

Conference abstract

Usability of assistive technologies in ageing and disabilities

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Abstract

Introduction: Assistive technologies (AT) enable older and/or disabled people to age as long as possible in place by supporting them in various tasks and activities of daily living. AT range from low technologies such as walkers or book holders to high technologies, for instance alarm systems or voice-controlled computer input systems. Besides financial costs and accessibility, usability has the highest impact on actual technology use. Therefore, it is necessary to enhance effectiveness, efficacy and user satisfaction of the technical device.

Review of the literature: Research about awareness and perceptions considering AT and corresponding methodologies is relevant in order to investigate possible barriers and reasons for non-use. Psychological models emphasize the role of attitudes, social norms and self-efficacy. Prerequisites of acceptance and use will be discussed.

Discussion: Although there is a high number and variety of AT in Europe, little is known about acceptance and use of AT. Evidence-based-research is needed in order to enable cost-benefits-analysis of AT. Since enhancement of autonomy and competence of persons with disabilities should also be a matter of health care and social policies, political decisions are necessary for successful implementation of AT and rehabilitation.

Keywords

assistive technology, usability, acceptance, social inclusion

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