

Optimising Quality of Life

A one day sandpit to explore challenges and potential solutions in the care of head and neck cancer

When: 10am-4pm, Monday 14th April 2014

Where: Leeds Metropolitan University

The Centre for Applied Social Research, Leeds Metropolitan University and the Speech and Language Department, Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust are organising this sandpit to identify ways of optimising quality of life for those diagnosed and treated for a head and neck cancer.

AIM

The aim of this sandpit is to bring together a multi-disciplinary group of about 20 to 30 people who will create projects that will improve expectations about the impact of treatment and improve post-treatment communication, self-care and swallowing. The Speech & Language Department and their patients are particularly keen to explore digital and engineering solutions for use by individuals that recognise and incorporate the social aspects of living with a head and neck cancer.

WHO IS THE EVENT FOR?

The success of this sandpit relies on getting the right mix of people together. We need people from a range of disciplines and backgrounds (e.g. from the arts, humanities and social sciences to engineering, physical sciences and mathematics) and they will need to have the right mix of personal attributes. We also seek people who are at different stages in their careers: sandpits are not just aimed at those with senior positions. We imagine that this sandpit may appeal to those with expertise in animation, digital apps, fluid dynamics, product design, production and marketing, and speech production – nevertheless, if you think you have something to add then we are interested in hearing from you

WHAT WILL HAPPEN ON THE DAY?

This sandpit is a one-day interactive workshop involving 20-30 participants, the director, patients and a number of independent stakeholders. An essential element of a sandpit is a highly multidisciplinary mix of participants taking part, some being active researchers and some being potential users of research outcomes, to drive lateral thinking and radical approaches to addressing particular challenges.

The sandpit is an intensive discussion forum where free thinking is encouraged in order to delve deep into the problems on the agenda and uncover innovative solutions. Each sandpit is led by a director, whose role is to define the topic and facilitate discussions at the sandpit event.

The process can be broken down into:

- Defining the scope of the issue.
- Agreeing a common language and terminology amongst people from a very diverse range of backgrounds and disciplines.
- Sharing understanding of the problem domain, and the expertise brought by the participants to the sandpit.
- Taking part in break-out sessions focused on the problem domain, using creative and innovative thinking techniques.
- Creating a plan and timeline

APPLY TO TAKE PART IN THIS SANDPIT

The sandpit approach is about bringing together people who would not normally interact. We are looking for people who can bring new thinking to an existing problem. You do not need to have any prior knowledge of head and neck cancer, but will need to demonstrate an enthusiasm for working at the interface between disciplines.

The criteria for selecting sandpit participants are:

- The potential to contribute to research at the interface between disciplines
- The ability to work in a team
- The ability to explain research to non-experts
- The ability to develop new and highly original research ideas

To apply please send a covering letter and 2 page CV to:
HSSResearchSupportUnit@LeedsMet.ac.uk

With any queries please email: P.Branney@leedsmet.ac.uk

Application Deadline: Monday 31st March 2014