DOCREADY

# Helping young people make the most of their mental health care

Overview

Up to 20% of young people in Britain deal with mental health issues every year. (That's up to six students in every classroom). However, when it comes to seeking help, nearly four in ten don't feel comfortable talking with their doctors.

In collaboration with Enabled by Design, Neontribe and Social Spider, FutureGov partnered with Right Here Brighton and Hove to develop a simple, elegant tool that empowers young people to talk with their doctors about mental health.
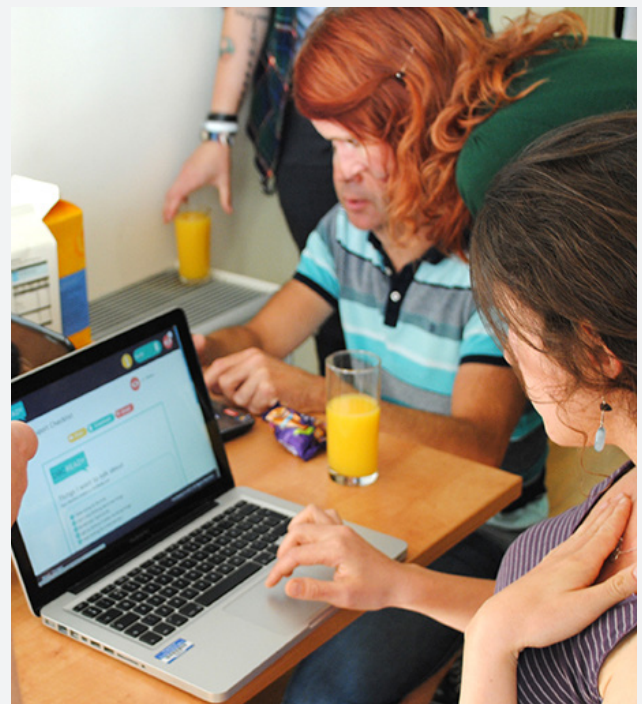
Doc Ready co-design workshops

Process
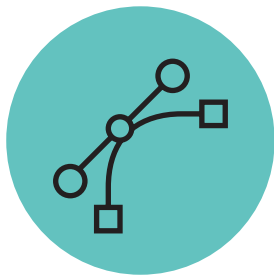
From the outset, we knew our biggest challenge would be reaching our goal as quickly -- and as inexpensively -- as possible.

Doc Ready took four months to evolve from project brief to finalised tool. During that time, we conducted our research, held a series of workshops, tested paper prototypes and a minimum viable product, and redesigned the interface to make the product look and feel friendlier.

Research

We sought insight from relevant local organisations like MIND and community LGBT groups, as well as from mental health practitioners and GPs. By conducting interviews and a customer mapping journey, we were able to see how young people interact with their doctors and identify pain points along the way.

Since we were speaking with young people about their experiences with mental health, ensuring safety and comfort was a priority. We mapped user journeys, but we never asked our end users to share their personal experiences with mental health care. Instead, we relied heavily on personas -- and encouraged our young co-designers to put themselves in others' shoes.

Co-design

Our entire project was co-designed with young people from Brighton & Hove in southeast England. We maintained the same user base throughout the project, which led to strong feelings of ownership among the young people who co-designed Doc Ready. They felt like an integral part of the process -- because they were.

Taking a user-centred design approach to Doc Ready helped us come up with the right solution for our users. It's not feature-rich: it does the most important thing young people need, and it does it well.

Approach

Over the course of six months, we used an Agile process to evolve from discovery to minimum viable product to finalised tool. Maintaining a flexible approach allowed us to make rapid changes when needed; for example, when our users found that a stripped-down checklist tool was more useful than the feature-rich tool originally planned.

