

# #NT100IS5 ONE TO WATCH: PATIENT'S VIRTUAL GUIDE

Celebrating 5 years of NT100

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## AN AR APP TO GUIDE CHILDREN THROUGH THE HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT

*By Corporation Pop*

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### The problem

When Dom Raban's 13-year-old daughter Issy was first treated for a rare form of cancer called Ewing's Sarcoma, she was terrified. Issy is thankfully now healthy, but remains anxious about entering a medical environment.

In the UK, more than 2 million children are admitted to NHS hospitals every year, over 1,700 of them for cancer treatment. All too often, lack of health information leaves them confused and scared, though research suggests that reducing stress and anxiety can lead to quicker recovery and improved clinical outcomes.

### The response

Using a working name of Patient's Virtual Guide (PVG), Raban, managing director of digital agency, Corporation Pop, decided to address the problem by developing an AR app for children about to start medical treatment in a hospital.

The user can customise their own avatar, which guides them through the whole experience, reminds them about appointments and answers their questions in a child-friendly way.

Once they create their guide, children can explore hospital environments, play with otherwise intimidating equipment, such as an MRI scanner, and even interact with others in the ward.

### The potential

Corporation Pop first tested a prototype app with clinicians, parents and patients at Royal Manchester Children's Hospital. "I have yet to show this pilot

app to anyone, of any age, who has not positively engaged with it, suggesting that this tech has the potential to greatly improve the healthcare experience," said Peter-Marc Fortune, associate clinical head at the hospital.

Following initial funding from Nominet Trust and the Manchester Business Growth Hub, PVG has secured £500,000 from Innovate UK and the Biomedical Research Council to develop the prototype into a full app, ready for hospital trials in October 2018. PVG has the potential to transform the hospital experience for sick children.

*Last updated: 07th of February, 2018*