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Society needs digital home care for elderly

Digital home care services for elderly people have been introduced, tested and analysed in a Swedish mid-size municipality - with promising results so far.

Issues Faced

Swedish municipalities are facing accelerating costs and challenges in taking care of elderly people.

The objective was firstly to examine how municipalities could put a brake on the runaway costs for providing home care and focus more resources on front line services and secondly to create additional benefits by introducing new digital home care services for elderly people (as well as for the caregivers and relatives).

The new services would permit greater autonomy; improve physical and mental health and focus staff time on care delivery, not travel and administration.

Key Objectives

The objective was to understand and quantify the impact and effects of substituting traditional physical home care with digital services.

Research and analysis was based on four different e-services, all of which have been tested and evaluated within home care services in the city of Västerås, a mid-size municipality in Sweden.

The four services were:
- Video communication via a TV set
- Video communication via a moving "robot"
- Night safety surveillance
- Remote management of services

Main Results

Benefits were quantifiable and substantial, e.g. achieved through fewer transports, shorter attendance times (via video calls) and through reduced need for physical visits. The elderly who participated also felt that the services often led to greater independence, security, participation and freedom of choice on their part. In addition, the services also generated extensive cost savings for society.

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