

Use of information technology in risk groups differs from average use by seniors

It is known that the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) by seniors is increasing, and technological solutions or services may be used to eg. decrease or compensate for health risk. As such it is also important to examine use by subgroups most benefiting from such interventions. Frail elderly are an example of a risk group at an increased risk of falling or loss of independency in daily activities. Frailty is caused by physiological changes associated with age (weight loss, difficulty standing up from chair, lack of energy).

Based on the GASEL survey in 2014, the information technology use and attitudes have been evaluated among frail and non-frail seniors. The results are based on almost 800 responses from persons aged over 65 living in the Oulu region. It was noticed that the ICT use of frail elderly was significantly less, and the attitudes towards technology use among non-users more negative. Among those, who already used ICT in their daily life, there were no attitude differences between the frail and non-frail. These findings were not explained by age, education, diagnosed memory conditions, or visual impairments.



This research highlights the need for various methods of service delivery. According to this study, many of the seniors are ready and willing to take advantage of new ICT services, but the people among highest risk are still difficult to reach through these means. The risk of increasing inequality among seniors is great.