



# Technology for ageless sexual health

## Older Adults, Stroke Survivors and Colorectal Cancer Patients

Sexual health is an integral part of quality of life, including in older age. However, sexuality and intimacy are still considered a taboo. Often times, older adults feel embarrassed to talk about it with clinicians, their partners, family, and peers. There are several negative beliefs that contribute to this, e.g.: society thinks of older adults as asexual, and older adults might think sexual activity is dangerous or improper for older age.



To address the issues above, a European consortium called **Anathema** set out to adapt traditional face-to-face interventions, usually made by sexologists, to be delivered through a smartphone. The consortium considered the audience of older adults, including those with chronic disease, and their partners. In the process of creating the intervention, the design team at Fraunhofer AICOS conducted several explorations together with older adults and their partners to reach a design concept that would be aesthetically pleasing, inclusive and informative, but not stigmatising.



Coordinator (R&D)



Sexuality



Mental Health



Oncology Hospital



Software Development

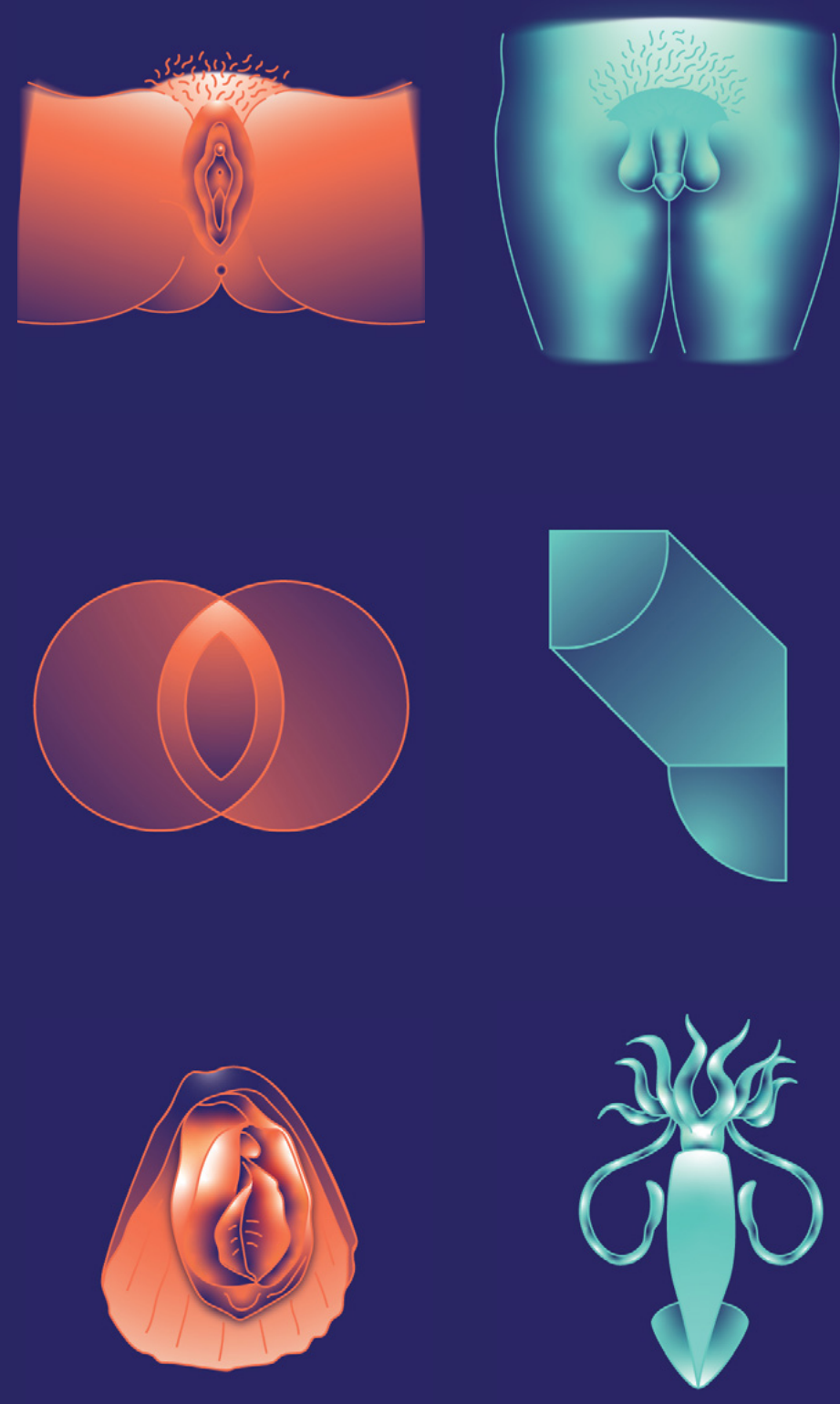


Senior Organization



Patient Association

We created dozens of illustrations of human genitalia, using the following spectra: figurative-abstract, metaphorical-literal, line-plane, single-multiple colour, detailed-minimalist representation. This imagery was shared and discussed with older adults, who tended to prefer figurative and realistic representations, but struggled with some elements, such as seeing pubic hair.



Following Nielsen Norman group's guidelines, we created different versions of the written content so as to find the ideal 'tone of voice' for it. Participants preferred text that felt casual, serious, respectful, and matter-of-fact, with the occasional space for wittiness.



We built a logo for the project which conveyed the idea of modularity and diversity. Using these characteristics, we played with it to create patterns for the app, so as to make it more appealing and to be able to, at times, conceal the topic of sexuality for the users who were more embarrassed of having such as app on their phones.

Using these patterns, we created cards with Hints for those users with sexual partners. The Hints are suggestions of what the sexual partners can do together. The front of the card has a suggestive call to action and the back of the card has instructions written in the tone of voice combination described above. Participants get the hints at random times in the day, as surprises. They can see the back of the card, shuffle it to get another one, or dismiss it if they are not in the mood for it. Through testing, we found that users found the hints and the graphic patterns to be pleasing, inviting, and non-stigmatising.



## Showreel

See video here:

