

Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists
Product Recognition Program

Report of the review of the Qcard



Available online at www.caot.ca/prp



Report last updated August 2016

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Specific questions related to this product(s) (including usage, availability, pricing, etc.) should be addressed directly to the manufacturer and/or distributor. Please visit Qcard.ca. Concerns or questions related to the content of this report should be addressed to Julie Lapointe, Director of Professional Practice, at jlapointe@caot.ca or at 1 (800) 434-2268 ext. 260

The conclusions presented in the current report are derived from the best information available. In the case that new information becomes available and grants a modification to the conclusions, CAOT reserves the right to update and issue a new report of this product at any time.

Acknowledgement

The generation of this report would not have been possible without the contribution of occupational therapists and members of the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists (CAOT).



Executive Summary

The Qcard is a memory aid phone application designed to help people with memory and cognitive impairments plan and remember daily living tasks. Reviewers have recommended this technology if used under the following circumstances a) the technology is readily available to the client (e.g., the client already has an Apple product), b) someone is able to provide the client with technical support such as programming of tasks and c) the therapist is supporting the initial programming and integration of the application. The Qcard application has been accepted for the CAOT Product Recognition Program.



Qcard is recognized by CAOT.



Review report

The purpose of this product

This mobile application (app) aims to assist people with mild cognitive impairments (i.e., having short-term memory deficits and/or organizational or planning issues) or intellectual disabilities remember tasks and be more independent. This app provides auditory and visual reminders that help in task organization, sequencing and appointment scheduling.

Performance of the product (efficacy, usability, safety, reliability, durability)

- For Apple product users, this app is easy to install on the device.
- The online “tutorial” is a helpful component as an overview, but the use of the app still requires some exploration and a trial and error approach.
- Creating a Reminder Card can be done in as little as 3 steps: shake the device, type and save. The Guided Tasks require a greater number of steps to set up, therefore users may require assistance. To assist this process, occupational therapists may create commonly used Guided Tasks on their own Qcard app and simply send them to their clients.
- Once the tasks and reminder are scheduled, the organization of the home screen allows access to most of the program components with a single swipe, which simplifies the use of the app.
- The app design relies mainly on text. In a future version, the design of the app could be further improved by increasing the text size and replacing text with visual design when possible.
- Each Guided Task allows the user to create a series of steps to be completed with programmed reminders. This feature is a potential benefit for users. A minor shortcoming is that the space provided to label the steps is limited to about 35 characters. The user may require more space to identify the steps.
- When a task is due to be completed, the app sends a reminder (message with an audible sound as a cue) approximately every minute until the user marks the task as complete. This repeated alert supports users to take action and to prevent them from forgetting or dismissing it by accident. However, the persistent sound and vibration can become disruptive if the phone cannot or should not be accessed at the time (e.g., when driving or in a meeting).
- In terms of maintenance, it would be helpful to schedule a data clean up to avoid confusion and clutter with many Reminder Cards.

Economic considerations (value for money, retail and customer service)

- This app is currently only available on Apple OS, which may be a barrier for several potential users. An Android platform is under development and would increase access.
- Qcard requires a monthly subscription, currently set at around \$3 per month in the Apple App Store. There is also a lifetime upgrade version available for \$299 USD (\$399 CAD), providing the user with free updates for life. These price have been judged by reviewers to limit the number of individuals who would obtain a benefit equitable to this ongoing cost.



Scientific evidence

- To our knowledge, there is currently no published clinical trial assessing the effectiveness of mobile applications in helping people remember and initiate tasks. One case study reported that text alerts from an electronic calendar was effective as a memory aid (Baldwin & Powell, 2015).

Use in the occupational therapy practice

- This app could be very useful for people with mild cognitive impairments (i.e., having short-term memory deficits and/or organizational or planning issues) or intellectual disabilities to help them remember to do various self-care, productivity and leisure occupations, including taking medication, taking out the garbage, checking mail, watering house plants, paying bills, changing furnace filters every year and attending appointments.
- This app should be recommended if a) the technology is readily available to the client (e.g., they already have an Apple product), b) someone is able to provide technical support and c) the therapist can support the proper integration of the app for the client.
- In addition, engaging family members in supporting the use of this app might further develop the family cohesion on the organization of activities.

Review committee

The three occupational therapists involved in the review of this product have garnered knowledge, skills and experience in recommending this technology to their clients. Two of them have been involved in research activities related to the development and assessment of health interventions delivered through mobile technology.

Final recommendation

This app is recognized by CAOT if used under the following circumstances a) the technology is readily available to the client (e.g., the client already has an Apple product), b) someone is able to provide technical support such as programming of tasks and c) the therapist is supporting the initial programming and integration of the application.

References

Baldwin, V. N., & Powell, T. (2015). Google Calendar: A single case experimental design study of a man with severe memory problems. *Neuropsychol Rehabil*, 25(4), 617-636. doi:10.1080/09602011.2014.956764