PAPER

Technology for Independence

M. HAUFE, S.T.M PEEK, K.G. LUIJKX. Matching assistive technology to independent-living seniors' individual needs: challenges and opportunities. Gerontechnology 2018;17(Suppl):142s; https://doi.org/10.4017/gt.2018.17.s.138.00 **Purpose** Assistive technology, such as personal alarms or remote control systems, have the potential to support seniors in living independently. However, many seniors do not recognize assistive technology as relevant to their personal needs and circumstances[1]. Professionals tasked with matching seniors' (implicit) needs with existing assistive technology solutions can play an important role[2]. By being sensitive to the specific challenges and context of independent living, they can offer and implement assistive technology that fits best with a senior's individual situation. Currently, not much is known about these professionals' challenges in seeking to optimally match assistive technology with seniors, or what is needed to overcome these challenges. **Method** We conducted action research[3] in the city of The Hague, Netherlands, in three phases. In phase one, we sought to understand the current matching practice as performed by two municipal technology consultants. This was done by observing 10 conversations they had with seniors, followed by interviews with both technology consultants and seniors. In phase two, we conducted three co-creation sessions with technology consultants in which we reflected on challenges and opportunities with regards to the matching process. Subsequently, we co-created a new matching tool that was tested out in another 6 conversations with seniors. The Cycle of Technology Acquirement by Independent-Living Seniors (C-TAILS) model[4], which can be used to understand both origins and consequences of technology acquirement by independent-living seniors, was used as a theoretical lens. **Results & Discussion** Important challenges for municipal technology consultants in their current matchmaking practice are: (1) How to create an accurate and complete overview of the relevant factors within the seniors' individual situation so that an optimal match can be made; and (2) How to know if the timing is right to offer a technological solution. Together with technology consultants, we have created a new tool to better include each senior's personal, social, physical and technological context, when matching technologies to seniors' needs. The tool also takes into account that these contexts are subject to change, and that certain contexts provide more opportunities for successful matching than others. This tool is currently being evaluated in practice.

References
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