RETHINKING BRAIN HEALTH

PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH DESIGN

OVERVIEW

"Safe And Effective Discontinuing of Anticholinergics (SEDA) project, led by Regenstrief Institute and A Center for Aging and Brain, focuses on patient safety items from medications with anticholinergic effects. Drugs with anticholinergic effects have been implicated in cognitive impairment in older adults.

The Rethinking Brain Health research project was conducted in the course of Collaborative Action Research in Design. Our team adopted a problem-centered design approach, aiming to develop a practical and contextual understanding of brain safety issues related to anticholinergic medication.

The beginning of the research, we identified the key stakeholders as patients, family, and community support caregivers, registered nurses, doctors, and care coordinators. Anticholinergic medications are used to treat various conditions, including Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, and dementia.

Using research methods, we were able to gain a contextual understanding of the brainstorm and the needs of patients and caregivers. The gigamap poster serves as a tool to visualize the interconnectedness of the problems associated with the patients’ experience with anticholinergics from the perspective of both the patient and provider.

A deeper understanding of the problems associated with anticholinergic medications helped us to identify the opportunity areas and avoid overwhelming patients and providers with the options of treatment. The gigamap poster is a tool to identify opportunities at the center of the problems and find solutions. By using anticholinergic medication, the SEDA team can take the next appropriate actionable steps in identifying appropriate solutions.

PROCESS + METHODOLOGY

SEDA Research team gave Heron a brief on anticholinergic drugs and their overall effects on brain health

Design team + SEDA Research team developed questions for primary stakeholders, Providers + Patients, using the framework of Context, Awareness, & Choice

Engaged with Providers and Patients to understand their medical and living contexts. Methods Used: Interview, Observation, Journey Mapping

We grouped the data based on the categories: Environment, Routine, Family, Medicines, & Providers. Next, we used data synthesis and visualization to effectively communicate our findings. Methods Used: Affinity Grouping, Theme Matrix

By identifying barriers in the analysis process, we were able to transition the problem spaces into opportunity spaces to help the SEDA team take the next appropriate actionable step.

CONCLUSION: A GIGAMAP AS A TOOL

Adopting a patient-centered approach allowed our design team to develop a tool that the SEDA research team is using to inform the Regenstrief Institute. The use of the poster was created intentionally for the researchers to interact with the information and collaborate with each other. Currently, the Regenstrief staff use the poster as a framework to understand their patients and iterate further by adding more insights as they become available.