Internet use has a number of positive effects, including but not limited to, reduced depression, better health literacy, and more social engagement in old age. Prior studies have found that older internet users tend to be more educated, white, and have higher income. Yet, less is known about older people who do not own computers in their home but still access the internet. Using the National Health and Aging Trends Study (NHATS), the current study examines the effect of using computers outside the home (e.g., public libraries/ friends’ homes) without owning computers on older adults’ psychological and physical health outcomes. Using propensity score matching, we categorized users (N=88) as the treated group and non-users (N=1,478) as the control group, and made their sociodemographic characteristics similar in the baseline data, and estimated the effect of using computers on psychological well-being (i.e., self-realization, self-efficacy, depression) and physical health (i.e., self-reported health) changes from 2011 to 2014 with the difference-in-difference method. Across all models, those who used computers from social resources had significantly higher self-efficacy changes and higher self-reported health. The results were compared to regular computer users (N=2,451) and non-users (N=1,739). Regular computer users had significantly higher self-efficacy changes than non-users, but there was no significant difference in self-reported health. This indicates modest effects for older adults for using computers without owning them at home.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF DEMENTIA CARE AND ACTIVITIES IN HOME HEALTH: HOME 4 CARE®

G. Gorzelle, M. Skrajner, Hearthstone Alzheimer Care

HOME 4 CARE® (H4C) is an NIA-funded SBIR study in which a mobile app is being developed and tested with clients and staff in the Home Health environment. With the increased prevalence of dementia, demand has increased for education and interventions that can be used to treat and/or circumvent the responsive behaviors associated with the condition. While much emphasis has been placed on improving dementia care in LTC over the last decade, the thrust to improve dementia care in home health has lagged behind. This is unfortunate, because 58% of PWD live in the community. The app consists of three main components: (1) Montessori-based digital activities for persons with dementia, (2) interactive, video-based dementia training modules for care partners, and (3) a “Get to Know You” module that enables staff to better understand their clients’ activity, care, and social preferences. The study explores the effects of the activities on engagement/affet, satisfaction with activities, the training modules’ effects on knowledge transfer, and satisfaction with the Get to Know You module. Preliminary outcomes are promising. H4C activities have produced a 34% increase in constructive engagement (p<.01) and a 100% decrease in non-engagement, as compared to other interventions for PWD. Client satisfaction with activities was 90%. The H4C Training modules increased staff dementia knowledge by 21% (p<.01). Staff have reported high satisfaction with the Get to Know You Module. The presentation will discuss outcomes to-date, lessons learned about developing mobile apps for PWD, and future plans and extensions of HOME 4 CARE®.