

Digital Revolution meets PHS. What's Next?

Advanced Technologies Serving Older Persons at Home

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EURAG, founded in 1962, is the oldest transnational organisation
of and for senior citizens

With institutional and individual members in 28 European countries
Has highest consultative status with the United Nations ECOSOC

Ageing at home

- By 2040: 1/3 of Europeans over 65 will be 80 and plus
- Effects: political, social, economic, organisational
- Around 80 % of older persons prefer to age at home
- Care and nursing facilities generally very costly
- Ageing “in the family” is rarely a preferred choice
- Informal supporters and carers become rarer
- “At home” not necessarily means one’s own home
- But “home” is a complex physical and social space

Needs and their coverage

- Older persons want independence & self-determination
- Ageing normally requires more assistance, support, care
- “Home” may be work-intensive and uncomfortable
- Mobile services mostly insufficient and/or not affordable
- Scarcity of well trained, competent, committed carers
- Habitual strategies can no longer solve the problem
- Need of Ambient/Active Assisted Living (AAL) solutions
- Advanced technologies and artificial intelligence (AI)

Improvement of living conditions at home

- Make homes safer, smarter and more comfortable
- Support by detectors, sensors, assistance devices
- Voice-commanded and intuitive home appliances
- Individualised responsive support technologies
- Information, communication, participation systems
- Application of tele-medicine and tele-care methods
- Robots with imbedded artificial intelligence
- Not only assistance but real support and care

Remarkable advantages

- Diversity can be better respected and addressed
- Very different needs & preferences can be served
- Individually tailored assistance and care is easier
- Independence & self-determination in the forefront
- Timely and appropriate preparation of services
- Diverse stakeholders can cooperate better
- Decentralisation and resilience will be reinforced
- Local partnerships can be developed more easily

Issues to be addressed

- Can such technologies really cover personal needs?
- Will high-tech systems and AI robots replace carers?
- Will older persons accept such technologies?
- What can be the barriers against the use of them?
- What about the costs and the accessibility to them?
- Are there issues of safety, control and abuse?
- How about the use of data and their protection?
- Can beneficiaries control and stop robots?

New approach needed

- Progress in science and technology creates chances
- Change in our mindset is of key importance
- Problem solving through imagination & creativity
- Successful engineering is not at all enough
- How to apply artificial intelligence intelligently!
- The needs of the users must be absolutely central
- Be more care-full & respect-full in support and care
- How to balance individual and societal interests?

How to proceed?

- Work on an ethical vision and coordinated strategy
- Co-creation will be absolutely indispensable
- Interdisciplinary cooperation strongly required
- Integrate all stakeholders in concept development
- Full involvement of users in the creation process
- State must insure safety and equal treatment
- Investment in professional/personal competences
- Measures to overcome the “Valley of Death” hurdle

Brief final reflection

- Does AI endanger human dignity and human rights?
- “I am somewhat afraid of artificial intelligence – but definitely I do not want to miss it!”
- Now I do hope that I can still benefit from all these great opportunities “when I grow older, loosing my hair !”

Thanks for your kind attention – and let’s discuss!

Project idea *“The Use of Very Advanced Technologies and Artificial Intelligence in Personal Support and Care Services for Older Persons Living in Their Own Homes”*