

Augmenting Older Adults' Well-Being: Three PC-based Prototypes

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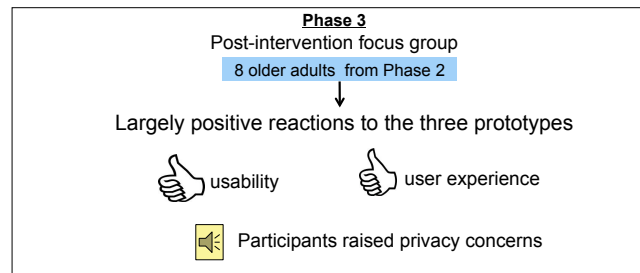
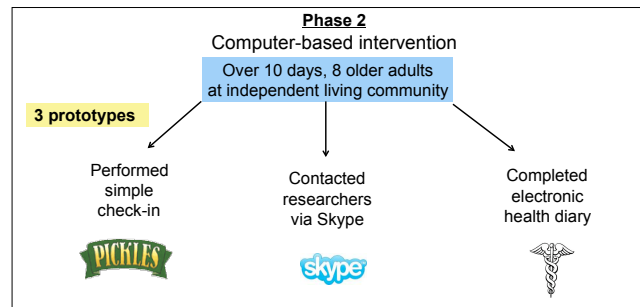
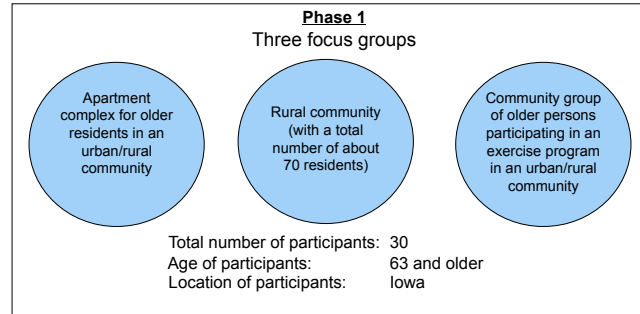
Abstract

This presentation summarizes results from three phases of research concerning PC-based prototypes. The first phase included three focus group sessions with a total of 30 older adults in Iowa. Results revealed five tech-related themes: technology barriers, transportation, help and assistance, self-monitoring, and gaming. The second phase included a three-pronged, computer-based intervention to address some of the issues that participants had raised in the focus groups. The intervention took place over ten days and involved eight older adults residing in an independent living community. Each day, participants performed a simple check-in process on their computers, contacted researchers using Skype, and completed an electronic health diary. The third phase consisted of a post-intervention focus group that revealed largely positive reactions to the three prototypes in terms of usability and user experience. Elements of the study's design, such as incorporating a Skype demonstration, clear instructions for users, and free loan and installation of the equipment likely helped participants overcome initial hesitations. This study shows that, with appropriate introduction and ongoing assistance, older adults can be enthusiastic about computer-based interventions that facilitate well-being.

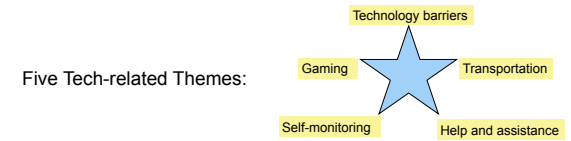
Introduction / Background

- "We are in the midst of two striking trends: widespread population aging and rapid diffusion of technology... Modern technology has the potential to enhance human health, abilities, and relationships" (Charness, 2004).
- Older adults are less likely to adopt new technologies into their lives unless they see clear benefits to themselves (Rogers, 2003).
- Older adults are more willing to use technology than stereotypes suggest, and important predictors of adoption are attitude, nature of the experience, available support, and perceived utility (Czaja and Lee, 2006).

Methods



Results and Conclusions



- Older adults:
- are not negatively biased toward technology
 - do have usability concerns and frustrations with regard to technology
 - are willing to adopt new technology when usefulness and usability outweigh feelings of inadequacy

