iStayHealthy is one year old. A journey

February 21, 2012 By iStayHealthy

Just occurred to me that exactly 1 year ago I submitted the first version of iStayHealthy to iTunes/Apple. I can remember the anticipation and tension well - and felt a huge relief when Apple finally approved and published the app on 2 March 2011. Since then 2000 people have downloaded and used the app.

This has been a hugely significant and important journey for me personally. It all started in 2009. Actually, also around the Feb/March period. At that time I was diagnosed with HIV. And what a shock it was. For half a year I felt quite disoriented. So much to take in, even though I was relatively familiar with HIV through other friends I know. But it's always different when it hits you personally. I got through it with the tremendous help and support from my friends and also from the fantastic doctors and nurses from the Sexual Health Clinic in London, UK. Not to mention the great support I received from POZ magazine, who have been backing this app from very early on.

When diagnosed, I quickly found myself in jogging down results from the various blood tests. Trying to keep up with the trend. And when 6 month later my doc put me on treatment, I then wanted to make sure I adhere to the regime and set alarms.

At this stage I began to think: wouldn't it be great if there were a single tool that would allow me to do all these things: store my results, give me an overview of the trend of where things are going and remind me when to take the meds. Next, I wanted this tool to be available wherever I go.

Hence, the idea of iStayHealthy was born. With the iPhone getting ever more popular it was the perfect platform to get it started. So in 2010 I started prototyping and coding.

It took me ca 6 months before I was finally happy with the result and uploaded it to Apple.

Since then I got plenty of feedback from users and uploaded a number of updates.

Later in 2011 Android started to catch up with iPhone - so I threw an Android into the mix as well.

It's been very hard work - but also stimulating and very, very rewarding.

But the journey doesn't end here. In my mind the app can still go much further. I want this app to make the life of HIV people (including mine) easier. Much easier.

One step into that direction is to be able to receive your results from your doctor directly into the app. In fact, this idea is currently something I am working with Sexual Health clinics in London.

Integrating the app into our medical treatment more closely seems like a natural step for me. It also

helps the medical clinics deal with increased workload (and dare I say it the pressure of keeping budgets in line).

For patients that are in a stable condition there is also another problem. E.g. I get a med supply for 6 months from my clinic. It takes a bit of planning to set the date for the next blood test, get the results, go to the doctor - so that I get the next stash on time without running out of supply.

In other words, a bit of advance treatment planning is what would make at least my life easier.

Another big journey is to go to Washington this year to attend AIDS 2012 congress. I am very excited to attend. And I hope to meet a lot of you there.

All the best for 2012

Peter

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