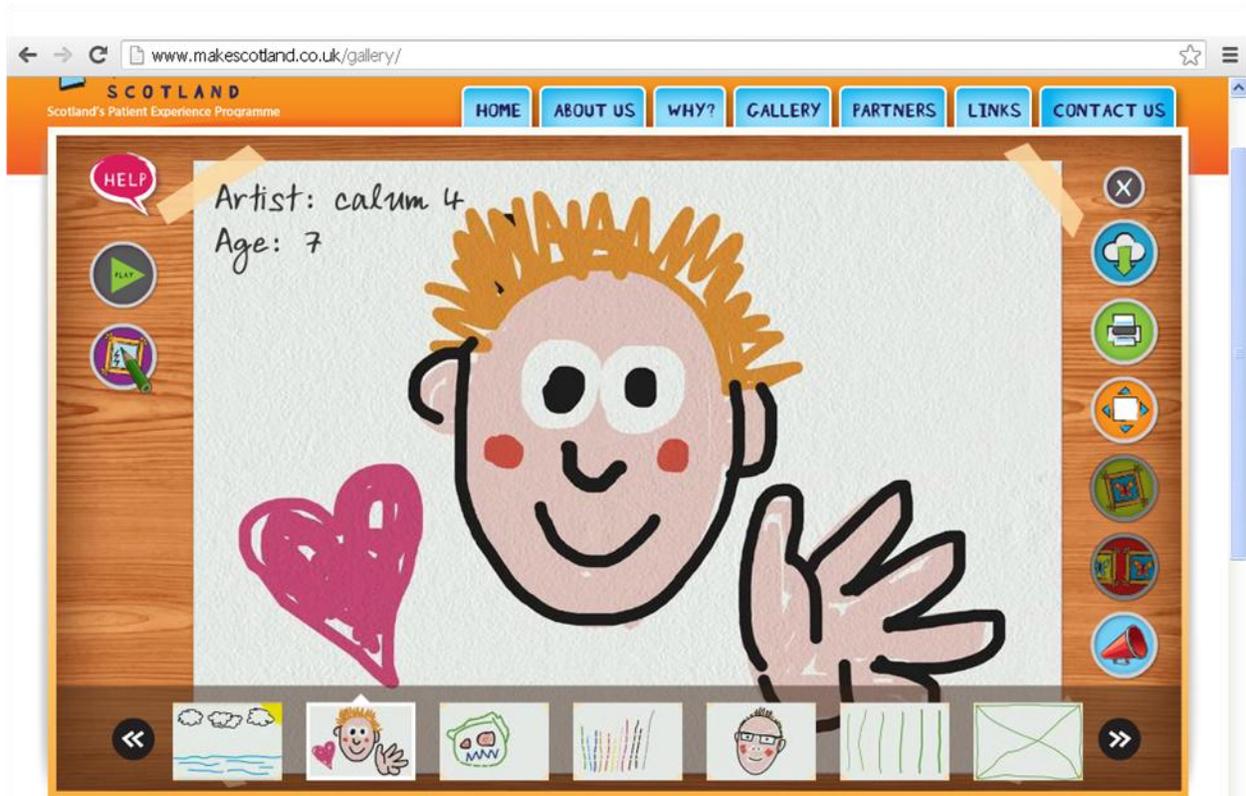
Secondly, existing paper based spreadsheets were replaced by an online tool developed by Miituu Ltd (which can be accessed at www.care-experiences.com); NHS boards can, if they prefer, simply print the questionnaire and conduct surveys as before or access them via most digital devices with an internet connection.



Thirdly, to extend the reach of the programme to **children, young people and adults with learning difficulties** and to those who may not want to communicate by writing, speaking or signing, Better Together (through the Managed Clinical Networks, or MCN's), SBP Creative and Miituu developed a special national MCN Patient Experience Package which can be accessed at www.makescotland.co.uk.



The package enables children, their families and carers to **express themselves through drawings**. The drawings are kept in a 'web gallery' and, importantly, there is a time-lapse feature that shows how the drawings have been created or built up; this can help children in particular learn how to make more complex pictures.



The result of this work is that there is now a wide range of ways in which patients can express themselves, and it is now much easier to analyse and present the results of that expression.

The scale of the challenge, given the scale and complexity of the NHS, is huge. Perhaps inevitably, in the process of defining and developing the tools, crystal clear communication of objectives, requirements, specifications and changes has not always been possible, leading to delays and some frustration. But there is widespread recognition that capturing this richer feedback is the way forward, so such stumbling blocks are accepted as part of the process.

The miituu trials have been very positive, with staff in particular receiving really good comments from patients. This in turn has proven to be a powerful motivational mechanism for them to continue using it.

The websites www.care-experiences.com and www.makescotland.co.uk went live in January 2013 and so there is a long way to go to realise fully the value of patients' experiences, but it is seen as huge step forward in delivering an effective, patient centred health service. By making the most of new technology and new systems, from the miituu App on mobile devices to digital stories and online drawings, it is now much easier for that patient voice to be heard.

“Many organisations in and around the healthcare industry have for many years talked about ‘the voice of the patient’; we believe we’ve found a way to capture it that goes far beyond traditional methods to yield dramatic improvements in both the quantity and quality of responses. It’s very ambitious and hugely exciting.”

(Richard McLennan)

The key to obtaining ‘rich’ feedback is to give people the freedom to say what they want, where they want, when they want. Using video as the mechanism for setting questions and recording responses can bring many benefits.

- Respondents typically answer much more quickly and naturally when compared to writing
- If questions are posed in a personal way (through video) the resulting responses are candid, spontaneous and authentic – yielding much greater value
- You can capture the human expression and emotions in their responses.

By Mark Magnante
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More information on the miituu App can be found at www.miituu.com