

*"Having a companion
would be nice"*
Exploring Community
Perspectives on
Conversational AI for
Dementia Support

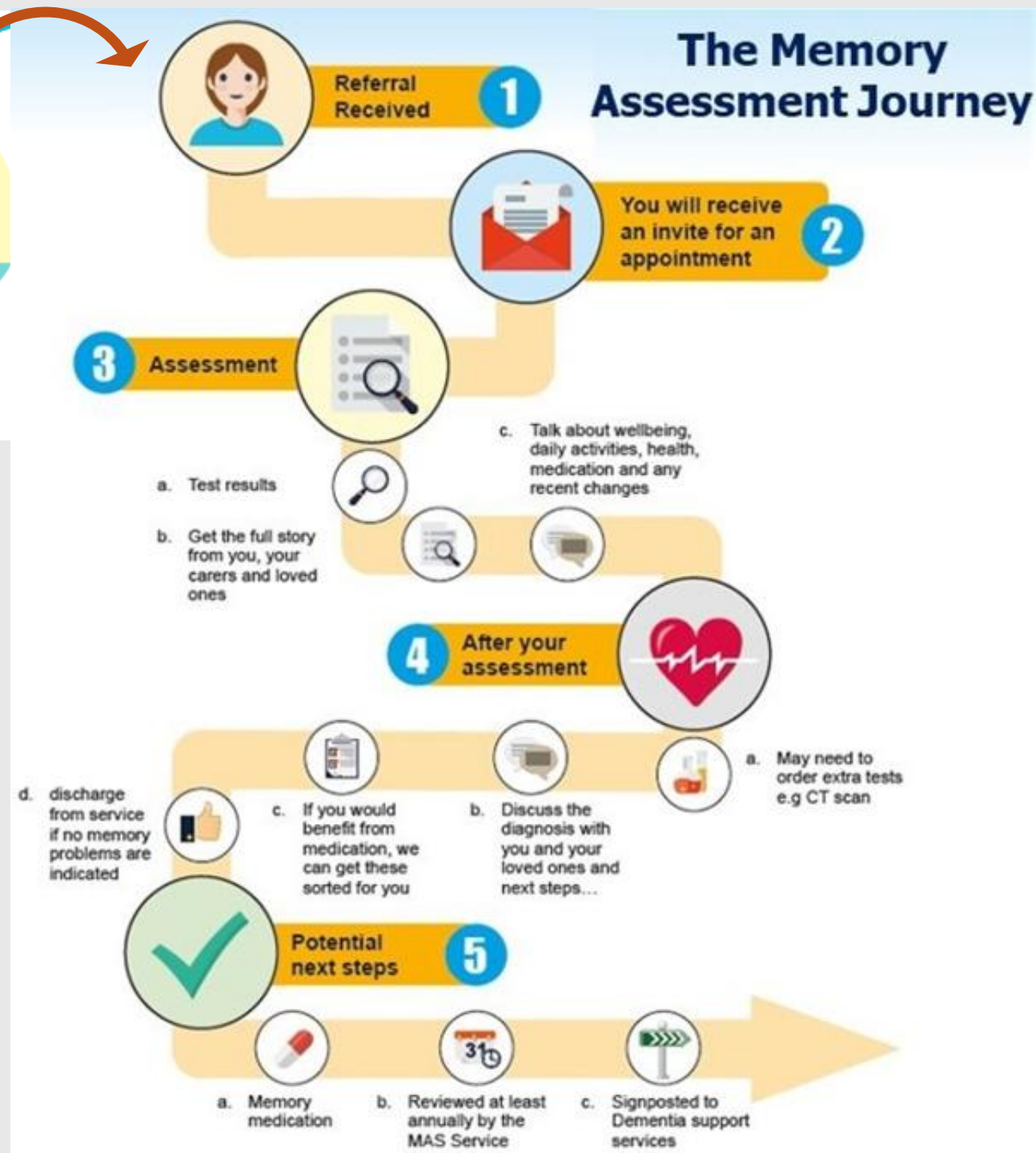
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Diagnosing Dementia

NHS Wait time for Dementia diagnosis is increasing

2025: 19.6 weeks

2021: 17.7 weeks

2019: 13 weeks

Mean wait time between referral to diagnosis increased by 4.7 weeks

Overall Wait Time



During this wait, people are left without support or access to easy-to-digest information & can feel isolated

What does my diagnosis mean?

