



## Poster # 29

**Title of poster:** Informing the use and selection of technology in the care of frail older adults

### Abstract

**Background:** Health policy in Canada supports healthy aging at home and in the community. Specialized geriatric assessment services are generally centralized and frequently require frail seniors to travel for assessment and follow-up visits. Technology enabled interprofessional assessments and follow-up in the home or local community will enable more frail seniors to receive timely assessment, intervention and follow-up by overcoming barriers. Timely comprehensive geriatric assessment has been demonstrated to support the development of holistic care plans that provide the best opportunity for seniors to maintain their independence and function. At the same time, older people are becoming the subjects of applied technology solutions, but may not have had the opportunity to influence the development of these technology solutions. An understanding of the ways in which older people currently view and use technology is required to ensure the needs and values of older people inform technology development and adoption. This understanding can also support the development and selection of technology solutions that optimize the potential for self-care among frail older people.

**Objectives:** To explore the use and limits of technology to facilitate in-home geriatric assessment and follow-up/monitoring of community-dwelling frail seniors, including:

- Identification of available and emerging health technology options for both self and provider-led care for frail older people
- Develop strategies to inform the selection and use of technology in the care of frail older people
- Learn from the experience of seniors, families and health care professionals who use technology in healthcare relationships to inform the design and modification of technological solutions

**Methods:** In 2006, Ontario's government implemented regionalized healthcare services and created 14 Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs). Each LHIN is responsible for the planning, integration and funding of specified health services in their region, including hospitals, community and home care. Similar to other regions in Canada the number of seniors experiencing frailty (e.g. multiple co-morbidities, high health service utilization etc.) is increasing in Ontario's Central East LHIN.

Data collection in phase one includes focus groups and interviews with seniors, technology designers, decision makers and a survey of healthcare and social services workers in the Central East LHIN to identify and evaluate technology options and approaches for home based care of frail seniors.

**Results and Implications:** We will report on the first stage of the study. Working collaboratively

with field experts and others we have identified technology options for health assessment and monitoring. We have then gathered input about the process of design and the inclusion of the input of seniors in the design, decision-making and selection of technology options. Ideas to enhance the inclusion of seniors are explored as is the tension between the opportunities and limits of technology in the care of frail seniors. The evaluation of the technology and current decision making approaches is considered and can inform health service design for community dwelling frail seniors.

