

# LONG LIVE CHILDHOOD...

## Exploring How Technology Can Better Support the Social Well-Being of Hospitalized Childhood Cancer Patients

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### Problem + Motivation

Children with cancer report feelings of social isolation, loneliness and loss of a normal childhood as their disease, treatment and environment keep them from peers and normal childhood activities. However, few studies explore how technology plays a role in the social lives of hospitalized children with cancer or how technology may be used to better support social well-being in children confined to hospital spaces.

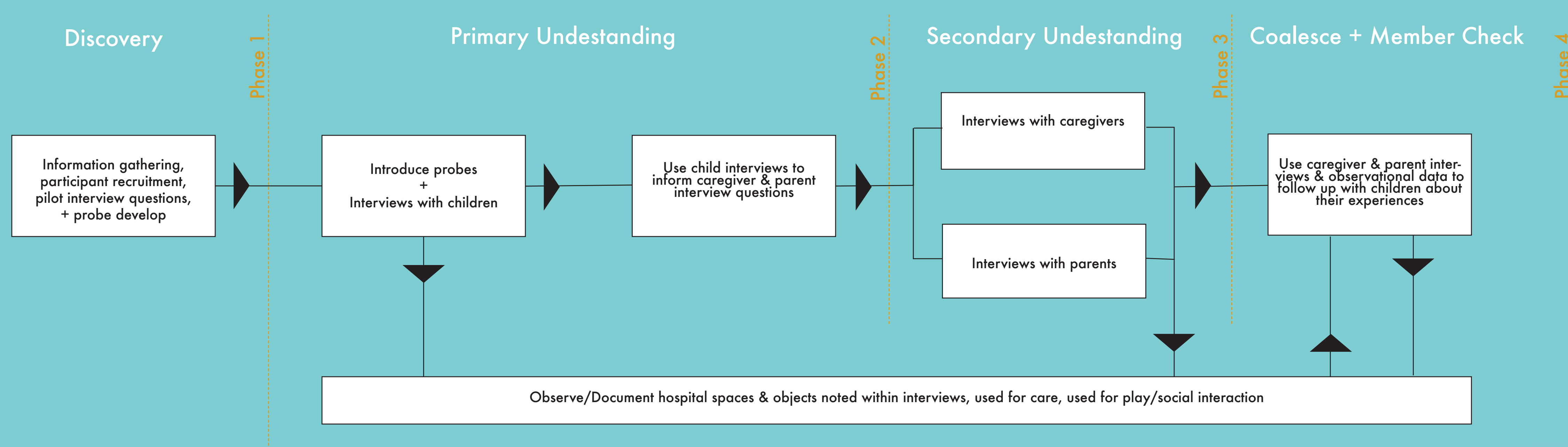


### Research Goals + Contribution

I will explore the opportunities and challenges for designing technology aimed at alleviating social well-being issues related to loneliness, isolation and loss of a normal childhood for child patients in the hospital environment. To inform future design studies I will examine how existing social supports are sufficient or not, how the physical and cultural environment of the hospital play a role in these feelings and influence support for technology usage, and how parental concerns influence the use of technology for social purposes.

### Proposed Data Collection Methods

An exploratory qualitative study will be conducted that employs mixed methods for data collection. In-depth semi-structured interviews will be paired – for child participants – with a photo-based experience probe. These types of probes assist the researcher in understanding the children's hospital experience from their point of view, as well as promotes agency in the children as partners in the research. Parents and caregivers will also be interviewed, and observations will be done. Overview below.



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