What happens at an appointment?



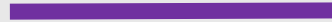
I need to talk about my concerns



Could Conversational AI help?



Chatbots trained on NHS
Dementia documents



Answer questions using
vetted information



Specialist AI could provide 24/7 accurate information in a more accessible way

AI can simplify medical jargon, and
signpost to relevant information sites

AI can provide an overview of what
to expect at NHS appointments



Conversational AI can
provide 24/7 social support



**This does not replace
doctors or family support*



How Do Communities
Feel About Using AI
Chatbots During The
Diagnosis Process?



What Additional
Barriers Could
Bilingual Groups
Face?

The Models

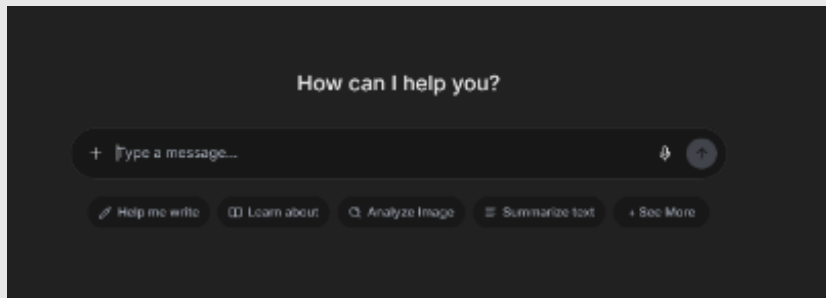
Somali & Chinese communities tested
3 AI Chatbots:



- ☒ **1. Avatar-Based AI (D-ID style)**
Humanistic talking
Voice + visual presence



- ☒ **2. AI Companion (Replika)**
Designed for chatting
More social tone



- **3. Text & Voice-Based AI (OpenAI Assistant)**

Chatbots for Information > Social



1) Interpreting Medical Outcomes

- Rephrase/ Translate doctor's letters
- Support brain health



2) Preparing for appointments

- Track symptoms to discuss with doctors
- Translate questions for appointment

"help us to prepare for a GP appointment and keep a note so we're not put on the spot"

'Getting an interpreter is difficult so AI could help me with translation [during a GP appointment]'



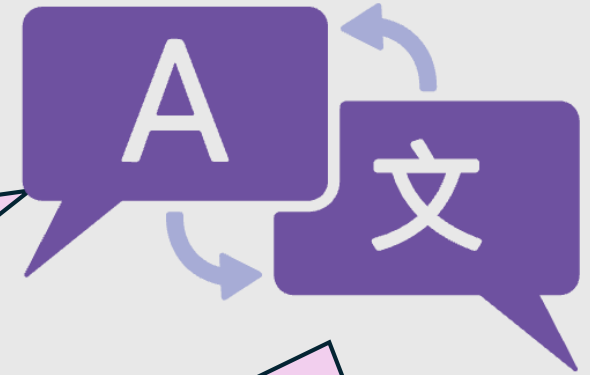
Concerns with AI

"Having a companion would be nice ... I go days without opening my mouth... it would help the lonely"



