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In terms of technology or human beings? The strategies of reconciling the use of the ERP system and good care in homecare practitioners' everyday work

A wide range of technologies are used in homecare for older people to make care work more efficient and ensure the quality and sufficiency of the care services. One of the most important technologies is an enterprise resource planning system (ERP) designed for managing and organising daily care work and documenting client data. We examine what changes the ERP system brings to the daily delivery of care and the creation of a good caring relationship in homecare. Drawing on a socio-material and practice-oriented framework, we examine how homecare workers describe resolving tensions between the delivery of good care and the use of the mobile ERP in their everyday work. We conducted the qualitative case study in two public homecare organisations in two Finnish municipalities. The research data consist of semi-structured thematic interviews with 12 care workers. We analysed the interview data using content analysis. As a result of the analysis, we found five different strategies for reconciling mobile documenting and good care and four different strategies for reconciling the time allocated by the ERP system and the time needed for good care. The strategies in use indicate the care workers' efforts to nurture and protect the good caring relationship with the client. In their daily work, homecare workers have autonomy to carry out care work on people's terms and to go beyond the embedded features of the ERP system and the expectations related to its use.

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