

# OPP: DEMENTIA & TECHNOLOGY

## Caregivers and technology: Need assessment to improve digital contents on Alzheimer's disease

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**Purpose.** This study represents the second phase in a larger project aimed at developing a user-centric digital platform to assist caregivers of people living with Dementia (PwD), specifically Alzheimer's disease. The main objective is to analyse caregivers' opinions regarding digital contents as resources designed to support them, according to a previous study where the areas of need were detected (Piromalli et al., 2023). This approach is supported by the theoretical basis of participatory design in healthcare, which posits that effective digital tools are best created with active input from end-users, thereby ensuring relevance and utility in real-world settings (O'Connor et al., 2016; Cheraghi-Sohi et al., 2023). Additionally, we have gathered caregivers' insights on content they believe would be relevant for individuals diagnosed with Alzheimer's (Read et al., 2020). This analysis will inform the design of a digital platform aimed at supporting both caregivers and individuals recently diagnosed.

**Method** A quantitative study with an *ad hoc* online self-administered survey based on need assessment structure (four areas of needs: information access, professional support, virtual community and task management) according to previous results (Figure 1) addressed to caregivers to pursue a co-creation process and to gain a deeper understanding of their needs. The survey population was drawn from Pasqual Maragall Foundation's (FPM) database targeting individuals who met specific inclusion criteria. Subjects were required to be adult caregivers of relatives with Alzheimer's and must have previously participated in the FPM online or in-person support and therapeutical programs (editions 2021, 2022 and 2023). The survey was provided to an eligible population of 494 caregivers, resulting on a sample of N=147 individuals with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 8%. A univariate and multivariate descriptive analysis was conducted using RStudio to validate or reject relationships among variables. Two separate databases were utilized based on the language of the survey (Catalan and Spanish). **Results and Discussion** In this study, according to the main areas of needs, care task and care information (information access area) were rated as the most useful content by 42,4% of the sample (n=147). In the professional support area, emotional support on communication with the PwD was the most valued content by 74,4% of the survey respondents. As for the virtual community area, 73% of caregivers believed that the most valuable purpose of a digital community is the ability to share strategies, connect, and exchange experiences with people in similar situations. PwD personal calendar (task management area) was rated as the most useful tool by 67,2% of respondents caregivers. From the caregiver's perspective, the most valued resources and areas of interest for the PwD are cognitive stimulation (52,2%) followed by promotion of autonomy (47,8%). To summarise, digital contents on professional support and digital community areas stand out.

### References

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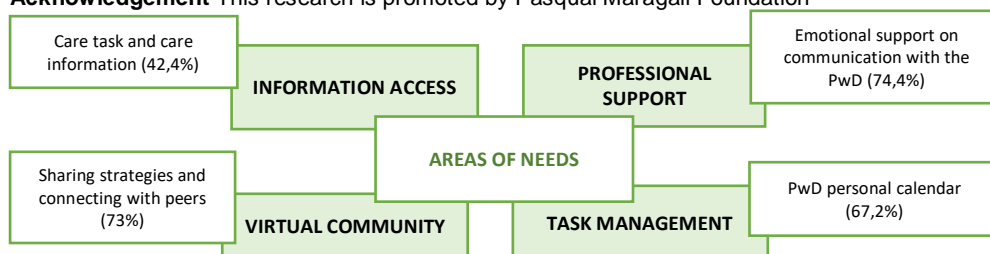


Figure 1. Areas of needs and related digital contents