

STARS-Health

STARS EU, the strategic alliance for regional transition Europe, integrates a health care team system around patients with lower health literacy and digital literacy

ABSTRACT

In Europe, 42% (0.36–0.48) of persons have lower health literacy. Health literacy involves finding, understanding, and using health information for informed health decisions. Lower health literacy is more profound in the ageing population, lower education and socioeconomic status, and more prevalent in rural areas. Lower health literacy in patients is related to higher prevalence of chronic diseases, hospitalisation, and doctor visits, resulting in stress on the healthcare system's secondary and tertiary prevention programs in primary-, hospital-, and community-based care. Normally, caregivers support patient's self-management by means of digital services. But these patients exhibit lower levels of digital literacy skills as well as a need for an adapted integrated health care system that surrounds these patients throughout their patient journey from the hospital to the community care with unambiguous communication strategies. This integrated care needs specific attention.

This project aims to transform health and care systems towards a uniform integrated care system, supporting caregivers in communicating with older patients with lower health and digital literacy (LHDL), including their families and communities. This project seeks to enhance the ability of older adults with LHDL to understand and use digital services for preventing and managing health conditions to improve patient satisfaction, outcomes, and caregiver job satisfaction, thereby reducing health inequalities among older adults.

To achieve this, we will redesign the FindMyApps app and develop training programs for both formal and informal caregivers in primary, hospital, and community-based care, empowering older adults to use digital services. FindMyApps, currently used by patients with mild dementia and their caregivers, gives an overview of user-friendly apps for different purposes. It allows patients to track their progress and share it with different caregivers. Combined with a training program on LHDL for health and care professionals, this project aims to enhance the digital literacy and care of older adults.

Key components of this project include:

1. Identifying the needs of older patients with LHDL, and their formal and informal caregivers
2. Reviewing digital services designed for persons with LHDL
3. Re-developing the FindMyApps app for use by older patients with LHDL.
4. Implementation of the re-developed FindMyApps including communication training for caregivers.

This will enhance the communication skills of formal and informal caregivers when interacting with older adults with LHDL to support older adults with LHDL in using digital services. Sharing knowledge and best practices across countries can foster innovative solutions for an integrated healthcare system for patients with LHDL and beyond. The aim is to promote secondary and tertiary prevention in primary, hospital, and community-based care for these patients.

The results of this project will have an impact on the health of older adults with LHD, relieve the pressure on health and care facilities, contribute to the job satisfaction of healthcare providers, and improve the communication and support between care providers and patients.

After implementing personalised prevention strategies by means of caregivers that are able to match apps and devices to the needs of older patients with lower health literacy, the results of this study will empower people to self-management. Health literacy affects patient's health outcomes. Thus, this study will have an impact on the inequity of care in rural areas. Additionally job satisfaction of caregivers will improve, contributing to reducing the strain on the health and care system. The access to health and care systems will be improved, especially for those living in rural areas, and therewith will contribute to the accessibility and equity of care of these patients and their formal and informal caregivers.

KEYWORDS

- Health Literacy
- Digital Literacy
- Blended Care
- Integrated Care
- Communication
- Healthy Ageing
- Implementation

DURATION

36 months

PARTNERS

	Name and Surname of the Principal investigator	Institution, Department, full Affiliations	City, Country
Coordinator (= Partner 1)	Johannes Hobbelen	Hanze University of Applied Sciences Groningen.	Groningen, The Netherlands
Partner 2	Margareta Karlsson	University West, Department of health sciences	Trollhattan, Sweden
Partner 3	Rui Pedro Lopes	Instituto Politécnico de Bragança	Bragança, Portugal
Partner 4	Sara Darias-Curvo	University of La Laguna, Nursing Department. Campus de Ciencias de la Salud, sección Enfermería	La Laguna, Spain
Partner 5	Lilisbeth Perestelo-Perez	Servicio Canario de la Salud.	Radazul Alto. El Rosario. Santa Cruz de Tenerife
<i>Collaborator 1</i>	Yveta Vrublova	Silesian University in Opava, Faculty of Public Policies, Institute of Paramedical Health Studies,	Opava, Czech Republic