

Digitalized services to support future social and health services

Digitalisation and ICT solutions are tools for better service of social and healthcare clients and in the maintenance of their wellbeing and functional capacity. Digitalisation is about reforming operational processes, digitizing internal processes and electronizing services. Electronic services can also support the citizens' activity in the maintenance of their wellbeing. The population is aging and needs more support to promote wellbeing and health. The development of electronic services should be user-driven. In order to make future integrated social and health services possible, the different areas of social and health services need to be strengthened and professional skills and competencies and introduction of new operational processes need to be supported.

Ahmadinia et al. has studied the electronic services and devices available in Finland as well as benefits and limitations of using these services and devices in people's everyday life. Based on the study the development of sustainable, innovative solutions should take into account factors affecting future eHealth and system efficiency, such as accessibility, costs of development, prospective user preferences and developing practical solutions to minimize the complexity of the systems. More research would be needed on the information needs of e-service users and on finding practical solutions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the e-services.

In low and middle-income countries, simple solutions to e-services allow follow up cancer patients. Sanjay Kumar Yadav et al. has evaluated the effectiveness of using a social media application in terms of compliance to care, satisfaction, and financial cost. Research shows that the social media is a practical tool in the follow up of cancer patients in low- and middle-income countries, where traditional telemedicine tools are restricted and conventional follow up is economically challenging for patients over long distances.

Valuable information to support the development and design of client information systems can be gained by studying user experiences. The article by Ylönen et al. presents user experiences of social care professionals about client information systems. The themes of the survey were technical functioning, usability, support for perceiving the client case as a whole and managing own

work, collaboration and flow of information, as well as the benefits and disadvantages of the systems. The systems were considered to be technically stable and functional, but evaluations of collaboration and the flow of information, time management, and perceiving the client's network in the systems were quite critical.

Different user groups should also be paid attention to when developing electronic services. According to the results of Kivistö et al. persons with disabilities who lead a relatively stable life and have a positive attitude towards electronic disability services (experienced and potential electronic disability services users) appear to utilize electronic disability services more than those whose life situation is unstable and whose experiences of disability services are more problematic (reserved and forced electronic disability services users). The latter tend to use electronic disability services remotely and with less enthusiasm than the experienced and potential users. The willingness and ability of persons with disabilities to use electronic disability services could be increased by improving the usability, availability and accessibility of these services, but this should be accomplished in accordance with the needs of these different types of users.

The skills and competencies of health care personnel is also a key factor in the development of new social and health care e-services. The skills and competencies should be taken into account in the curriculums. The purpose of the study of Outi Ahonen et al. was to find out teachers' views of the assessment tool that has been developed to assess the students' competence in the development of services in health and social care. A previously developed competence assessment tool based on the international curriculum for informatics in health and social care and the descriptions of service design at the European Qualifications Framework level (EQF). The results of the study show that teachers do not require EQF level six in the field of expertise identified in this study. The research confirms the idea that teachers and students from different fields need common expertise in the health and social care area.

One of Finland's strategic goals is to support the independent living of elder people and hence increase the amount of seniors living in their homes - thus decreasing the amount of institutionalization in elderly care.

Under the pressure of answering to the increased demand for home care services, enterprise resource planning (ERP) is taken into use to optimize human resources in home care so that the quality and responsible development of home care services could be secured. According to Miettinen et al. home care ERP system evaluation study, the recommendations that support the use of ERP system include recommen-

dations related to the use of time and quality. In addition, the ERP system should be adapted for the individual needs of the customer organisation. Integration of the ERP system with other systems is also essential to achieve an efficient and functional entity.

Kristiina Häyrinen
Editor-in-Charge