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Home > Conferences > CCS > Proceedings > WPES '12 > Understanding sharing preferences and behavior for mHealth devices

RESEARCH-ARTICLE



Understanding sharing preferences and behavior for mHealth devices

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preferences and behavior f...
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ABSTRACT
References
Index Terms
Comments

ABSTRACT

If people are not in control of the collection and sharing of their personal health information collected using mobile health (mHealth) devices and applications, privacy concerns could limit their willingness to use and reduce potential benefits provided via mHealth. We investigated users' willingness to share their personal information, collected using mHealth sensing devices, with their family, friends, third parties, and the public. Previous work employed hypothetical scenarios, surveys and interviews to understand people's information-sharing behavior; to the best of our knowledge, ours is the first privacy study where participants actually have the option to share their own information with real people. We expect our results can guide the development of privacy controls for mobile devices and applications that collect any personal and activity information, not restricted to health or fitness information.



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1/3

to share could be information that is indirectly collected by the mobile devices. 3) We confirmed that privacy concerns are not static; mHealth device users may change their sharing decisions over time. Based on our findings, we emphasize the need for sensible default settings and flexible privacy controls to allow people to choose different settings for different recipients, and to change their sharing settings at any time.

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2/3

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