IMPLEMENTING VIDEO CONFERENCING IN DISCHARGE PLANNING SESSIONS
LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE WHEN DESIGNING IT SUPPORT FOR EVERYDAY WORK IN NURSING PRACTICE

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Abstract

The overall aim of this thesis has been to study the implementation process concerning the use of video conferencing in discharge planning, during and after a development project in a region in southeast Sweden. The research approach has been developed within a new interdisciplinary research area, Applied Health Technology. The main focus of the research has been on how the new IT solution has affected everyday work, and in what ways management supported staff during the implementation process. The study design has a qualitative approach. Phenomenological hermeneutics, content analysis and Participatory Action Research (PAR) have been used in the analysis process. Study I aimed to describe primary healthcare nursing staff's experiences of discharge planning, along with their concerns about using video conferencing in discharge planning sessions. It was found that there is need for improvement in communication and understanding between nursing staff working in hospitals and in primary healthcare, and need for nursing staff to obtain more information about how IT solutions could support their work. The aim of Study II was to examine the implementation process of using video conferencing in discharge planning, according to a theoretical framework composed from theories about implementation processes. It was found that implementation frameworks can be useful, and that framing the implementation process supports the exposure of factors and highlights relationships and states of dependency between those factors which may affect implementation. Study III set out to describe managers' reflections about leading the implementation process of using video conferencing in the discharge planning session. The results indicate that managers experienced two leadership perspectives when they reflected on the implementation process. On one hand, they described a desired way of leading implementation, on the other hand they described an actual way of leading implementation. The aim of Study IV was to describe the reflections of professionals about what is needed in order to create what should become a new best practice using videoconferencing in the discharge planning sessions. The results indicate that the professionals experienced lack of knowledge and understanding about each other’s everyday work and that the absence of well-functioning common routines obstructed the process. The results also indicate that there is a lack of common arenas to enable discussions, negotiations and agreements about adopting new routines as the discharge planning process changes over time. This thesis contributes to the much-needed discussions about how to manage the many ongoing IT implementation processes in Swedish healthcare organizations, by highlighting challenges and difficulties that both healthcare professionals and managers have experienced during an implementation process. The results indicate that implementation frameworks can be useful when new IT solutions are introduced in healthcare, and that there is a need for dedicating time, space and support for involved professionals in designing their everyday work.

Keywords: Applied health technology, Discharge planning, Healthcare, Implementation, IT solutions, Video conferencing, Qualitative research