

How to describe and assess household health information management activities/practices and needs?



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Background: Personal

- PhD student in Health Informatics in Kuopio University
- Interest in user experiences of changing information management environments in maternal healthcare
- Strong interest in participatory research methods, ethnographic or "emic" approach
- Past research project: PAR with maternity care workers in Finnish primary care and hospitals (2006-2007)



Background: Household/citizens' health information management activities/practices and needs

- Current challenge: "My Wellbeing". A multi-disciplinary r&d project involving 5 Finnish universities. Aim is to develop a concept for an e-health-tool for the use of citizens/customers/patients. Requires a thorough analysis of *user needs*.
- Case study: families who expect a baby or who have a max 2-year-old child in Kuopio. Contacts to the field are provided by another sub-project.



Questions and challenges

- Challenge 1: How to conceptualize user needs defined as "individual/household health related information management practices and needs"?
- Challenge 2: How to find the most suitable participatory method(s) to investigate hh/citizens' health information management activities/practices and needs?



Proposed path

- Step 1: Conceptual and methodological review (Article 1)
- Step 2: Selection of the most appropriate method(s) and development of the discussion topics/questions (involving the "technical people")
- Step 3: Needs assessment with families
- Step 4: Reporting of the results (Article 2)
- Step 5: A critical analysis of the process of the methodological development (Article 3)

Current situation: Step 1

- Currently working on the conceptual and methodological review (Article 1):
- Question is: How can we conceptualize citizen's/household information management needs?
- What has been the approach to assess user needs (behavior) in previous e-health tool development projects?
- What methods have been used? What can we learn from this?



Step 1 continues...

- Proposed method: **systematic review**
- Selection of the most appropriate search terms and limitations
- Search from the most important reference data bases (PubMed, Cinahl, ISI Web Of Science, IEEE, Google Scholar?)
- Results to be reported in a journal article

Very preliminary findings of the review

- Plenty of different ways to conceptualize the topic such as:
 - Health services development: health needs assessment
 - Information sciences: information needs assessment, information behaviour, information seeking behaviour, information practices etc...
 - Personal Information Management (PIM)
- User involvement during the design process not usual (or not much reported) but some examples exist