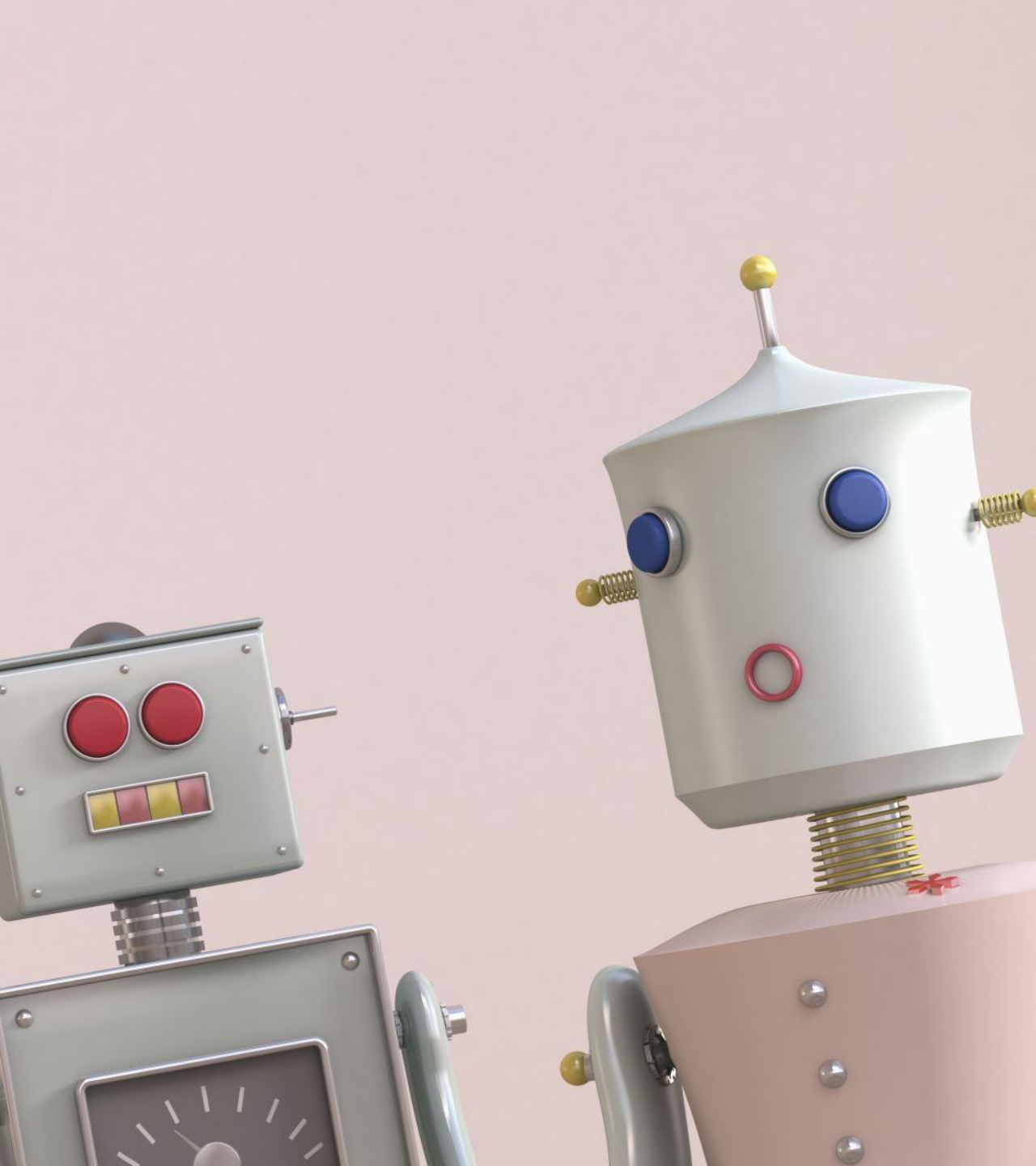
"I would prefer to talk to a person, especially for emotional topics"

"when I have to speak in my second language [English] is harder and feels different emotionally"



The AI worked in Chinese but struggled with Somali

'It should be a family discussion about whether to use these models, and how to use them... it should be monitored how long they [the plwd] use it each day'



Conclusion

- AI offers an accessible method for **getting information** and **preparing for appointments**
- **BUT human social** interaction > chatbots
- More funding and resources should be put towards social support & Training on AI literacy



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Sheffield**

Acknowledgements

- Dr Mohamed Mohamed
- Lise Sproson
- Dr Daniel Blackburn
- Dr Jennifer MacRitchie
- Dr Neil Lowrie
- Dr Jim Ang (Uni of Kent)
- Dr Anna Xygkou-Tsiamoulou (Uni of Kent)
- Melika Vafafar (Uni of Kent)

Community Centres:

- Muse Jama & Sahra Abdi
- Sai Lee & Candice Wang
- Sheffield Chinese Community
- Israac Somali Community

