

Groundbreaking Development: A mobile application for remote detection of early cognitive change in older adults

MyndYou, a startup company in the field of aging technology, has already begun collaborating with US rehabilitation giants and plans to expand into the field of Alzheimer's assessments and support for families and caregivers. Company founder and CEO: "I saw how the field of senior care was desperate for support and assistance and also realized the incredible business opportunity inherent within it."

Gali Weinreb, 6/19/2018



Photo: Shahr Tamir

Occupational therapists and speech and language pathologists continue to be undervalued today, perhaps due to society's old-fashioned perception that allied health professionals are "nice to have, but not crucial". MyndYou is seeking to provide them with an innovative tool for older adult care—a system that identifies physical and cognitive decline through smartphones

to allow for more accurate tracking, status understanding, and connections to appropriate care protocols.

Poliakine-Baruchi, founder and CEO of the company, explains, “One of the biggest challenges in cognitive care for seniors is that people only begin receiving treatment at progressed stages. This happens because of the sensitive nature of the topic and the difficulty to differentiate between natural deterioration with age and deterioration that could be treatable. When intervention does take place, it exists within a specific time-frame; the individual could be having a good day or an especially bad day, largely affecting the assessment and treatment. In contrast to this, when continuously tracking change over time, clinicians can stay informed regarding the circumstances, rate, and nature of the decline. With this, we can connect each problem to the correct treatment plan.”

While managing the company, Wellsense—a company that developed a smart textile technology that prevents bedsores in hospitals—Poliakine-Baruchi was exposed to the needs of senior care. “When I managed Wellsense, I spent a great deal of time in hospitals and nursing homes in the US,” she tells us. “I left that experience with an understanding of what I wanted to do in life. I saw how the field of senior care was desperate for support and assistance and also realized the incredible business opportunity inherent within it.”

Doctor of Physics from Tel Aviv University Itay Baruchi, her partner in this initiative and in life, explains the company’s core technology. “For most of my career, I dealt with neurological systems and signal processing,” he says. “This knowledge enables us at MyndYou to use methods of signal processing and machine learning in order to detect when the patient deviates from his normal abilities, even when the change occurs slowly and gradually. The signals are collected through smartphones and include movement patterns, route selection, sleep patterns, and voice analysis.”

The company’s initial focus is on occupational therapy, with the intention to expand to other disciplines. “We provide occupational therapists with the information they need to better personalize their care and bridge the gap between care sessions and the client's continuous daily activity,” Poliakine-Baruchi explains. “Say the individual returns home after a stroke and he enjoys going grocery shopping. After downloading the application onto his smartphone, the app will track and analyze his route while he shops, and if the clinician identifies certain difficulties through the platform (for example, he stops multiple times or goes back and forth within the supermarket), they can target the treatment for the individual accordingly. For the first time, the clinician can see whether his intervention is beneficial and receive information about the client between sessions. This feedback is also passed onto the healthcare system, increasing the chances that therapists will get the appreciation they deserve.

MyndYou has already released its product into the market. Occupational therapists across the US utilize MyndYou's platform through a collaboration with Genesis Rehab Services, an expansive US-based company in the field of rehabilitation and senior care that employs, among others, around 30,000 occupational therapists. "Together with Genesis, we are the first to penetrate this market, and this year we will care for 1,000 patients using our technology," says Poliakine-Baruchi. The business model in this case is a license fee payment per month per patient, up to \$15-50 based on the type of requested service.

In the future, the company plans to expand into the field of Alzheimer's assessments and support for families and caregivers. "We want to pass the information along to families so that they can have a better understanding of their loved ones' health status and their role in supporting them. We believe that the families will adopt this tool only after they see how it is being utilized by care professionals."

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