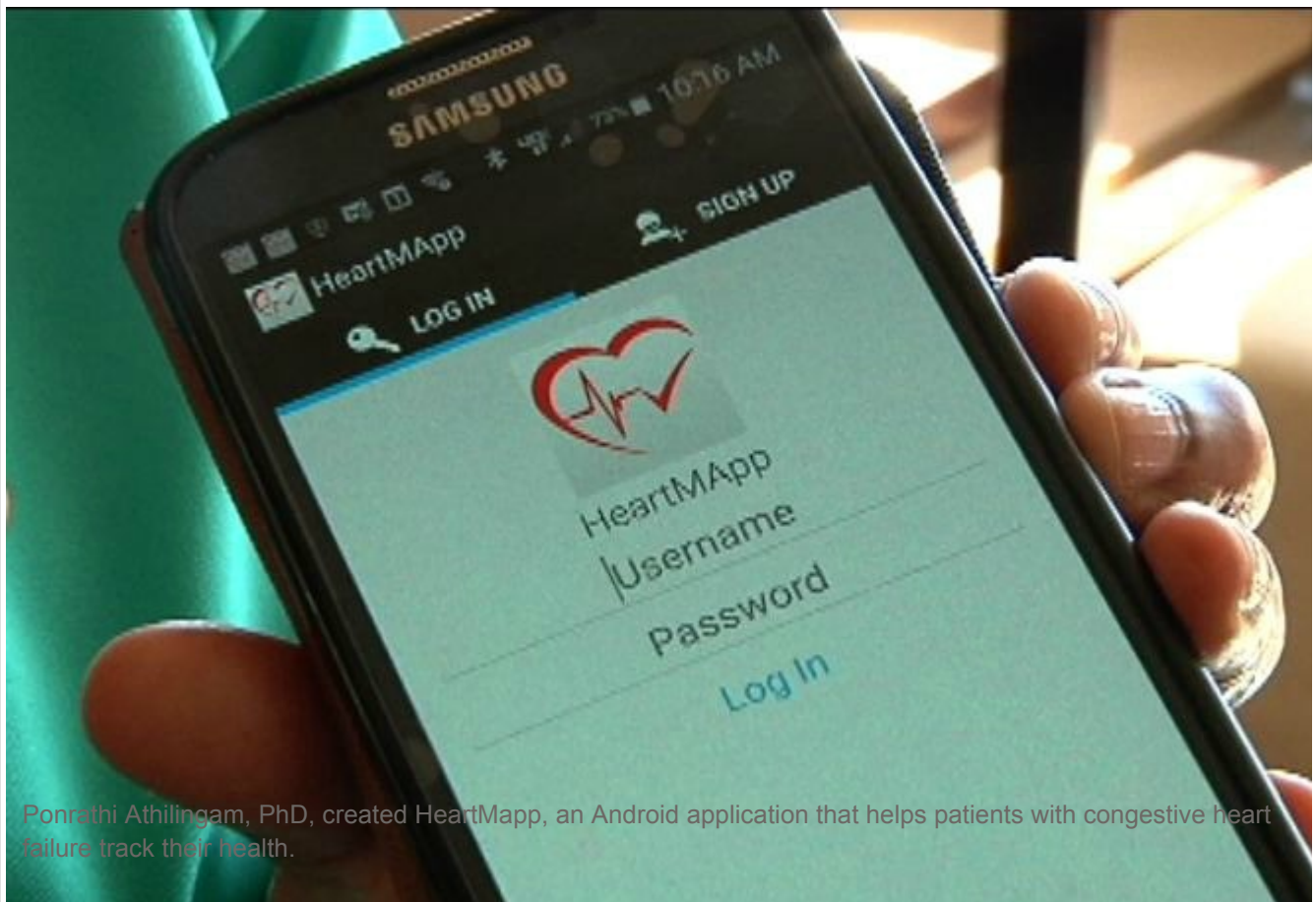




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USF professor creates app to track heart health



Ponrathi Athilingam, PhD, created HeartMapp, an Android application that helps patients with congestive heart failure track their health.

By [Sara Belsole](#), Reporter

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TAMPA -- A University of South Florida nursing professor knows the way to patients' hearts.

Ponrathi Athilingam, PhD, created HeartMapp, an Android application that helps patients with congestive heart failure track their health.

"I think everybody has a phone now and it's like a toy for even older adults, they can Skype with their grandchildrer They carry their phone everywhere they go," Athilingam said.

Athilingam worked with Miguel Labrador, PhD, a professor at the USF Department of Computer Science and Engineering, to create the app.

Athilingam said the goal of the app is to give the patients a better way to self-monitor and cut down on costly hospital readmissions. If a patient is readmitted 30 days after they are released, the hospital does not get reimbursed for the second admission. Hospitals are also penalized for high readmission rates.

"I thought we are teaching them, but still patients are not able to follow the instructions that we give," Athilingam said.

HeartMapp gives patients a daily assessment by tracking vital signs, asking questions and monitoring symptoms. The app then gives advice on what to do, from taking medication to making a doctor's appointment.

The app also sends reminders to take medications and users can input their doctor's information into their profile to send updates.

"I think it's an awesome technology that will help patients with heart failure and decrease readmission rates," Bradlee Jenkins, a first year PhD student said. Jenkins is one of the students helping Athilingam with HeartMapp.

The app is still in its testing phase, but recently was accepted into the National Science Foundation's Innovation Corps program.

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