

# ORAL PAPER PRESENTATION 7: OTHERS

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## Screen-based home care visits, care work and old age in the Scandinavian welfare state - the case of Denmark

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**Purpose** Population aging – an increase in the proportion of older people in a population – is predicted to affect all sectors that form the backbone of modern democratic societies. In the attempt to ensure the social and economic sustainability of the welfare state, digital technologies have become essential components in the delivery of care for older adults. Departing in situated care practices among older adults in Denmark, the purpose of this presentation is to contribute to the studies and discussions of the role and effects of digitally mediated care solutions in care practices. **Method** This presentation is based on 4 months of ethnographic fieldwork (qualitative research). The researchers participated in- and observed 10 digitally mediated health/home care visits and 10 digitally mediated rehabilitation programs in homes and in training centers. Furthermore we attended several cultural activities and participated in health care and political forums, where the digitalisation of elder care was discussed. Furthermore the researchers conducted interviews with 15 elderly citizens, 15 healthcare professionals, 5 public health care managers. The research took place on the island of Ærø, Denmark during the early phases of the corona crisis between June and September 2020. **Results and Discussion** Our research shows how a group of healthcare professionals perform their care work with and through screens, and how this work is both facilitated and curtailed by the functionalities, materiality and design features of particular screen technologies. We stress that the use of screens to establish a virtual meeting point between citizens and healthcare professionals, is not solely or simply a technological solution, but instead a material, embodied and technical practice that requires health workers to develop new skills and competencies. We thus identify a need to develop new professional competencies when working with the digitally mediated care and an acknowledgement of the extra work performed by both health professionals and elderly citizens, as well as the complexities involved in introducing digital care.

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**Keywords:** digital technologies, home care visits, older adults, screen-based care, digital care

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