Social connectedness through ICT and the influence on wellbeing: the case of the CareRabbit

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Oslo, August 30th 2011
Introduction to the CareRabbit

- Device to be given to hospitalized children
- Website for friends and family
- Sends mp3 to be played or text to be read out loud to the device
- Ears will rotate and belly-lights will glow
- Fits with the Family Centred Care concept
- Social connectedness impacts wellbeing
- Started as IBM social responsibility project

Nabaztag device marketed independently by Mindscape France
Research Question and Methods

- Part of a broader pilot study on the implementation and business model of the CareRabbit in the pediatric wards of two general hospitals

- *Does the CareRabbit contribute to the wellbeing of hospitalized children?*
  - Literature to support this claim has been studied

- Baseline measurement using the KINDL questionnaire on hospitalized children and their parents on or close to discharge date

- Effect measurement on children that were given the CareRabbit for at least two days, and their parents that interacted through the CareRabbit
Results

- 27 children with CareRabbits
  - 11 children and 12 parents (~34%)
- 32 children in control group
  - 27 parents participated as well

- No significant difference (+2.5 points) in wellbeing across all children
- Significant difference for children age 4-7
  - 12.3 points for parents; 17.5 points for children (overall 14.52, significant at 97% certainty)

- Positive influence on wellbeing for younger children
Conclusion and discussion

- Number of questionnaires filled out for CareRabbit children is low (n=12)
- Personal factors may weigh in into the measurement (not controlled for)
- Overall impression of both parents and children is positive
- Hospital staff was motivated as well to hand out the CareRabbit

  Social connectedness can improve the wellbeing of hospitalized children

- Enhanced design: measure wellbeing both at admission and discharge
- Enlarge the patient groups, as this study is (very) limited in numbers

- Value of applying validated clinical instruments in outcome measurement
- Adds to traditional ‘perceived usefulness’ and ‘ease-of-use’ measures
Tusen takk – Thank you!

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