Locating Technology Project
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Accessibly Yours:
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in partnership with
Ontario Ministry of Community & Social Services
Purpose of Research

- Conduct a technical evaluation of devices
- Develop description of attributes, potential advantages and disadvantages.
- Gain deeper understanding of the complex realities of caring for a person who wanders and is at risk of becoming lost.
- Examine caregivers’ perspectives about the application of electronic locating systems.
“It [wandering behaviour] has a huge impact because he is not able to experience life. If he goes out with someone, I wouldn’t necessarily trust someone to take him out, because I would worry that he would bolt and run away. Less independence, less experiences”.

~Consumer Trial Participant
What is Locating Technology?

• Technology that enables tracking and/or locating of people who wander and are at risk of becoming lost or unsafe

• The user carries a device – usually a cell phone or a bracelet

• User device is wireless e.g. FM or GPS
Phase 1

- Literature review & definition of “wandering”
- Appointment of Advisory Board
- Technical evaluation & field testing of submitted equipment
- Description of attributes, advantages & disadvantages
- Technologies selected for Phase 2
Phase 1 – Technical Evaluation

• 12 devices submitted
• 5 devices included
• Trials of equipment
• Description of attributes, strengths, & limitations
• Those with 50% success moved to Phase 2
“It would be nice to know what direction he has gone. I am happy to search the forest. I am happy to go down the side road, but they are opposite directions”.

~Consumer Trial Participant
Phase 2

• Recruit participants
• Consumer trials May – June 2006
• Consumer panels
• Collate results
• Report to the Ministry – August 2006
• Publish findings
Phase 2 – Consumer Trials

- 3/5 devices met criteria - 2 used in trial
- 7 people tested devices for 45 days
- Journals written by caregiver
- Interviews conducted re: impact, usage, usability etc.
“John did not tolerate the wristband monitor at all. He wore it for a maximum of 5 minutes. At about 2-3 minutes he started rubbing and pulling and almost biting the wristband. He got quite upset with it”.

~Consumer Trial Participant
“Well I want to keep it. I spoke to [the service provider] about continuing with it, and he said it’s not going to be available until 2007. I’ll have to work around it somehow....”.

~Consumer Trial Participant
Phase 2 – Consumer Panels

• 5 cities in Ontario
• Presentation on methodology & devices
• Groups of 4 - 30 people
• Small group discussions
• Completion of survey forms
Lessons Learned – the Technology

• Varying degrees of support available
• Location determined by: caregiver/monitoring service/police
• Use of geofencing
• Most use GPS and/or FM (radio)
What do you expect from ELT?
Why would you use ELT?
Do you think ELT would affect “John’s” life and others; in what way?
What People Want

Size reduction
Disguise/customize device
Weather/water proof
Combination of technologies
Decreased cost

Bracelet security
Geo-fence
Website access
Acceptable appearance
Independent use
Increased battery life
“People notice it right away, so it looks kind of institutional-like....”

~Consumer Panel Participant
Ethical Issues

• Locating devices may impose restrictions on clients’ rights including liberty, freedom, privacy & dignity

• Devices have been used to track criminals & wild animals which may lead to stigmatization & negative connotations

• Advantages outweigh ethical considerations
“The peace of mind that this device will bring is truly unbelievable! Thank you!”

~Consumer Trial Participant
Discussion & Questions?
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