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Statement of Topic:

Taking health information behaviour into account in the development of e-health services

Significance and Relevance of the Topic

Many e-health services and technologies have been unsuccessful in bringing sustainable innovations into health care practices. The state-of-the-art e-health research has underlined the need for a new, holistic approach to the development of technologies that addresses “the complexity of health care and the rituals and habits of patients and other stakeholders” (van Gemert-Pijnen et al., 2011). E-health services and technologies often fail to acknowledge the interdependency of technology, socioeconomic environment and the entire spectrum of people’s health information behaviour. Consumer health technologies have extensively been created assuming that presumptive users can

identify their health needs and have the ability to receive, understand, prioritize and access resources to meet them (Hesse and Shneiderman, 2007). It has, however, become clear that a “one size fits all” approach has a limited impact (Colineau and Paris, 2009; Enwald, 2013).

The major contribution discussed in the poster from the perspective of health information behaviour research is that it proposes a holistic point of view on e-Health, the use and users of e-health services that acknowledges the interdependency of human information behaviour, technology, and the socioeconomic environment, which has been lacking from previous research. The findings inform research in the field of health information behaviour and e-health, but also in related fields ranging from medical informatics to human-computer interaction, public health and computer science. The practical significance of the project is that by using an action research approach it provides directly applicable information on user practices and the actual utility value of the studied e-health services that can be used both in improving existing services and in developing new ones.

Content

The poster describes the ongoing work of the research project “Taking Health Information Behaviour into Account: implications of a neglected element for successful implementation of consumer health technologies on older adults (HIBA)“, funded by the Academy of Finland.

The objective of the project is to develop comprehensible, manageable and, in particular, more meaningful and user friendly e-health services in the future. The poster discusses the three specific questions and the related findings from the project so far: 1) How do older adults (born 1946-1960) with a chronic condition experience the usefulness, effectiveness, trustworthiness and privacy of e-health services?; 2) Do existing e-health services have an impact on issues related to older adults’ health information behaviour?; and 3) How can e-health services be tailored to effectively fit older adults’ everyday health information behaviour? What are characteristic features of such tailored services?

Abstract

The poster describes the ongoing work of the Academy of Finland funded research project “Taking Health Information Behaviour into Account: implications of a neglected element for successful implementation of consumer health technologies on older adults (HIBA)“. The objective of the project is to develop comprehensible, manageable and, in particular, more meaningful and user friendly e-health services in the future. The starting point of the project is that the current crucial challenge for healthcare and medicine is not the *lack* of available treatments, but rather a *deficit* of patient involvement and consumer-focused provision of health information. In comparison to earlier research, the HIBA project aims at providing a holistic point of view on e-Health, the use and users of e-health services that acknowledges the interdependency of human information behaviour, technology, and the socioeconomic environment.

References

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