E-Health: ‘I feel in control of my life’
Exploring innovative forms of support through inclusive research

Zaagsma, M. a b Volkers, K.M. a Schippers, A. b c & van Hove, G. b c

a Philadelphia Care Foundation, the Netherlands b VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, the Netherlands c Disability Studies in the Netherlands

Background and objective
Services for people with intellectual disabilities (ID) increasingly use E-health applications such as Telecare. In the Netherlands, service provider Philadelphia Care Foundation implemented the E-health innovation ‘DigiContact’ as part of their support packages. 1

DigiContact is a videoconferencing program. Users can contact specially trained support professionals 24/7. It is aimed at promoting independence and community participation of adults with ID who live independently in their own homes. We explored experiences users have with DigiContact.

The objective highlighted in this poster is to create insights into the support provided by DigiContact.

Methods
- This study is part of an inclusive research project. A researcher worked together with a co-researcher who was a client of DigiContact.
- The co-researcher interviewed 21 DigiContact users.
- Analyses were performed with MAXQDA 12. A creative analysis session 1 was held to analyze and interpret results with three self-advocates with ID.
- Results concerning the provided support were classified according to the five dimensions of the AAIDD conceptual framework of human functioning 2 (Figure 1).

Results

DigiContact support:

A Practical and conceptual skills
- Administration, mail, finances
- Plan daily/weekly schedules
- Prepare travel plans (public transport)
- Prepare contacts with healthcare professionals

B Social skills
- Social conflicts (at work, with partner, parents, friend etc)
- Coaching assertiveness

C Physical health
- Advice on what to do in case of experiencing pain
- Reminder of medication intake

Results concerning the provided support were classified according to the five dimensions of the AAIDD conceptual framework of human functioning 2 (Figure 1).

Reflection
Two themes emerge from the stories of DigiContact users about the support they receive:

1. Social problem solving, recurring conflicts in relationships with others, having a small or inaccessible social network and the occurrence of emotional or mental health problems.
2. Learning new things, problem solving and the (increasing) complexity of societal demands.

Inclusive research, richer results!
We noticed many respondents experiencing relieve and feeling more at ease, as they perceived the interviewer was ‘one of them’. This facilitated them to talk more freely and to elaborate on their experiences more. Because of this we felt that the inclusive character of the interviews generated richer results.

We advise to use an inclusive research design and specifically a co-researcher with ID when people with ID are subject of research.

References
2. VU University Medical Center Amsterdam, the Netherlands
3. Philadelphia Care Foundation, the Netherlands

Contact
Miriam Zaagsma MSc
miriam.zaagsma@philadelphia.nl
+31 (0)6 55491032

Figure 1: DigiContact support classified according to AAIDD conceptual framework of human functioning

Contact
Miriam Zaagsma MSc
miriam.zaagsma@philadelphia.nl
+31 (0)6 55491032

Figure 1: DigiContact support classified according to AAIDD conceptual framework of human functioning

Results

DigiContact support:

A Practical and conceptual skills
- Administration, mail, finances
- Plan daily/weekly schedules
- Prepare travel plans (public transport)
- Prepare contacts with healthcare professionals

B Social skills
- Social conflicts (at work, with partner, parents, friend etc)
- Coaching assertiveness

C Physical health
- Advice on what to do in case of experiencing pain
- Reminder of medication intake

Figure 1: DigiContact support classified according to AAIDD conceptual framework of human functioning