

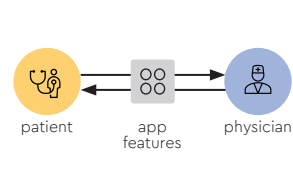
Activating Insights with Systemic Design: Implement Lasting Measures in Healthcare Systems

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Research X Design – our motto at Point Blank – describes an invaluable symbiosis for activating insights. This is especially true for the healthcare sector, which is characterized by its complexity. In order to create impact in this context, you need systemic thinking: this means embedding insights and possible solutions in existing products and processes in the healthcare ecosystem and creating interfaces between them. With the help of Systemic Design, we can develop compatible solutions that have lasting effects on the optimization of the entire system.

Micro-Level: Human Perspective

Methods: Market Research, Design Thinking for developing human-centered solutions, e.g. developing app features



Macro-Level: Systems Perspective

Methods: Systemic Design for visualizing and analyzing, e.g. implementing app into existing digital infrastructures

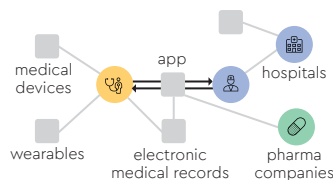


Figure: Micro- and macro-level in comparison as used in app development

The Idea:

Grounding & Activating Insights Through Systemic Design

All too often, insights from market research are not consistently implemented. One reason for this is the fact that they are not properly transferred from the study participant's individual perspective into the "big picture" of the healthcare sector. Existing products, processes and services of different stakeholders often are not fully taken into account, making implementation difficult.

A change in perspective can help: first, market research results, e.g. from interviews with patients, are verbalized as insights which then help to create solutions that are centered on the *patient's needs*. Bridging the gap between the individual's perspective and the big picture is helpful in developing *lasting* solutions.

Systemic Design fills this gap by visualizing relevant structures and processes connected to the stakeholders concerned. Based on Systems Thinking, we can define and analyze components of a system – e.g. stakeholders, products, services – and the relationships between them. It complements the human-centered approach of Qualitative Market Research and Design Thinking with a higher-level perspective and contextualizes the insights. This synergy ensures an integrated approach, especially for interventions in complex problems in healthcare (De Savigny & Adam, 2009; Mugadza, 2015).

The Procedure:

1. Provide an Initial Overview

- Outline stakeholders and existing structures as a basis for initial hypotheses: Which stakeholders are key to the success of the project? Which services already exist? Which problems are already known?

2. Research, Analyze and Formulate Insights

- Adapt interview questions based on the initial overview
- Analyze research results with the help of the overview
- Formulate insights while taking into account the individual participant's perspective and the system as a whole. What are the pain-points on the patient side? Are there systemic causes for these, are there effects on a product or process?

3. Visualize the Ecosystem and Apply the Insights

- Outline the relationships, processes, and information flows between the stakeholders. Which processes take too long? How can we mitigate this? Where are gaps in the system that we need to bridge?
- Apply ideas (e.g. from workshops with study participants): What changes in the system if we insert idea A in place X? What are the resulting recommendations?

4. Activate Insights by Utilizing the System

- Use the system as a strategic playground in internal workshops: What does this entail in terms of strategy at the micro level, what at the macro level? What are the next steps and measures?
- For future-proof measures, also consider trends and your own strategy: How will the situation or the system have changed in five years?
- Use Design Thinking methods to develop ideas at the micro-level: How do we create human-centered solutions to existing and future challenges?

Key Takeaways:

01 Research x Systemic Design = Lasting Solutions in the System! Visualizing with a Systemic Design approach helps to correctly assess individual opinions and ideas and to derive viable recommendations for the project.

02 Don't be Afraid of Complexity! Initially, an increase in complexity is inevitable to provide decisive recommendations. This way, interrelationships become clear, and the consequences of system-changing ideas can be assessed.

03 Flexible Change of Perspective as a Strategic Tool! Transform your body of knowledge into a strategic tool that can be zoomed into or out of as needed:

- Macro-level = patterns and long-term changes, Systemic Design supports analyzing and strategic planning
- Micro-level = human need, Design Thinking supports prototyping of tangible interventions (IDEO U, 2022).

For further information on Systemic Design in Market Research, please contact jelena.bebic@point-blank.net.

Sources

De Savigny, D. & Adam, T. (2009). *Systems thinking for health systems strengthening*. Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, WHO. DOI:10.13140/2.1.4720.4325.

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Mugadza, G. (2015). Systems Thinking and Design Thinking: Complimentary Approaches?. *Systems Thinking World Journal: Reflection in Action*. [Online Journal]. 3. [Referred 2015-2-9]. ISSN-L 2242-8577.