

**An in-progress mixed methods study to
test the usability of an interactive
communication tool to help
English- and French-speaking children
express their cancer symptoms**

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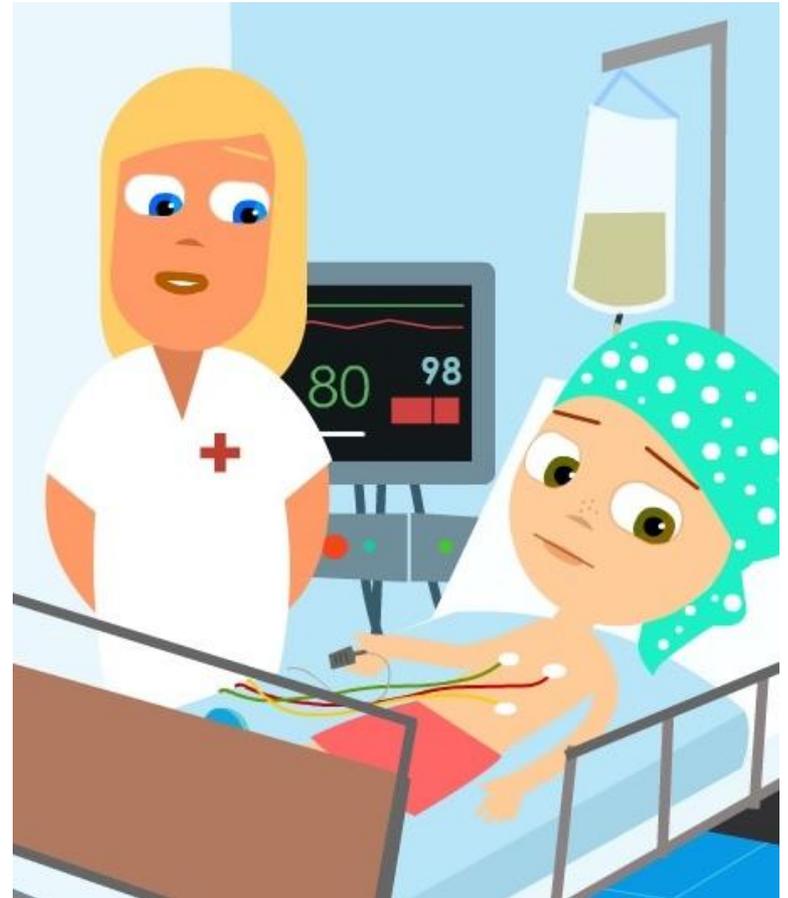
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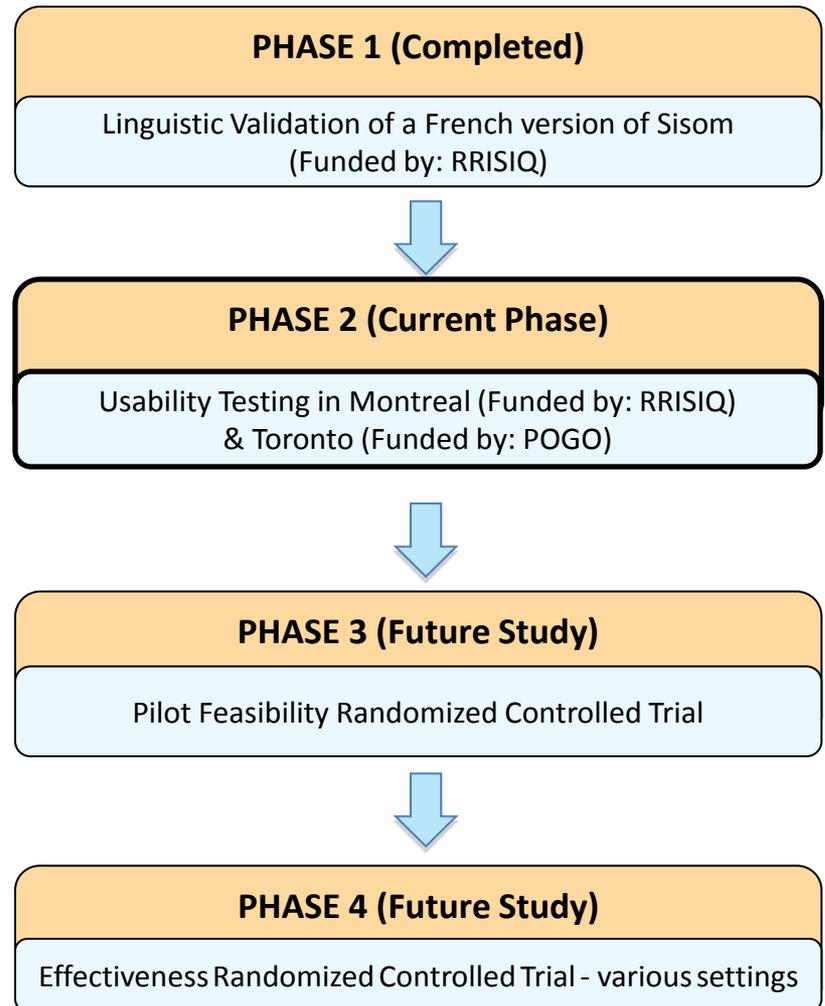
Background

- Children with cancer experience many physical, psychological, school-based and behavioural symptoms during and after treatment that are often unreported, and therefore unmanaged.
- In order to help children express their symptoms, a computer-based program called Sisom was developed. Rigorous testing in Norway has shown Sisom significantly increases the number of symptoms reported.
- To account for cultural differences, it is important to evaluate Sisom in Canada.



