Researcher develops a chatbot that already is a reference in healthcare

August 31 2017

Florence is an online personal health assistant that helps users to manage their health & wellness care. This "virtual friend" has evolved from being a simple symptom checker to become focused on two main features with high demand: health tracking and med & pill reminding, powered by an intelligent automated messaging system. One of the project team members, André Fialho, is a MIT Portugal Bioengineering PhD Alumni at Instituto Superior Técnico, focused on the analysis on how new technologies can help patients outside the Hospital.

Florence was launched at the beginning of 2017 and currently has more than 2 thousand daily users. Among its features this online assistant is a pill reminder, offers additional information about the user medication and explains what he must do if he misses a pill, thanks to an automated messaging system. All users have to do is to start chatting with her inside a messaging platform, like Facebook messenger, Kik or Skype.

André Fialho is confident of the potential of chatbots and says that "these solutions are nowadays used in many sectors such as Tourism, Food Industry and E-Commerce, however in Healthcare they are almost non-existent, so we strongly believe in Florence's potential" and adds "I think chatbots can solve a lot of the current problems of the healthcare industry and make health information more accessible for everyone."

Florence was created in June 2016 as a hobby project of David Hawig, a German entrepreneur, and researcher. Today, Florence is one of the most commonly used chatbots and a reference in healthcare. Named

after Florence Nightingale, the founder of modern nursing, she also puts healthcare on a new level. "If you see that people answered more than 200 reminders in a row, you know that you might actually help someone with your technology. And more and more people are also using other features of Florence like period or mood tracking. So, I think chatbots definitely have the potential to improve our [healthcare](#) system," said David.

Florence is available in English and versions in Portuguese, Spanish and French are under development and will be added in the coming months.

Florence is currently available in Facebook Messenger (m.me/[florence](#).[chatbot](#)), Skype (join.skype.com/bot/64ba2a82-af90-43f0-8aea-42a95405a1ba) or Kik (kik.com/bots/florence.chat/).

More information at Florence´s [website](#).

Provided by Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Citation: Researcher develops a chatbot that already is a reference in healthcare (2017, August 31) retrieved 3 May 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2017-08-chatbot-healthcare.html