Mapping elderly citizen’s computer and ICT use in a small-sized Norwegian Municipality

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Background

• Information and communication technology (ICT)
  • Entertainment
  • Communication
  • Social interaction health and wellbeing
  • Access to services and information

→ Independent living
Europe 2020 - Flagship initiatives

• Smart growth
  – innovation Union
  – Youth on the move

• Sustainable growth
  – resource efficient Europe
  – an industrial policy for the globalisation era

• Inclusive growth
  – an agenda for new skills and jobs
  – European platform against poverty
Digital divide
Quality of life
Research questions

• To what extent are Norwegian elderly people users of computers and the Internet?

• What motivates their use/non-use of the Internet?

• In what areas are there needs for training?
iAge
www.iageproject.eu

• Interreg IVB program for the North Sea Region (2012 – 2014)

• promote e-inclusion among the increasing ageing population in Europe to keep them active and facilitating their participation in social and work life
Grandma on web

• Get insight in ICT-use of elderly people, the motivational factors for such use and to specify their needs as technology users

• design, implementation and evaluation of educational programs to instruct elderly people in ICT use and increase their digital competence
The municipalities of Lillesand and Vennesla
University of Agder

www.uia.no/senter-og-nettverk/senter-for-ehelse-og-omsorgsteknologi

http://www.uia.no/forskning/helse-og-idrettsvitenskap/ehelse

UiA, Campus Grimstad

Centre of eHealth and Healthcare Technology
Methods

• Survey about ICT-use and needs
  – Distributed to 500 inhabitants in Lillesand
  – 178 answers

• Group interviews about ICT-use and needs
  – 3 focus group interviews in Lillesand (10 informants)
Results
Access to and use of computer

Survey:
• 91% had access to computer
• 80% used the computer frequently (daily or weekly)
• 20% used the computer infrequently or never

Focus groups:
• All had access to computer
• All had “some” or “lot of experience” in ICT use
Use

• Extensive experience
  – Online banking
  – Email
  – Sending attachments
  – Reading online newspapers
  – Finding phone numbers
  – Factual information
Barriers to use ICT

• Non-users:
  – Lack of interest

• Users:
  – Lack of interest
  – No need for further training
  – Having other people doing it for them
  – Poor offering of courses
  – Experiences of low usability/episodes of difficulty
Attitudes towards use of ICT

• Reasons starting using Internet
  – Introduced through job or education
  – Order goods/trips
  – To get access to services

• Reasons to continue to use Internet
  – Necessary to follow along
  – Maintain social contact
  – To be included in society
Attitudes towards use of ICT

• Increase quality of life
  – Social life
  – Mental health

• Contribute to self-development and increased self-reliance

• Contribute to inactivity and social isolation
Improvement of ICT-skills

• Survey
  • Ca 75% had “some” or “considerable” need to strengthen their skills
  • Ca 50% wanted to attend courses

• Suggested training topics
  • Genealogy
  • Skype
  • Use of search engines
  • Image processing
  • Organising and editing files
  • Book and order trips
  • Social media and entertainment application
How to facilitate ICT-use among elderly people?

• Initiatives from local municipalities

• Make courses attractive

• Home tuition

• Engage volunteers and schools
Discussion
Access and use of ICT

• Survey:
  – 91% of the participants had access to a computer
  – 80% of the participants were frequent users
Begge kjønn

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Access and use of ICT

• Still a significant proportion of non-users
• Few advanced users
• unused potential when it comes to social media

→ Inform elderly people about the potential of ICT
Barriers

• Lack of knowledge of ICT benefits

• Low usability

• Men more active users

→ educate about the benefits of ICT use
→ taking elderly users into account when designing and updating ICT software
→ Provide training specifically aimed at older women
Attitudes

• Internet a positive contribution

• General skepticism to ICT

→ Technology’s duality
  → Strengthen social and independent lives
  → Contributes to social isolation and passivity
Improvement of ICT skills and facilitating ICT-use

• Offer ICT-courses
  – Non-users
  – Advanced users

• Raise awareness about ICT contribution to social participation and self-efficacy

• Focus on how to reach non-users
  – Low level courses
  – Low course fee
  – Creative arrangements