Public Abstract

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Title: PRIVACY AND SENIOR ADOPTION OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN RESIDENTIAL CARE

Within the next twenty years, there is a large increase anticipated in the segment of the population ages sixty five and older and a subsequent increase in demand on residential care facilities. With this expectation, researchers have been exploring the use of assistive information-based technologies in residential care facilities to enhance resident quality of life and safety. Assistive technologies in this context are information-based technologies that collect and share resident information to health care providers such as nurses or physicians. Little evaluation research exists on user acceptance and effectiveness of assistive technologies in RC facilities (Demiris et al., 2004). Older adults' perceptions of privacy can inhibit their adoption of assistive technologies. This qualitative study used descriptive content analysis of focus group sessions and individual interviews to explore the relationship between privacy, living environment and willingness to adopt assistive technology with older adults living in residential care facilities. The findings from this study indicate that privacy can be a barrier for older adults' adoption of assistive technologies; however their perception of their need for the technology may override their own privacy concerns. Privacy concerns, as a barrier to technology adoption, can be influenced by both individual-level and community-level factors. Further exploration of the factors influencing older adults' perceptions of assistive technology need is necessary.