Fun and educational technologies for children in hospices
It’s all about socialisation and not isolation,” sums up Pam Howson, Head of Care at Demelza Kent Children’s Hospice, when describing the impact Kinect has had on the children there. “It is a very inclusive fun activity and draws everyone together.

Six-year-old Sophie is like a lot of the children who visit Demelza House, a children’s hospice built in the traditional Kent oast house style and situated in a peaceful country setting on the north coast of the county. She has problems with her coordination which often means she is unable to play games requiring dexterity, and in the past this has led to her feeling isolated.

However, since the Kinect was donated as part of the Lifelites package for the children of Demelza Kent*, Sophie’s world has expanded.

Unlike other computers games which rely on the ability to use hand held controls, the amazing new up-to-the-minute interactive toy allows your own body to become the controller. The 360 Kinect camera tracks your movements on a TV screen, recognises your voice and scans objects into games. As no hand held controller is needed to play the new games, children can use their bodies to create whatever movement is possible for them. So for many children whose disabilities and limited dexterity means they are unable to use traditional games consoles, all of a sudden, it’s about what they can do rather than what they can’t.

Playing on the Kinect has boosted Sophie’s confidence as she is now able to join in with the other children and have fun.

Pam said, “She was on it non-stop during her last visit, it was wonderful as it really brought her out of herself. It helps to increase her confidence as she can use whatever movement she does have. It helps with her concentration too.”

The Kinect is hooked up to a huge flat screen TV and is one of the focal points of the hospice’s main living area.

“It’s great for children with visual problems as it really draws them in. We already have a TV with the normal channels in one corner and I was adamant I didn’t want this one to be the same. I wanted it to be an interactive part of the hospice so it is only used to play games,” Pam explained. “Because so many of the children who come here are isolated, I wanted this area – with the Kinect– to be about socialising and spending time together with each other and their families.”

In 2011, three families stayed at the hospice over the Easter weekend and the games were a great way for them to spend quality time together.
Hayley, a member of the care team, said, “It encourages great bonding time. For instance, one of our boys, Thomas, and his Dad chilled out together and spent some time on the Kinect over the family weekend...just a bit of normal father/son time which was just lovely to see.”

James, a care team member, said, “This is really cutting edge, the next level really and completely brilliant. The great thing about it is that it is not a barrier for anyone; as long as you can move, you can play. It provides quality time and means the family can be a family.”

There was even a ‘dance off’ competition between the families staying with their children over the weekend.

Pam said, “It was just great; it really broke down the barriers and helped them to relax. For a group of families to come in and do activities together it helps them form friendships which in turn helps to build support networks with each other and that is invaluable when you think about what they have to cope with.”

Pam told us, “We had a newly bereaved family recently and the Kinect was very therapeutic for the brother and sister. Bereaved siblings often drop in and out of a difficult situation and it was a good outlet for them when they just needed some distraction and time away and yet could stay within the hospice.”

Hayley explained, “It’s been fantastic. It is so clever. The dancing program is great and it lets everyone interact...of all ages really.”

“The younger ones enjoy dancing and bowling, and they like the animal avatar game too.”

James believes that, “…as long as they are old enough to be engaged by it, they really love it.”

For teenagers, dancing and sports games such as tennis are a big draw and a teenagers’ weekend saw the Kinect in almost constant use. A trip was organised with some of the older children to buy more games, using the donated vouchers.

Pam said, “We wanted to empower the children and young people, and by choosing their own games, they are given control over their leisure time, and they are more likely to play them.

“Having the Kinect has just been fantastic for us, really wonderful and we are very grateful to Lifelites.”

* With thanks to the Jeremy Willson Charitable Trust.
We are really grateful for all the work that has gone into making this new equipment possible and also the care in the installation and training. It is a real bonus to have equipment which is so tailored to the needs of our children.

Ian Sparks, Chief Executive, Haven House

The children will love the Lifelites package . . . The fact that it is so interactive enables the children with very complex needs to be able to use it, which is fantastic. Thank you so, so much.

Helen Thrower, Play Specialist, EACH Milton

On behalf of Demelza and the families we support I would like to thank you for Lifelites’ ongoing support which you so generously offer and which enables us to continue to brighten the lives of the children and their families whilst they are with us.

Debbie McSwiney, Acting Head of Care, Demelza Kent

When I asked one of the young men what the best bit about the new extension was, he replied “the touch screen computer!” . . . The computers have proved a real talking point and they help our new teenage lodge to offer something that is truly unique and special to the young people who use it.

