

CHI 2019 Mental Health Symposium Social Paper: Emma Nicol

Name: Emma Nicol

Position: Research Associate

Affiliation: Department of Computer and Information Sciences, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK

Current Project: "Finding solutions to advance digital health for addressing unmet needs in relation to self-harming behaviours" (European Social Fund: Social Innovation Fund).

Contact: emma.nicol@strath.ac.uk

Emma is a member of the Strathclyde Information School Research Group (SISRG) and the Digital Health and Wellness Group (DHAWG) in the Department of Computer and Information Sciences at Strathclyde. She recently submitted her PhD for consideration by the academic committee of the university. Emma's key research interests are information behaviour and interaction design. Emma's 15-year research career has encompassed investigations of the information behaviour of children and vulnerable young people, and the co-creation of designs for interactive technology for use in educational, health and cultural settings, as well as extensive research in the area of improving access to mobile technology for older citizens. She has designed and undertaken evaluations of such technology both in the lab and in the wild and has co-authored 35+ peer-reviewed papers in these areas. In 2018 she was co-editor of a special issue of the *International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction* on the roles that children can play in co-design activities.

Emma has a keen interest in mental health and, alongside her research activities, for the past decade has supported students facing mental health challenges as a mentor with the University of Strathclyde's Wellbeing Service.

Since mid 2018 Emma has been working with Dr Diane Pennington on a project funded by the Scottish Government via the European Social Innovation Fund that seeks to determine how to best design digital resources that will address unmet information and support needs for young people who exhibit self-harming behaviour as well as their friends, family and caregivers. Self-harm is often a hidden behaviour, and health and support services only see a small percentage of the young people who harm themselves. Research indicates that those who come into contact with services often do not receive the support they need, such as the provision of adequate and relevant information, resources, advice, and counselling. Young people often have difficulties in talking to adults about this behaviour due to stigma, judgmental attitudes and other unhelpful approaches. The many potential benefits of e-mental health solutions to supporting young people who self-harm include widening control and choice, anonymity, privacy, 24hr access, and improving access to information, care and support by reducing barriers created, for example, by physical location or disability. Self-harm amongst young people is known to have major impacts on parents and other family members and so we have been keen to investigate their information and support needs also. This research has been conducted in collaboration with the charity Health in Mind, psychologists and a specialist nurse from the NHS. The research has taken a co-production approach involving design and idea generation workshop activities with young people with lived experience of self-harm including those with autism, those from care backgrounds, parents and siblings of young people who self-harm, teachers, support workers, clinicians and service managers. Workshops generated ideas and preliminary designs for aspects of the management of self-harming behaviour that could be supported digitally such as recognising when not coping, managing impulses, distraction activities, development and adherence to safety plans, provision of crisis details, and physical and mental health first aid. A future stage of the project will further develop the ideas generated and lead to the production and testing of prototypes.

Emma is keen to meet others with an interest in e-mental health, particularly for young people and those who support them.

Selected Publications:

D Pennington, **E Nicol**, S Rasmussen, D Dinham, S McCluskey, M Pope (2018). "Addressing Self-harm via Digital Innovation". Poster presented at NRS Mental Health Research Network Edinburgh. Winner: People's Poster Prize.

M Bekker, W Barendregt, H Skovbjerg, M Landoni, **E Nicol**, E Rubegni (2018). Special Issue on Assumptions about the Concept of Childhood and the Roles of Children in Design. *Int. Journal of Child-Computer Interaction*.

M Landoni, E Rubegni, **E Nicol** (2018). "Engaging Young Users in Collaborative Design: How Much, How Far and How Deep?" *International Journal of Child-Computer Interaction*.

S Buchanan, **E Nicol** (2018). "Developing health information literacy in disengaged at-risk populations: insights to inform interventions". *Journal of Documentation*.

M Landoni, E Rubegni, **E Nicol**, J Read (2017). How Many Roles Can Children Play?. In *Proceedings of the The 15th International Conference on Interaction Design and Children (IDC '16)*.

N Charness, M Dunlop, C Munteanu, **Emma Nicol**, A Oulasvirta, X Ren, S Sarcar, C Silpasuwanchai (2016). Rethinking Mobile Interfaces for Older Adults. In *Proceedings of the 2016 CHI Conference Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI EA '16)*.

E Nicol, A Komninos, M D Dunlop (2016). A participatory design and formal study investigation into mobile text entry for older adults. *Int. Journal of Mobile Human Computer Interaction*, 8 (2).

E Nicol, M D Dunlop, Jutta Treviranus (2016). Editorial: Special issue on reimagining interfaces for older adults. *International Journal of Mobile Human Computer Interaction*, 8 (2).