

Tutorial: Co-production of assisted living technologies and services

Overview

Despite the promised potential of assisted living technologies to enable people to 'age in place' (that is, avoid or defer institutional care in later life and remain active participants in society), the benefits achieved to date have been modest. Hence, there is a risk that much of the current and planned investment in assisted living programmes will be wasted.

Our work in the ATHENE project demonstrates that this problem cannot be resolved without a richer understanding of the complex and diverse living experiences and care needs of older people. More than that, however, it suggests that if the needs of older people are to be met, then industry, health and social care providers must evolve ways to work with older people to 'co-produce' useful and useable assisted living technology designs.

Objectives

In this tutorial, we develop and expand on themes concerning the challenges of understanding the assisted living needs of older people in domestic settings, and methods to support their involvement in the co-production of assisted living technologies and services. It has the overall objective of developing an understanding and appreciation of the benefits and the various practical issues of following a co-production or 'bricolage' approach.

The tutorial will include comprehensive slides and a website where other relevant material will be hosted. It will build on our experiences and understanding gained from following a co-production approach with older people in the ATHENE project and will maintain a strong practical focus with an

emphasis on active participation. The duration is 90 minutes.

Web-based Resources: www.atheneproject.org

Target audience

The tutorial will be of use to people involved in the design and development of assisted living technologies, healthcare professionals involved in the planning, management and delivery of assisted living services, Social Science researchers, including those in health and social care, and commercial researchers and consultants working in the field.

About the presenters

The presenters, from Queen Mary University of London, Warwick and Lancaster Universities are members of the ATHENE (Assisted Technologies for Healthy Living in Elders: Needs Assessment by Ethnography) project funded by the Technology Strategy Board under its Assisted Living Innovation (ALIP) programme. They are particularly associated with developments in methodologies for the ethnographic study of domestic environments and practices associated with the participative design and co-production of technologies.