

HIVNetwork

TEAM 4

Project Proposal

Team Members: Chaitali Kumar, Navneet Verma, Sukhdeep Singh Saini, Yanji Chen

Team Website: <http://www.ccs.neu.edu/home/navneet/index1.html>

Abstract:

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) leads to AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome), which cripples human's immune system. AIDS has been categorized as an epidemic by the CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) and the life expectancy has been extended despite the lack of a vaccination or cure. The average life expectancy of people with HIV AIDS after being detecting is about a decade or more. However, *AIDS-related stigma* and discrimination exists due to which the patients experience mental trauma. This discrimination refers to prejudice, negative attitudes, abuse and maltreatment directed at people living with HIV and AIDS, from their own family, peers and community. Hence, only people with similar conditions can understand each other's problems. It would be very helpful to have an application that concentrates on *connecting* such people, which is the main goal of this project. It would also be useful to connect these patients with local *NGOs* and *care-giving groups* that are focused on helping these people.

Keywords: HIV, AIDS, Stigma, Connect, NGO

Project Description

Problem:

AIDS is now a pandemic. As of 2009, AVERT estimated that there are 33.3 million people worldwide living with HIV/AIDS, with 2.6 million new HIV infections per year. HIV is transmitted through direct contact of a mucous membrane or the bloodstream with a bodily fluid containing HIV. This transmission can involve sex, blood transfusion, contaminated hypodermic needles, exchange between mother and baby during pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or other exposure to one of the bodily fluids. However, people often have conceptions regarding the disease. AIDS-related stigma and discrimination refers to prejudice, negative attitudes, abuse and maltreatment directed at people living with HIV and AIDS. The consequences of stigma and discrimination are wide-ranging: being shunned by family, peers and the wider community, poor treatment in healthcare and education settings, an erosion of rights, psychological damage, and a negative effect on the success of HIV testing and treatment. Stigma not only makes it more difficult for people trying to come to terms with HIV and manage their illness on a personal level, but it also interferes with attempts to fight the AIDS epidemic as a whole. Hence, a tool that can help these people communicate with each other and with people who provide help and health care is highly necessary.

Existing Solution:

There are various applications both on web and mobile that guide HIV patients. These applications help them monitor their condition and help them keep track of their treatments

and medication. However there are currently no applications in the market where people can communicate with other patients diagnosed HIV and at the same time, interact with care-givers and AIDS-related groups near their location.

Approach:

Our approach to achieving this goal consists of several steps. Firstly, our team will go to hospital to visit patients who are inspected by HIV. By observing patients behavior and talking to them, we take notes and collect information about what they really want, what our volunteers and relatives can do effectively. After completing requirement analysis, we design and implement our system using technical skills and tools. Then, we test our system and publish it in the website. At last, we verify our system from the feedback from users until it satisfies most.

Challenges:

- 1) An person who does not know much about technology and applications may resist using this application.
- 2) People who have fear to come out in public may have reservations in mind to use this application; however one can keep his personal details private.
- 3) Some patients may mislead other patients by sharing wrong information.
- 4) Advertisements are required to motivate people to volunteer for the noble cause of helping the patients.

5) Doctors verification for a particular treatment is not covered in this application, patients just interpret from the comments and information shared by other users.

