The aim of the Active and Assistive Living AAL joint programme is to provide “equipment and services for the independent living of seniors”1. Depaoli 2016 shows in his research that most AAL solutions are technology driven and not adequately centered on service innovations and social innovations2. Additionally, it deems challenging to achieve the intended impact due to a lack of business implementation. It is therefore crucial to involve all levels of users and stakeholders throughout the project. Primary end-users the older adults, sometimes with cognitive decline, secondary end-users informal and professional carers and tertiary end-users branche organizations, local governments and insurance companies all have their own needs and preferences regarding their involvement. Though primary and secondary end-users are increasingly involved during the development of assistive technologies 3, not much is known on how the Dutch tertiary users want to contribute to the process. To gain insights on this a focus group was conducted N=9 to test the following hypotheses: 1. Stakeholders have troubles to be involved in the early fuzzy phases of the development of technology, 2. Stakeholders do not want to invest in products that are ready-to-go-to-market but are out of their current scope, 3. Stakeholders are still unsure about the exact role they can take in projects regarding new technology. A semi-structured group discussion was performed by using five different examples of AAL projects e.g. eWare4, DayGuide5, PaletteV26, Co-TRAIN7 and Happy Walker8. These projects differ in outcomes and are currently in different phases of development. Using a diverse set of exemplary projects is an unique method to spark the discussion on several factors. It was stated that healthcare insurers and municipalities could further facilitate the implementation when it is demonstrated that a technology has added value for their insured and citizens. In addition, it was proposed that organizations that represent the interests of the target group could impose functional requirements on the technology, to give direction to projects and to steer the agenda of research and development. For insurers, it was appointed that there is also a tension between supporting in technology projects on the one hand, and the higher premiums to which it could lead on the other hand. However, overall, the sense of urgency among different tertiary stakeholders that they have a responsibility in facilitating the use of new technology is increasing. Further research will focus on close collaboration with tertiary users in how they can contribute to the development process effectively.
References:

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