



FDA's Idea Lab Seeks to Reimagine Device Use in the Home Through New Virtual Reality Prototype

January 2, 2025

Reading Time : **1 min**

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On December 30, 2024, FDA unveiled an Idea Lab as part of its Home as a Health Care Hub initiative to reimagine how new and existing medical devices can be incorporated in a home environment.

As previously discussed here, FDA created the Home as a Health Care Hub to advance health equity across the United States. In April 2024, the agency began working on an Idea Lab to help developers design new solutions, visualize how their medical devices can integrate into people's homes and daily lives, and ensure compatibility with other health technologies. FDA chose people living with diabetes as its first test case.

The Idea Lab features Lilypad™, a virtual reality prototype, designed to immerse users into various affordable housing environments of people living with diabetes—a chronic condition impacting millions of Americans. Available online, Lilypad™ offers a realistic view into the challenges and barriers these individuals face in managing their condition. The software will allow users to visualize and create integrative solutions, innovate new home use devices and adapt existing devices to better meet patient needs in the home environment.

In addition to Lilypad™, the Idea Lab provides insights from patients, caregivers, providers, and experts and landscape research on different design opportunities with the goal of helping FDA, innovators and other stakeholders better understand how current medical devices operate in people's homes and daily lives. On the Idea Lab's web page, interested parties can explore fictional patient personas, the Lilypad™ virtual reality (VR) experience, key questions and considerations for innovators, and research and insights.

Numerous companies are already exploring VR as a means of demonstrating at-home and point of care use cases for their medical technologies. FDA's Idea Lab provides an additional opportunity to explore opportunities for at-home uses with FDA.

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