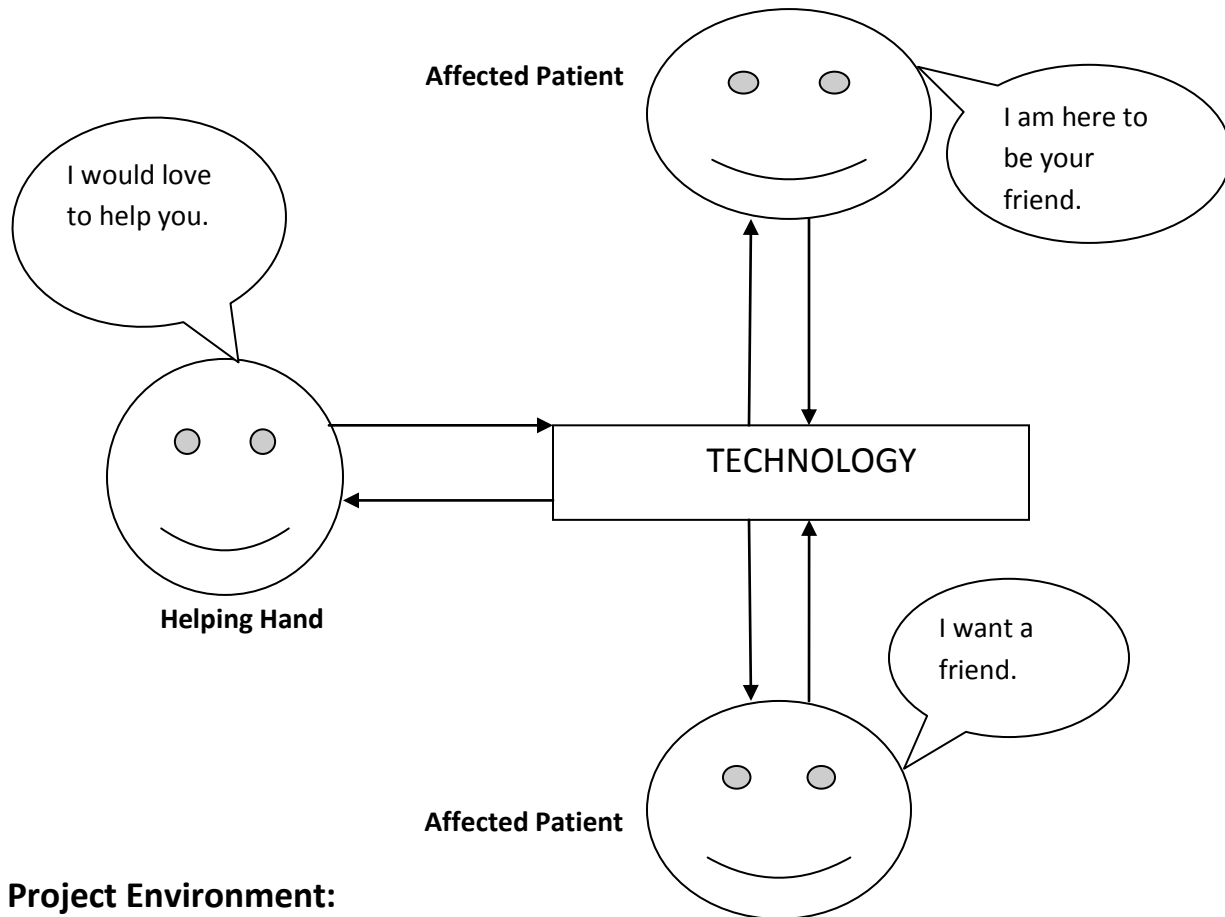
How can technology solve this:

People find it lot easier to communicate, address and understand each other problems if they belong to a same group, community, culture or even if they are suffering from same disease. In the similar way it is easier to communicate if there is somebody who has proper understanding of the problem. Thanks to online social networking, it has become a lot easier to find people with similar interests or problem. Within the matter of few keystrokes and mouse clicks a user can find what he needs.

Such an application for HIV infected people can do wonders for them. Firstly, they can find people in similar condition and communicate with them, share their plights, their sufferings or as simple as find a listening ear. One can share precautionary measures, their treatment experiences with newly effected patients without having to meet them personally. If an user has to find people with similar problem near him, all he has to do is to enter his location and press the button, the database would provide what user has asked for.

There might be many social groups or normal guys like us who would love to provide help, care or to be friends with affected people. Technology can assist to help affected people to find helping hands or to help helping hands to find affected people. As mentioned above, all this is matter of few clicks, button taps or even screen touches, gone are the days when one has to search whole sea to a pearl.

This is simple example of how it can work:



Project Environment:

It will be a desktop application developed using java (Eclipse IDE) and php.

Target Users:

- 1) The patients suffering from AIDS or detected HIV positive are the mainly targeted by this application. People with HIV positive normally have apprehensions on coming out in public and estrange themselves.

- 2) Helping Hands: NGO, Social groups, you, me or anybody who wants to help HIV positive community.

Contributions:

Navneet Verma: Worked on team website, project proposal writing and project formation.

Sukhdeep Singh Saini: Worked on project idea formation and project proposal writing.

Chaitali Kumar: Worked on project idea formation and project proposal writing.

Yanji Chen: Worked on project idea formation and project proposal writing.

Bibliography:

1. <http://www.healthfiend.com/weeklytop/top-10-infectious-contagious-transmissible-diseases>
2. <http://www.avert.org/hiv-aids-stigma.htm>