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Virtual Human Simulations Launched to Help Manage Real-Life Conversations in Primary Care and Family Settings

Health Professionals, Family Care Providers, Patients and Parents Invited to Experience and Share Feedback on Simulations to Advance Collaborative Conversations About Health

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Kognito, a leader in conversation simulations featuring virtual humans, announced today the launch of a series of four new conversation experiences available to help users build skills related to physical, emotional and social health. The modules were created and are available to public users on a new website – www.conversationsforhealth.com – through the support of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the nation's largest philanthropy dedicated solely to health.

One of the simulated conversations is called Primary Care Office Visit: Antibiotics and takes place during an office visit between a physician and a patient who has been coughing for a week and strongly believes that antibiotics are the only solution to help her get better. The simulation has two versions and allows the user to play the role of the physician or the patient. Users also get advice from Dr. Martin Blaser, one of the TIME 100 Most Influential People and the Chair of the President's Advisory Council on Combating Antibiotic-Resistant Bacteria (CARB).

Another simulation, called Building Family Bonds: A Virtual Home Visit, takes place during a home visit between a family support provider and a single mom and her 3-year old son. The simulation allows the user to play the provider and coach the mom on why and how to read with her son.

The Calm Parents, Healthy Kids simulation is for parents with children aged 2 to 5 years old. The simulation allows the user to play a parent and learn about managing a child's behavior during stressful situations, such as a tantrum in the supermarket or a fight with another child on the playground.

The virtual humans are fully animated, are coded to possess a human personality and adapt their behaviors to the dialogue decisions of the learner. At the conclusion of each simulation, a dashboard provides feedback to the user on their performance.

The simulations were commissioned by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and developed by Kognito using the Kognito Conversation Platform™ with input from experts in motivational interviewing, patient/parent engagement, medical education and child development. Users can also review the summary results of two preliminary pilot research studies of the simulated conversations, one conducted by the NYU School of Medicine and one at New Jersey Family Connections.

"We are excited to develop and release this series of conversation simulations with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation," said Ron Goldman, Co-founder and CEO of Kognito. "Conversations are powerful tools to drive behavior change and these simulations will allow large audiences to learn and practice how to harness this power to improve provider- patient communication and parent-child interactions."

Lois Drapin, MPS-HSA, Kognito's SVP, New Health Markets added, "When we take the view of individual and population health, the roles of conversation, human intervention and technology are inexorably intertwined. Healthcare organizations can look to use Kognito's research-proven approach to behavior change featuring virtual human technology to move the needle on adherence, patient engagement, professional communication and coaching, treatment decisions and choices - really, wherever there is an opportunity to activate, motivate others or yourself, to develop a new skill or change an attitude."

The conversation simulations are available at no cost for people who have access to the Internet. Healthcare, family support, and research entities or others that wish to use the simulations with a group of fifty or more may request a no-cost license through the site.

"Kognito's simulations represent a new and creative approach to engage providers and parents that we hope will inform our journey to build a Culture of Health across the country," said Lori Melichar, Director, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. "By making them broadly available, we want to learn if virtual conversations can support better communication to improve the quality of our health care and help parents raise healthy children."

About Kognito

Kognito is a proven leader in developing conversation simulations featuring emotionally responsive virtual humans to enable conversations that make a difference in social, emotional, and physical health. Kognito's growing portfolio of research-proven conversation simulations is licensed by over 450 leading health, education, nonprofit and government agencies. Kognito is the only company with health simulations listed in the National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP). For more information, visit www.Kognito.com and follow Kognito on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Vimeo.