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Conference abstract

Formative evaluation of a regional health portal in the Netherlands

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Abstract

Background: Zorgportaal Rijnmond (www.zorgportaalrijnmond.nl) is a Dutch health portal catering to the Rotterdam-Rijnmond region. Its targets include providing healthcare information to citizens, improving communication between patients and healthcare professionals, and creating 'uniformity' between healthcare providers in the region.

Methodology: A formative evaluation of Zorgportaal Rijnmond is conducted over a period of three years, during which PhD researcher Marcello Aspria provides feedback to the stakeholders of the project. The objectives of this evaluation are threefold: to describe the integration process between a regional internet platform and international standards; to gain insights in how electronic patient records and telecare applications affect relations between doctors and patients; and to determine which competences and levels of knowledge are presupposed when making healthcare-related information publicly available through an online portal.

The evaluation is conducted from a sociotechnical perspective, focusing on configurations of human actors, material objects, standards, infrastructures, laws, and norms. Social practices within these configurations serve as primary (qualitative) research data; the evaluation also encompasses document research and quantitative data-analysis. This presentation explains the formative character of the evaluation process, and draws from ethnographical observations of a web-based education project for cystic fibrosis patients.

Keywords

health portal, formative evaluation, action research, ethnography, e-health