Andrea Cail, General Manager, Derian House

We are really grateful for all the work that has gone into making this new equipment possible and also the care in the installation and training. It is a real bonus to have equipment which is so tailored to the needs of our children.

Ian Sparks, Chief Executive, Haven House
What’s in a Lifelites package at each children’s hospice?

Below are examples of the equipment and services provided by Lifelites, depending on the funds we have available and the requirements at each site.

- **Annual broadband and web-filtering** - protecting the children whilst they surf the net
- **Digital camera** - for fun and educational projects
- **Digital camcorder** - for making memories and films
- **Head operated mouse** - for children with limited hand movement
- **Specialist software** - for children with disabilities to use
- **HD wide touch screen computer** - for children who can’t use a mouse
- **Annual Sky grant** - to relax in front of their favourite programmes
- **Annual helpline and on site maintenance costs** - keeping the equipment in working order at all times
- **Training day** - teaching care staff how to make the most of the equipment
- **Xbox 360 console with Kinect and games** - for children who can’t hold a traditional gaming control
- **Specialist wireless keyboard and mouse** - protecting the children whilst they surf the net
- **What’s in a Lifelites package at each children’s hospice?**
It has been another hectic and rewarding year for the small Lifelites team and much has been achieved over the past 12 months. Seeing the faces of young people at children’s hospices light up with delight at the new equipment we have provided, shows us that what we do for them is exactly what they want.

Listening to the care staff at our training sessions commenting on all the specialist technologies and software, we hear how they adapt these to the education and entertainment of the children they work with. This tells us that we are right to concentrate on resources which will help children with disabilities to use the equipment for themselves and enjoy their lives to their best of their abilities.

As well as providing new packages at 12 sites and maintaining our network to keep the equipment working for these children for whom every second counts, we have taken a long hard look at our service delivery and cost effectiveness. The result has been a radical move away from the major supplier which served us well since the early days of Lifelites, to a much smaller company which is dedicating most of its time to working with Lifelites.

We are proud to say that in 2011, with the addition of Northern Ireland Children’s Hospice to our portfolio, we are now firmly established as a UK-wide charity. However, at the same time as aiming to provide our equipment and services for every children’s hospice in the country, we are endeavouring to ensure that our on-going costs are not increased beyond our ability to provide for the ever expanding network of children’s hospices.

Broadband remains a major expenditure for Lifelites and plans are being put in place to save substantial sums on this important resource, whilst still keeping the children safe online while they surf.

None of this would be possible without the dedicated support of the Lifelites volunteers at each hospice who are there to help make sure that everything is kept in good working order. Nor would we be able to carry on with our work without our growing band of donors making such generous contributions to our funds. Thank you.

Mike Woodcock
Chair of Trustees

Andrew Ross
Chair of Lifelites
Management Committee

Simone Enefer-Doy
Chief Executive
Facts and Figures

Geographical area covered by Lifelites = **UK wide**
Number of children’s hospices in the UK by 2012 = **44**
Number of children’s hospices served by Lifelites = **All 44**

Age of children looked after in children’s hospices = **0 – 18 years**
Number of children and their families benefiting from the work of Lifelites = **Approximately 7,000**

Percentage of Lifelites expenditure spent delivering equipment and services for children in hospices in 2010 = **78%**
Funding for Lifelites from donations = **100%**
Funding for Lifelites from statutory sources = **0%**
Funding for Lifelites from children’s hospices = **0%**

The average cost of installing a new Lifelites package at a hospice = **£12,000**
The average annual support and development costs = **£5,000 per hospice**

Number of new Lifelites packages installed in 2010 = **12**
Number of new Lifelites packages installed in 2011 = **17**
Brand new projects for Lifelites in 2011:
= Northern Ireland Children’s Hospice
= The Treehouse
= Forget-Me-Not
= Little Harbour
= St Oswald’s Young Person’s Unit

“With this [the head mouse and on-screen keyboard from Lifelites], there are some young people whose ‘voices’ you would be able to ‘hear’ for the first time ever – they will be able to ‘speak’ to us.”

Care Worker at training session on the new Lifelites equipment, Douglas House
The continuing support from the Thomas Cook Children’s Charity over the last two years has enabled Lifelites to offer children at 25 children’s hospices around the UK the opportunity to enjoy their very own ‘flights of fantasy.’ At each location, these funds have covered the cost of purchasing a high spec computer with a wide HD screen and flight simulator software with an authentic joystick. Through these wonders of technology, children whose lives are necessarily restricted by their conditions can have the pleasure of flying a virtual plane for themselves. Thanks to this help, they can escape from the reality of their illness by taking themselves anywhere in the world with this wonderfully realistic game.

