

POSTER

Health and Self-Esteem

A. DAS, J. REITAN. *Telehealth follow-up of patients with chronic conditions: Implications concerning patient perceived wellbeing. Gerontechnology 2018;17(Suppl):155s; <https://doi.org/10.4017/gt.2018.17.s.151.00>* **Purpose** People with chronic conditions are increasingly being managed at home due to new structures of providing healthcare. One approach to facilitate patients with chronic conditions, is to provide telehealth solutions, which enables remote diagnosis, monitoring and management of such conditions^{1,2}. Barriers and enablers to telehealth solutions have been identified, but careful understandings on patients' perspectives towards such is required, as patient acceptance is one of the most important influences on future implementation of telehealth³. In municipal healthcare in Norway, four ongoing trials are exploring telehealth follow-up to patients with chronic conditions (e.g. COPD, diabetes, heart failure), which are respectively under implementation in each its city: Trondheim, Oslo, Sarpsborg and Stavanger. Each trial has slightly different service pathways, however, they all have in common that the patients use a tablet computer application to report on own health condition, and where healthcare professionals at a telehealth centre provide follow-up accordingly. In this paper, we report on the patients' perceived wellbeing of being enrolled to such a telehealth follow-up service. **Method** In 2017, a total of 750 patients had been enrolled to the four telehealth service trials, and where 485 patients were registered as active users. We conducted qualitative semi-structured interviews with 43 patients in the age range of 52-92 years, enrolled in one of the telehealth services. The interviews had a duration of 1-2 hours each, and were conducted as individual or group interviews. The interviews were tape recorded, and analysed inductively. **Results & Discussion** The interviews revealed that most patients experienced a perceived enhanced safety and wellbeing of being enrolled to a telehealth follow-up service. Five factors influenced the patients' perceived safety and wellbeing: 1) easy access to healthcare, 2) healthcare surveillance of patient reported data, 3) healthcare initiated contact with patients, 4) professionals' provision of social support, and 5) professionals' competence. Our findings imply that telehealth follow-up for patients with chronic conditions is a valuable approach for enhanced patient experienced safety, and thus wellbeing. This is of value to patients with chronic conditions, as the stress and anxiety that many of them experience due to their condition influences their quality of life. Thus, addressing this may facilitate them to handle their life-lasting condition in an adequate way. Our study indicate that a telehealth solution is well suited for patients that aim to be independent, but who need a low-threshold solution to manage their day to day life.

References

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Address: SINTEF AS, P.O. Box 4760 Torgarden, NO-7465 Trondheim, Norway;

E: anita.das@sintef.no