Abstract: Abstract

Background

The increasing number of the older people and rapid innovations in household devices means that technology is becoming more familiar in the everyday life of elderly people. Technological solutions may promote independence levels and allow elderly people to remain at home by coping with age-related difficulties such as falls, isolation, medication management, sensory impairment, and diminished mobility. This study aimed to explore participants’ awareness, access to or availability, attitudes towards and use of home-based technology (HBT) devices, and obstacles that influence the use of technology.

Methods

A quantitative-designed and structured questionnaire was administered for this study. Using purposive sampling method 160 elderly people living in extra care housing schemes were selected from 23 schemes in England. A face-to-face interview was conducted in each participant’s living unit. The version 16 of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in terms of turning data into numbers, coding data for analysis, re-coding and re-weighting data, ranking of ordinal data, using descriptive statistics, and contingency tables.

Results

A majority of respondents reported that most of the new technological devices were not available in their living unit or schemes. Many respondents had positive attitudes towards devices. Although most basic appliances and emergency call systems were used in the living units, communally-provided facilities such as personal computers, washing machines, and assisted bathing equipment in the schemes were not well utilised. Health/mobility problems and inadequate information/training/support were reported frequently by the participants.

Conclusions

Although older people do use new technologies, they often have difficulties when attempting to adopt these devices and systems. In order to increase the receptivity, elderly people's perceptions, attitudes, and understanding of the needs and capabilities of elderly people should be assessed properly in planning and predicting the future use of devices.

Keywords

Home-Based Technology, Elderly People, Extra Care Housing, Awareness, and Attitude