

POSTER SESSION 2

MCI@work: The role of technology in work and everyday life as experienced by people with MCI or early stage dementia

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This study is part of the MCI@work consortium; a multidisciplinary collaboration between Canada, Finland and Sweden. The overall aim is to develop new knowledge and tools to facilitate continued work and/or transition from work, for persons with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or early stage dementia. One of the first indications of cognitive decline is a change in ability to use technology to execute the cognitively demanding complex tasks required for working and independent living (Jekel et al., 2015). It is also known that activity engagement is a key aspect to wellbeing for older adults (Öhman et al., 2001; Roach & Drummon, 2014). Yet, little is known about how these persons perceive and cope with cognitive decline in relation to technology, the impact of this interaction onto their work situation, and what aspects support continued work and/or transitions out of work. **Purpose:** the aim of this study is to explore the role of technology among people with MCI/dementia in the situation where they recently worked or still are working, including their views on technology as well as the challenges and potentials they see in it, particularly related to their approaches to adapting and managing work and private life with cognitive impairment; **Method:** The study uses a case study design with an ethnographic approach (Atkinson et al., 2014). Participants with MCI or early stage dementia from Canada, Finland and Sweden (total n=25), recently or still employed/working, have taken part in in-depth interviews focusing on their situation and the role of technology. The Swedish and Finish cases are also followed over time. The analysis uses a constant comparative approach. **Results and Discussion:** The preliminary analysis shows an extensive variation between cases, and throws new light on the meaning of technology as intertwined with everyday life both at work and outside work, in social relations as well as in domestic life among the participants. Based upon the findings, the potentials of technology as a means to support a continued active life - with or without work - are discussed.

References

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