The Thomas Cook Children’s Charity’s donation has also covered the cost of an amazing up-to-the-minute wide HD touch screen computer and lots of fun software for use with a wide variety of special computer accessories that help children with limited movement and dexterity to play the games for themselves.

The addition of the state-of-the-art Kinect technology is continuing to help Lifelites develop the best package for children in hospices. It helps the children enjoy an experience that is very different to the often restrictive routine of their days living with a terminal illness.

Staff from Thomas Cook are continuing to attend the official events that celebrate the installation of Lifelites equipment at most of the hospices. They are instantly enthusiastic about the technology, saying how much they think the children will love using it. Experiencing the fun of the simulator has led to claims that they need a copy of this software for themselves for ‘research purposes’.

“We’re delighted that our donation is enabling so many children to have the opportunity to experience the world of travel for themselves. The technology that Lifelites provides has such a positive impact on both the children and their families and we’re thrilled that we can help them offer this to more children’s hospices throughout the UK.”

Manny Fontenla-Novoa, Group CEO and Chairman of the Thomas Cook Children’s Charity
Support for technology for children in hospices from “Children with Cancer UK”

A very generous donation of £48,000 came to Lifelites this year from Children with Leukaemia (now Children with Cancer UK). The major motivation for this was their trustees understanding of how much the Lifelites equipment means to children with cancers and leukaemia, particularly when they have to spend so much time away from their homes, friends and families in a children’s hospice.

Hearing the responses of care workers who spoke about the safe internet provided by Lifelites which gives these young people the chance to keep in contact with their lives beyond the hospice walls – and maintain a sense of ‘normality’ in their lives - helped to secure this generous support.

Their trustees appreciated that many children with cancers would be frustrated by the lack of control they had over what happens to them. So they could see that with the specialist technologies Lifelites provided, the children had the ability to continue to use the equipment for themselves for as long as possible, giving them the chance to express themselves and have a degree of independence, long after they have lost control over many other aspects of their lives.

They valued the way in which Lifelites facilities can act as a welcome distraction from illness and the painful treatments the youngsters may be receiving.

On behalf of the children we serve we are very grateful to the trustees of Children with Cancer UK for their kind support for our work in 2011.

NON-FINANCIAL SUPPORT
The Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys (RMTGB)

Lifelites was originally the millennium project of the RMTGB. Now a separate charity, we continue to benefit from their support through the donation of offices, administration and accountancy services. This helps to keep overheads to a minimum so more of our donations can be put directly towards providing technology to improve the lives of children in hospices. This support is invaluable and we would like to record our grateful thanks for their continued generosity.
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Coutts Charitable Trust
Holborn Station London Underground Ltd, staff & customers
Jacqueline and Michael Gee Charitable Trust
Justin Hughes
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Dixons Sheffield Call Centre
Thomas Cook Children’s Charity

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Nova Lodge
Robert Redwood
Sanitarian Lodge
St George’s Esher Lodge
The Charles Littlewood Hill Trust
The Denton Wilde Sapte Charitable Trust
The Edward and Dorothy Cadbury Trust
The Grey Court Trust
The Lynn Foundation
The N Smith Charitable Settlement
The Northampton Queen’s Institute
Relief in Sickness Fund
The Rind Foundation

Gifts in Kind

The Royal Masonic Trust for Girls and Boys
Charity Technology Exchange and Microsoft
Lifelites Hospice Volunteers
Members of Lifelites Technical Advisory Panel
REACH Volunteers
The Worshipful Company of Information Technologists
The Worshipful Company of Marketors
Thinkology
Double-win triumph for Lifelites at the Technology 4 Good Awards

Lifelites was the toast of the inaugural Technology 4 Good Awards, winning both the Accessibility Award and the Best in Show.

Simone Enefer-Doy, Lifelites Chief Executive (pictured above right), said she could not believe the charity’s success against stiff competition at the awards which took place at the BT Centre.

Presented by broadcaster Mariella Frostrup, the awards aim to highlight organisations and individuals across the country who use computers and the internet to make the world a better place.

In their own words, “The Technology 4 Good Awards is an opportunity for outstanding and inspirational achievements in digital inclusion to obtain national recognition for the first time.”

Speaking about the experience, Simone said, “We won not only in our Accessibility category, but were also voted the Best in Show by the audience of over 200 on the night. We were amazed to be chosen from among more than 250 entrants to come through to win for Lifelites. It’s great to be recognised for the hard work we do to enhance the lives of around 7,000 terminally ill children in all 44 children’s hospices around the UK.”

