

John Radcliffe employs innovative mobile technology to ease MRI anxieties in young patients

- **The MRI Scan App from Siemens Healthcare is helping children understand the process of a scan in more depth to reduce fear**
- **Increasing the chance of young patients undergoing a successful awake scan, reducing the need for anaesthetic**

John Radcliffe Children's Hospital, part of Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust, has introduced a new mobile application during its MRI scan play preparation which is helping ease children's potential fears and anxieties around the imaging process. Many young patients who attend an MRI scan come with pre-conceived ideas around the noise, the closed environment and having to lie still for long periods of time with parents at a distance. The [MRI Scan App](#) from Siemens Healthcare is enabling children to gain clear, fun and reliable information plus play out the experience and learn coping mechanisms.

"Play preparation is a great method of familiarising a child with a procedure and gives the opportunity to eliminate any misconceptions in a format that is age appropriate," states Sarah Browne, Health Play Specialist at Oxford's Children's Hospital. "The process can help the child face, express or cope with fear or anxiety, putting them at greater ease during an MRI scan and other procedures. If a child is unable to complete a scan awake, waiting times and results will be delayed and anaesthetics will potentially be needed. This has a knock-on effect on the length of their stay, meaning greater hospital resources are required to accommodate them."

Oxford's Children's Hospital has been using a tablet device hosting the MRI Scan App from Siemens since its launch in the summer. It is used alongside a number of other resources such as a Siemens MRI model scanner and figures, preparation

books, a play tunnel, ear plugs and music. The tools are used in conjunction with each other in order to help children understand the process of an MRI scan in more depth and reduce the amount of anxiety, increasing the chance of a successful awake scan.

Sarah Browne continues, “The MRI Scan App from Siemens Healthcare brings a new element of interactivity to scan preparation; the features provide a realistic experience that gives the child control. It also provides answers to common questions and the games are very appealing to a young audience. Most children already know how to use a tablet device so the technology is a natural extension of activities from at home or school. Ideally we would like to take all children to see the scanner before an examination but this is not always possible. The app provides a 360-degree view which gives the best possible experience of a scan prior to their own.”

The MRI Scan App includes friendly characters and interactive features in an understandable format for children. The 360-degree virtual MRI scan means children can lie down or lean back and move their tablets around to virtually experience an MRI scan. It also provides realistic sound comparisons, comparing the sound of an MRI scan to other real-life noises, including wind, traffic, a vacuum cleaner and a dog barking.

The Siemens MRI Scan app is available to download free of charge for tablet devices from both [iTunes](#) and [Google Play](#).

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Picture caption: Sarah Browne, Play Specialist at John Radcliffe Children's Hospital is using the MRI Scan App from Siemens Healthcare during MRI play preparation with her young patients.

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strength are: cancer, cardiovascular science, diabetes, endocrinology & metabolism, infection and immunology, musculoskeletal science, neuroscience and reproduction and development. The Trust has been designated as a major trauma centre and is one of four UK centres for craniofacial surgery and The Trust employs 11,000 staff and consists of four hospitals: the Churchill Hospital, John Radcliffe Hospital and Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre in Oxford and the Horton General Hospital in Banbury. www.ouh.nhs.uk