
POSTER ABSTRACT**The psychosocial impacts of e-care technology use for long-term care recipients and informal carers**

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Introduction

With longevity and shortages in formal and informal care provision, e-care solutions are considered an important approach to support people in their own homes. ICT-based assistive services have the potential to improve the quality of life, safety, well-being and interpersonal relationships for long-term care recipients and their informal carers. However, little evidence is available about the potential of e-care services in relation to the reported psychosocial impact of end-users. The study aims to identify the psychosocial impact of e-care technology use among long-term care recipients.

Aims Objectives Theory or Methods

Data from a national project “Evaluating pilot projects in the field of long-term care in Slovenia” is used. The evaluation uses a mixed-methods design. E-care services were tested in 6-12 month intervention study using a one-group post-test only design. Long-term care services were available to adults that have applied and reached the eligibility threshold. Surveys were administered to care recipients and informal carers using standardized survey inventories (PIADS-10). The qualitative phase involved semi-structured interviews among e-care recipients and informal carers in the times of physical distancing measures during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is an important external factor in the study.

Highlights or Results or Key Findings

A total of 131 end users tested various e-care services, namely base unit with SOS button, wearable SOS button, fall detector, movement and door sensors, smoke detector, flood detector. Factor analysis of the indicators revealed two factors: 1. effects on perceived competencies (i.e. feeling competent and effective, being independent) and self-esteem (perceived higher self-confidence and well-being, feelings of happiness, security, feelings of power and control); 2. effects on perceived adaptability (ability to cooperate, try new things, and seize opportunities). The qualitative study revealed important positive and negative psychosocial effects on end users and informal carers. The main effects seem to be of psychological nature, especially for informal carers (i. e. a greater sense of security, certainty, calmness, relaxation and improved general well-being, less frequently also increased anxiety and fear).

Conclusions

The presentation will focus on the analysis of psychosocial impacts of e-care technology use for long-term care recipients. A mixed-method design is used, combining questionnaires and semi-structured telephone interviews with users of e-care services in the community setting in the time of physical-distancing measures due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Implications for applicability/transferability sustainability and limitations

The study has large sustainability potential. By testing proposed solutions in pilot activities and by studying their value, we might increase the likelihood of the inclusion of e-care services to Long-term care law, which represents a major step forward in the field of uptake of e-care technologies in Slovenia.