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Contact

Nicola Davies

Proto Labs

+44 (0) 1952 683047

nicola.davies@protolabs.co.uk

Innovative Respiratory Therapy System Wins Proto Labs' Cool Idea! Award

Compliant Games respiratory therapy system turns video games into healing devices for kids and elderly patients

The developers of a respiratory therapy system that uses video games as part of the system, and helps paediatric and nursing home patients comply with respiratory therapy requirements, have been presented with the latest Proto Labs Cool Idea! Award, a service grant given to innovative companies by quick-turn manufacturer Proto Labs, Ltd.

Compliant Games is “channelling the healing power of children’s video games,” say the developers, with a system that improves adherence to respiratory therapies by patients who are at-risk of pulmonary complications such as pneumonia. The system transforms common respiratory therapy tools into low-cost telemetry (wireless transmission and monitoring) instruments for doctors and their patients.

How does it work? The patient watches and follows along with a video game exercise on an iPad or other computer tablet. When prompted, the patient breathes through an air tube that wirelessly interacts with the game. Active, in-game feedback reinforces correct technique for the patient. “This product will deliver a crucial service to clinicians and will help patients,” says Proto Labs founder Larry Lukis. “The gaming system provides a ‘fun component’ that motivates patients to effectively do their required pulmonary exercises. And, what I really like about it: The therapy tool reaches both young patients and seniors.”

In the past, clinicians reported that other respiratory therapy devices and systems were ignored and rarely used by patients. This new system, with the air tube and video game interacting wirelessly, solves this problem, by “gamifying” an otherwise mundane but necessary task.

The Compliant Games respiratory therapy system is built around four components: AirLane, a hardware adapter that works with the patient’s respiratory device (air tube), the DragonKeeper video game that interacts with the patient, ClinicBox cloud-based data storage and analytics, and the AirRN mobile app for clinicians and caregivers.

Shane Luttrell, founder of Memphis, U.S.-based Compliant Games, says developers are using the Cool Idea! Award manufacturing grant for various custom prototype parts such as injection-moulded airway tubes and other components. “Injection moulded parts are actually a very big deal for us,”

Luttrell says, because parts that are moulded from conventional compliant resins using injection moulding “are more likely to meet regulatory requirements of institutional review boards than other prototype processes.”

Compliant Games will begin clinical studies later this year. The first study will assess whether its system increases patient compliance with prescribed therapies. Other future studies will follow. Developers plan to formally launch the product in Q2 of 2016.

About Cool Idea! Award

Since 2011, the Cool Idea! Award has provided more than £500,000 in Proto Labs prototyping and low-volume production services to entrepreneurs developing new products in Europe and the United States. Unlike other product awards that recognise products after they're in mass production and on store shelves, the Cool Idea! Award is meant to help innovative ideas come to life. For more information about the Cool Idea! Award and to apply, visit www.protolabs.co.uk/coolidea.

About Proto Labs

Proto Labs is the world's fastest digital manufacturing source for custom prototypes and low-volume production parts. The technology-enabled company uses advanced 3D printing, CNC machining and injection moulding technologies to produce parts within days. The result is an unprecedented speed-to-market value for product designers and engineers worldwide. Visit protolabs.co.uk for more information.

About Compliant Games

Compliant Games was founded by Shane Luttrell after a conversation with a paediatric oncologist who lamented that despite the effectiveness and safety of incentive spirometry in preventing pneumonia, most of his patients rarely took them out of the bag. Compliant Games plans to change that using a gaming platform coupled with low-cost hardware/software to improve both the quality and quantity of respiratory exercise. Luttrell has a history of medical product development, working at Pfizer/ValleyLab as well as founding HatchPoint, a product development company that spun out Compliant Games. For more information, visit angel.co/compliant-games.

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