

Finnish-Japanese technology to support the everyday life of the elderly

October 13 2015, by Olli Ernvall

VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland and the Japanese research institute AIST are studying how the adoption of ICT-based applications designed for the elderly will improve care service both at home and in assisted living facilities with the help of, for instance, a robot assistant.

The project's partner companies and VTT are developing applications that can be used to improve the quality of life and care of the [elderly](#). The applications, developed in cooperation with care professionals and the elderly, include a memory and activity game running on a tablet, a reminiscing and life story service, an access control application, and a robot assistant application.

The three-year METESE (Meaningful Technologies for Seniors – Safety, Comfort and Joy) project of VTT and the Japanese research institute AIST (National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology) studies the joint development of gerontechnology and its adoption in Finnish and Japanese care organisations.

The project is founded on the approach of co-design with the idea of encouraging the elderly and care professionals to get involved with the design and development work. The applications are brainstormed, assessed and tested together with the users with a systematic and long-term approach. VTT and Probot Oy are developing a robot assistant for the elderly based on the Jaco robotic arm with the purpose of studying the possibilities and limitations of robotics in care services. Elderly users and care personnel are taking part in the design process right from the

start.

The adaptation of the care organisations and the care service system to new technology is also studied at the same time. The objective is to understand the needs of the elderly, the care personnel and the care organisation from the perspectives of both application development and co-design, increase the users' interest in technology, and lower the threshold for the adoption of new gerontechnology applications in the homes of the elderly and in [assisted living](#) facilities. The project seeks cooperation models that would also allow voluntary agents to become involved in making the adoption of new technology easier in the everyday life of the elderly.

Finnish and Japanese care of the elderly and the adoption of technology are compared at assisted living facilities in both countries. The care service systems of the two countries are studied and analysed, through which the impacts of gerontechnologies and the involvement of different agents in organising care services for the elderly are assessed. At the same time, the ethical and societal effects of the [applications](#) are assessed.

More information: Project website: www.metese-project.com

Provided by VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland

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