Design
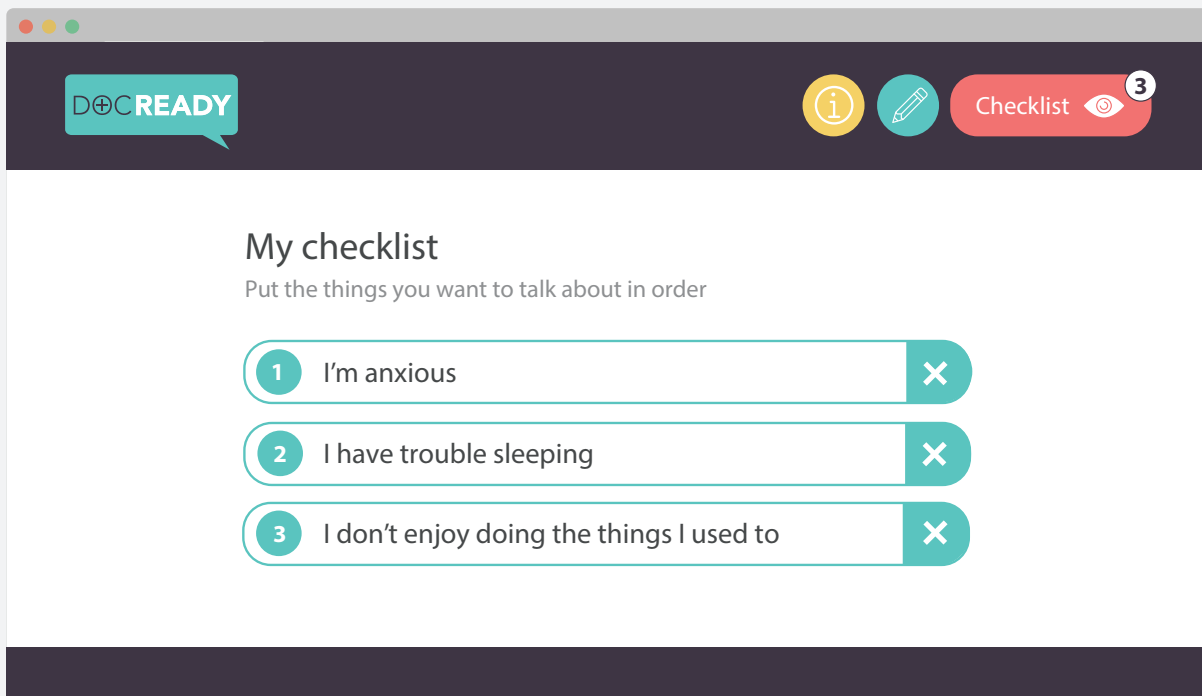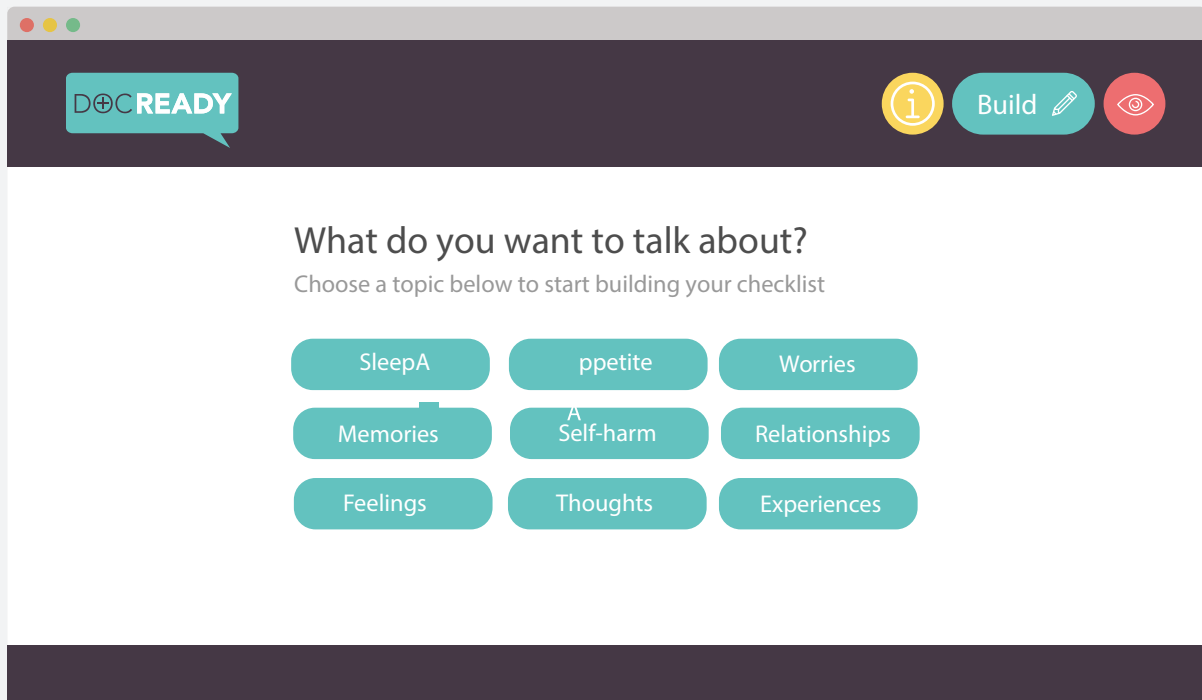
Doc Ready Website Screenshots

Results

The numbers speak for themselves: Doc Ready has helped young people prepare to talk with their doctors more than 40,000 times.

The tool itself is also extremely sustainable for our clients; it was purposefully developed to require only internet hosting and light-touch maintenance costs. As a result, the tool can remain live and free for young people to use for practically no additional funds.

Our users independently submitted the project for a mental health excellence award, which it later won. CAMHS reached out to us about creating a special version of Doc Ready to meet their needs. And on a personal note, two of our current team members joined FutureGov because of Doc Ready, including a psychotherapist who recommends the product to her clients.

After using DocReady

82% of users surveyed felt the tool helped them think more clearly

82% of users felt ready to talk to someone else

77% were more able to take control

77% were ready to make up their own minds about things