

M. ORTEGA, C. GAMERO. *The relationship between independence, well-being and the use of Internet among elderly in the UK*. *Gerontechnology* 2012;11(2):257; doi:10.4017/gt.2012.11.02.600.00 **Purpose** The purpose of this study is to analyse internet use among the elderly in UK and the relation between this behaviour and their capacity to live independently, as well as how this influences their well-being and sustains digital engagement. The aim is to prove the influence that the knowledge and the use of this specific ICT could have in increasing of the ability to prolong their life style as independent people, living in their own houses and resolving as many instrumental activities of daily living (IADL) independently as possible. The other purpose consists of proving the influence of internet usage on their well-being. We should take into account: education, sex, age and socio-economic status to investigate the relationship for different types of aging processes. Older people spend significantly more time listening to the radio and watching TV than the average population, but those over 65 years of age accounted only for 6% of internet users in the UK in 2010. New digital technologies can improve older adult's quality of life and support their independence by providing access to online services, information and communication with friends and family<sup>1</sup>. **Method** The first part consists of a descriptive analysis of the use of internet among the elderly in UK. In order to prove the relation between the use of internet and the increasing independence and well being two groups of elderly will be compared, those that don't use Internet and those that do. We will also distinguish different groups according age, sex, education and socio-economic status. The second part consists of an explanatory analysis to determine the factors that predispose the elderly to use the internet in UK. To do so we will develop a 'probit model' analysis. The unit of analysis will be older people (men and women over 65 years old). The source of data will be the UK Data of the World Internet Survey<sup>2</sup>, and the ICT usage in household and by individuals<sup>3</sup>. **Results & Discussion** We demonstrated that those elderly who start using internet to get in touch with their relatives keep using it for more and different purposes. These results sustain the idea that improving internet use to resolve different tasks would improve the independence of older people and would contribute to a reduction of several government costs. The results suggest that public policies should encourage older people to adopt internet to ensure continued learning, civic participation, independence and well-being throughout later years.

#### References

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