

## AN ETHNOGRAPHY OF HOME IN A PANDEMIC

Authors: **Hughes, K<sub>1</sub>**, **Diaz, J<sub>2</sub>**, **Grindle, M<sub>1</sub>**, **Sheng, Y<sub>2</sub>**

<sub>1</sub>University of the Highlands and Islands

<sub>2</sub>Dundalk Institute of Technology

email: karen.hughes@uhi.ac.uk

### BACKGROUND

This abstract paper aims to provide an overview of the current progress of a PhD project, and accompanies an audio-visual walkthrough.

Its focus is the study's methodology and its development, the findings of a scoping review and what will be achieved through fieldwork. The research involves the exploration of home, wellbeing and technology in the context of those who have experienced extended hospital stays. It has long been documented [5] how home is preferred to hospital, and this research seeks to ask participants what home means to them. This "essence" of home may be used to inform future policy for social housing and clinical practice. Technology in the home will be explored in the context of user uptake and what the relationships with technology in the home are for participants.

### ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODOLOGY

"The task [of ethnographers] is to document the culture, the perspectives and practices, of the people in these settings. The aim is to 'get inside' the way each group of people sees the world."

[4]This involves participant observation and face to face interviews – it is designed to be an immersive experience where the researcher surrounds themselves in the culture. In the case of this project, this has been achieved through gatekeepers who have facilitated first contact with participants. Accounts from multiple people from the same social context provides a diversity of experience, however there are underlying comparative themes. Themes are sorted as part of the data analysis and then discussed.

Thematic analysis can deepen understanding, inform policy and identify potential gaps in current knowledge. The face-to-face aspect of this fieldwork is currently impossible due to COVID19 and so it has been moved online. In-depth interviews conducted through video conferences and phone interviews will be the primary data gathering method.

This approach, especially in the context of COVID19, will allow us to explore the relationship participants have with technology with greater depth and from a fresh perspective.

The pandemic has affected everyone's relationship with home as a space. This research will ask participants how it has impacted them in the context of their home, their wellbeing, and their relationship with health-related technology, both in terms of its presence and its use.

### SCOPING REVIEW FINDINGS

A literature review conducted in 2020 searched for how the topics of home, wellbeing and technology intertwine. These three topics have been a consistent thread throughout the research. Combined with exploration of the effects of hospital stays, COVID19, and housing, participants may provide an insight into how we can improve practice, utilise resources, and focus on user experience.

It identified that wellbeing was often used as a suffix to health [1,2,3,5], but rarely addressed independently in terms of how quality of life and happiness were impacted by technology or telehealth in the home.

The scoping review also identified under-researched groups and highlighted the obstacles to the use of technology in the home in the context of health [2]. Experiences of those with earlier onset chronic conditions, congenital disorders or other issues affecting younger adults are under researched. As a result of these findings, participants in this study will be aged 18-55. This group may be able to give perspective on the current barriers to the widespread use of technology to manage health at home, such as privacy/security concerns and acceptance. Participant experiences can shed light on how wellbeing might better be incorporated into telehealth systems including wearables and ambient assistive technology; helping us understand the move from hospital to home in terms of place/space, making the journey less demanding on the psychosocial self.

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