Health figures: an open source JavaScript library for health data visualization

Background
The way we look at data has a great impact on how we can understand it, particularly when the data is related to health and wellness. Due to the increased use of self-tracking devices and the ongoing shift towards preventive medicine, better understanding of our health data is an important part of improving the general welfare of the citizens. Electronic Health Records, self-tracking devices and mobile applications provide a rich variety of data but it often becomes difficult to understand. We implemented the hFigures library inspired on the hGraph visualization with additional improvements. The purpose of the library is to provide a visual representation of the evolution of health measurements in a complete and useful manner.

Results
We researched the usefulness and usability of the library by building an application for health data visualization in a health coaching program. We performed a user evaluation with Heuristic Evaluation, Controlled User Testing and Usability Questionnaires. In the Heuristics Evaluation the average response was 6.3 out of 7 points and the Cognitive Walkthrough done by usability experts indicated no design or mismatch errors. In the CSUQ usability test the system obtained an average score of 6.13 out of 7, and in the ASQ usability test the overall satisfaction score was 6.64 out of 7.

Conclusions
We developed hFigures, an open source library for visualizing a complete, accurate and normalized graphical representation of health data. The idea is based on the concept of the hGraph but it provides additional key features, including a comparison of multiple health measurements over time. We conducted a usability evaluation of the library as a key component of an application for health and wellness monitoring. The results indicate that the data visualization library was helpful in assisting users in understanding health data and its evolution over time.

General information
State: Published
Ministry of Education publication type: A1 Journal article-refereed
Organisations: Department of Signal Processing, Research group: Personal Health Informatics- PHI
Authors: Ledesma, A., Al-Musawi, M., Nieminen, H.
Publication date: 22 Mar 2016
Peer-reviewed: Yes

Publication information
Journal: BMC Medical Informatics and Decision Making
Volume: 16
Issue number: 1
Article number: 38
ISSN (Print): 1472-6947
Ratings:
Scopus rating (2016): SJR 1.021 SNIP 1.125 CiteScore 2.27
Scopus rating (2015): SJR 1.055 SNIP 1.391 CiteScore 2.63
Scopus rating (2014): SJR 0.89 SNIP 1.199 CiteScore 2.01
Scopus rating (2013): SJR 0.693 SNIP 1.236 CiteScore 2.02
Scopus rating (2012): SJR 0.783 SNIP 1.229 CiteScore 2.14
Scopus rating (2011): SJR 1.053 SNIP 1.634 CiteScore 2.57
Scopus rating (2010): SJR 1.084 SNIP 1.678
Scopus rating (2009): SJR 0.87 SNIP 1.508
Scopus rating (2008): SJR 0.797 SNIP 1.576
Scopus rating (2007): SJR 0.653 SNIP 1.415
Scopus rating (2006): SJR 0.426 SNIP 1.125
Scopus rating (2005): SJR 0.3 SNIP 0.812
Scopus rating (2004): SJR 0.258 SNIP 1.073
Scopus rating (2003): SJR 0.351 SNIP 1.957
Scopus rating (2002): SJR 0.547 SNIP 0.244
Original language: English
Keywords: Data visualization, Health data, Health informatics, Javascript
Electronic versions:
hFiguresLedesmaEtAl
DOIs:
10.1186/s12911-016-0275-6
Links:
http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:ttty-201603243765