

UPSCALE

Unfolding the processes between user needs and health and welfare technology in socio-technical transition of health and care services

KEYWORDS

Socio-technical transition, Health and welfare technology, Health and care services, Ageing, User needs, Transition pathways, Mixed methods

DURATION

36 months

ABSTRACT

The UPSCALE project tackles the challenges of organizing future health and care services, the sustainability of which is affected, for instance, by population ageing and decline. There are immense expectations toward the opportunities of telemedicine and other types of health and welfare technology (hereafter HWT) in resolving these challenges. In practice, many obstacles hinder solving the challenges with the help of technology alone. An important reason for this is the systemic nature of health and care services, where both technological, structural and human factors strongly interact. UPSCALE grabs onto this systemic nature by analyzing health and care services as a socio-technical system and the ongoing change as a socio-technical transition. The aim of UPSCALE is to theorize on the socio-technical transition processes to understand the role of HWT use in health and care service transition, and to examine under what conditions HWT use helps to reach broader health and care policy goals. The particular focus is on users notably older people but also their informal caregivers and health and care providers and professionals. UPSCALE provides a broad, systemic view of health and care service transition with its main focus on users role and their diversity to ensure that HWT use is meaningful with regard to the entire health and care system. A central aim is knowledge co-creation during transitions information and knowledge building and sharing within, between, and beyond HWT users. Building on the approach of socio-technical transitions and interaction between actors and structures in transitions, UPSCALE answers the following questions: (1) How do different types of HWT users needs contribute to the transition of health and care services? (2) How are information and knowledge related to HWT built, shared and co-created within, between, and beyond HWT users? (3) What is the current state and future directions in our ageing societies, considering the main factors influencing the emergence of HWT use and its relations to socio-technical transitions, and what kinds of transition pathways can be formulated? Different geographical contexts affect the current state and future directions, requiring co-creation of tailored and specific transition pathways. Socio-spatial and socio-economic perspectives help in finding appropriate pathways and ways of contextualizing HWT-assisted systems for local communities. Country-specific case studies therefore complement the project. Overall, the research comprises both conceptual foundations and empirical investigation. Both empirical/theoretical and qualitative/quantitative approaches are utilized. The researchers conduct literature reviews, interviews, a broad international survey and participatory knowledge co-creation activities with users and stakeholders at local, regional and society levels. Both more established and emerging HWT

types are included. UPSCALE focuses on aim no. 1 of the call. UPSCALE contributes with increased user-centred understanding about the roles, characteristics, prerequisites and impacts of HWT use in the transition of health and care services; and novel knowledge about the use of HWT as a systemic issue requiring collaboration between different policies and sectors. The new knowledge stems from the novel application of socio-technical transition thinking specifically in health and care systems. UPSCALE provides a synthesis of socio-technical transition pathways for future health and care services as well as co-creates research-based policy recommendations for HWT use. It is expected to impact academy, societal actors, local, regional, national and European policymakers, HWT users and public and private sector actors through its future-oriented knowledge development.

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