“And it’s thanks to all our supporters for helping Lifelites become the charity it is today and helping us to win such a fantastic acknowledgement of the work we do.”

Surevine and Pelicam

Lifelites was delighted to be nominated as Chosen Charity by software developers Surevine.

The passionate team of skilled software developers and social media domain experts said they felt Lifelites was a brilliant fit for them.

Employee Laura Gill has already signed up to the Run to the Beat half-marathon in September to raise money for Lifelites and the company have lots of other fundraising activities and fun events in the pipeline.

We are also grateful for the continued support of Pelicam Project Assurance. A team of 6 from the company signed up to a Brighton to London bike ride and are determined to raise lots more for Lifelites.
Dixons staff rise to the challenge

Staff at Dixons Retail Plc are also doing their bit for Lifelites as their Chosen Charity. At PC World and Currys Megastore in Poole, they raised £1,000 – which will be generously doubled by the Dixons Foundation – by holding imaginative events such as an in store Ironing Day where customers donated £1 per item to be ironed by a staff volunteer.

A Playstation F1 Challenge event was also a big hit with customers as they battled to beat in-store game player Richard Smith’s record lap time of 1 minute 45 seconds. A donation of £1 per attempt was accepted.

Despite valiant efforts from customers, Richard was undefeated and a fantastic £230 was raised for Lifelites.

Fundraising Fun

From abseils to half-marathons, our supporters have been pushing their limits to raise money for Lifelites.

Sam Smith completed the Brighton Half-Marathon in a fantastic 1 hour and 52 minutes and raised £789 for us. A brilliant achievement!

Dave Foy brought in an amazing £900 by taking part in a sponsored abseil down Guys Hospital in London, while Epsom Rotaract Club realised £1,326 for Lifelites by holding a Race Night. The night saw about 90 people placing bets, taking part in a raffle and enjoying other fundraising games like stand up bingo.

Five people signed up to run the British 10K in 2011 and there are lots of other fun activities in the pipeline, including the London Bupa 10K in May 2012 which will run along part of the Olympic route. Anyone else who is interested in fundraising for Lifelites should call us on 020 7440 4200.
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Summary of financial information

Lifelites expenditure 2010

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<td>Providing technology for children in hospices</td>
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<td>Governance</td>
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<td><strong>Total expenditure</strong></td>
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Donations by type

- **23%** Companies and their staff
- **31%** Community groups
- **35%** Charitable trusts
- **11%** Individuals

To request a copy of our detailed Annual Report and Accounts 2010, please call us on 0207 440 4200. Alternatively, the detailed report can be viewed on our record on the Charity Commission website www.charity-commission.gov.uk

“From our point of view, the ability, (through the support of Lifelites) to offer such an amazing range of up to date computer games and equipment adds real value to what we are able to do. Most of the children who use our hospices are significantly disabled and cannot participate in the activities other children take for granted. Lifelites provision of specialised and adapted computer equipment to our hospices lets us give the children access to a virtual world with endless possibilities and the chance to take part on an equal level with their peers.”

Children’s Hospice South West
Our patrons

The Earl Cadogan: Lord Cadogan holds several children’s causes within his portfolio of good works and was one of the original trustees of Lifelites back in 1999. He has pledged to continue his support as a regular donor and honorary Patron, lending his significant kudos to our work.

Peter Bowles: One of the nation’s best loved actors, we are delighted Peter has chosen to support our cause. A prolific performer, he is keen to highlight the issue of funding for children’s hospices which are so dependent on charity. He is impressed with the Lifelites initiative and the way in which it gives children in hospices the chance to live, learn and play with technology.

Baroness Finlay: Having won wide ranging respect as a champion of children’s palliative care, the Baroness is well known as the voice of reason when it comes to lobbying with regard to a long-term funding solution for children’s hospices. She said, “As a keen supporter of these initiatives for the benefit of terminally ill children, I am delighted to undertake this honorary patronage of Lifelites.”

Lady Pamela Kalms MBE: Lifelites newest patron is Lady Pamela Kalms MBE (wife of the Founder and the current President of Dixons Retail Plc). She has worked extensively in the Health Service, Social Services and the wider Voluntary Sector. Lady Kalms said, “I am delighted to become a Patron of Lifelites and am looking forward to supporting and contributing to the wonderful work Lifelites does for children and young people within children’s hospices around the country.”