**ImmersiCare** **by Tribemix**

In May 2014, Alex Smale founded a social media marketing agency called Tribemix. Until January 2015, that was all they were until they created an award winning virtual reality system called ImmersiCare. The target audience for this device is hospice and long-term care centers, specifically for elderly patients with dementia. On their website, ImmersiCare sells a bundle that includes their virtual reality software, an Asus laptop, and an Oculus rift headset with handheld controllers for a completely immersive experience. When users put on the headset, they are greeted to scenery such as scuba diving, an African safari, or a stroll on the beach complete with dolphins and other animals.

The most notable facility that uses this product is St. Raphael’s, a long-term care facility in East Sussex with 90% of their residents suffering from some form of dementia. The patients sit down in a comfortable chair in the facility and are equipped with an Oculus rift headset that transports them to a faraway land that they would have never been able to experience otherwise. This form of treatment is the first of its kind for dementia care. It has been shown to reduce pain and for some patients it is twice as effective as morphine, reducing their dependence on a highly addictive pain medication. ImmersiCare has also been proven to reduce stress levels in work environments where it is being implemented by 70%. Also, with this virtual reality application there is no risk for dizziness or any negative physical side effects.

There are many other companies that are also in the virtual reality for health care space, like ImmersiCare. One of their direct competitors is a San Diego based company called Rendever. Their product and audience are similar, but they are smaller than ImmersiCare and a bit later to the market. However, they do fill the gap for this type of technology in the US while ImmersiCare mainly services the UK. There are also other similar devices with different purposes such as Virtually Better which offers therapy for anxiety, depression, and phobias through VR exposure. Another example is Bravemind, a VR headset-based system for treating PTSD in returned soldiers.

In conclusion, ImmersiCare was a ground-breaking company for VR used for dementia care and has now spread in to quality of life improvements for other patients and even doctors that work in these facilities. It is not the only product of this type on the market, but it is one of the biggest and will continue to grow into other applications in the health care realm.

**References**

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