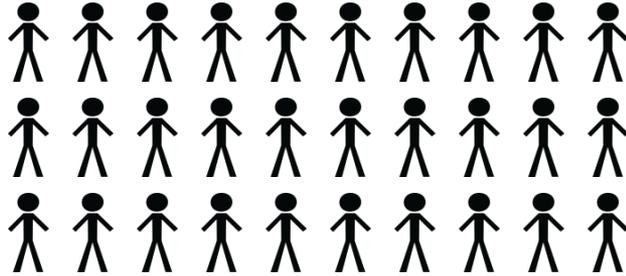
Aim of Study

- The objective of the current phase of this study is to test the usability of Sisom, in terms of ease of use, usefulness, and aesthetics from the perspective of English- and French-speaking children with cancer.



Methods

Recruitment

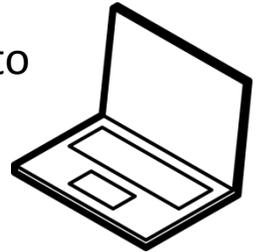


30 oncology patients

- 10 English-speaking patients @ HSC
- 10 English-speaking patients @ MCH
- 10 French-speaking patients @ Sainte-Justine

30-minute
Game Play
Session

Participants use a laptop to visit Sisom's "feeling islands" to answer questions about their symptoms, problems and feelings, and complete a symptom report.

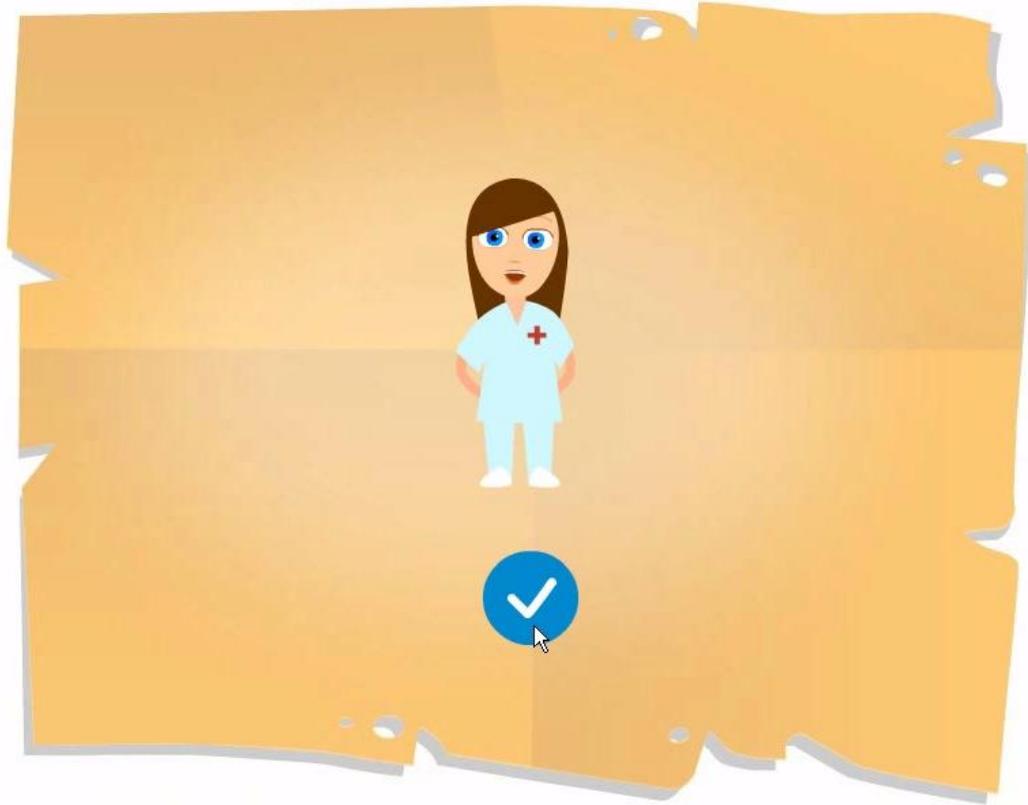


Semi-
Structured
Interview



Participants are asked questions about Sisom's aesthetics, ease of use, and usefulness.





Results

Usefulness

- 22/26 of participants thought Sisom was useful.
- 85% of participants would like to use Sisom again in the hospital.
- “The questions were very on point and very like, I guess you could relate to them easily, I guess I could.” – Male participant, Age 12

Ease of Use

- 92% of participants found Sisom easy to use.
- 42% of participants needed support using the Likert scale within Sisom.
- Some symptoms were not understood by at least one child and required clarification from the interviewer.

Aesthetics

- The majority of participants enjoyed the graphics & images in Sisom.
- The most well-liked “feeling island” was “At the Hospital.”

Identified Issues

- Parental role
- Concept of death

Conclusions/Next Steps

- English- and French-speaking children in this study endorse the use of Sisom to describe their cancer-related symptoms.



- They found Sisom easy to use, useful and aesthetically pleasing.
- Future research includes testing feasibility via pilot randomized controlled trial.

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