

Baden-Württemberg, Germany



Gesundaltern@bw - Getting old in health



Keyword(s):

Digital Education and Training

Disadvantaged Groups of Learners

Empowerment

Introduction

Digital applications are now part of everyday life in healthcare. Since they can be used independently of place and time, they can flexibly supplement preventive health care, medical care and nursing by medical and nursing staff. Elderly people in particular can benefit from e-files, medical apps and digital consultation hours.

The Baden-Württemberg Ministry for Social Affairs and Integration has launched the Gesundaltern@bw pilot project to take seniors along on the path to a digitized future. It is a joint project in which various partners from the "Seniors on the Internet" network have joined forces. So that senior citizens can use digital services in the health sector independently and self-determinedly

Main challenge

The increasing digital transformation of society brings with it many new possibilities that can make everyday life easier. This process can only succeed if all age groups make use of the new digital opportunities. It is therefore important that senior citizens can also use these digital opportunities. To reach this target group and to motivate it to become familiar with digital applications and tools.



Timing

The pilot project started in March 2020 and is part of the general digitisation strategy “digital@bw” of the German Bundesland Baden-Württemberg.

Objective

As part of the digital@bw digitisation strategy, the Gesundaltern@bw project has the task of informing and educating older citizens about digital applications and services in the healthcare system and empowering them to use digital media confidently.

The project partners contribute both their expertise and their existing structures in Baden-Württemberg to Gesundaltern@bw.

Target group

The target group comprises mainly senior citizens.

Geographical range

The project is implemented in the German Bundesland of Baden-Württemberg.

Stakeholders and partners

The overall project coordination is in the hands of the Landesanstalt für Kommunikation (Regional Office for Communication). In addition to the overall project control and administration, the tasks of the LFK include in particular public relations and the development of information offers and training documents. Project partners are, among others, the Volkshochschulverband Baden-Württemberg and the Volkshochschulen (adult education centers based in almost all municipalities in Baden-Württemberg), das Landesmedienzentrum Baden-Württemberg (Regional Media Centre) und das Zentrum für Allgemeine Wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung der Universität Ulm (Centre of Scientific Further Training at the University of Ulm).

Strategy / materials

The focus is on the development of model offers in the three project areas information, qualification and participation of citizens. The concepts are tested in selected pilot regions and modified based on the knowledge gained. Finally, the

offers of the pilot project are prepared in such a way that they can be transferred to other regions in Baden-Württemberg.

The following activities are implemented in the project areas:

Information:

Educational events inform older citizens extensively and easily about the digital changes in the healthcare system. The Adult Education Association of Baden-Württemberg (vhs-Verband) is planning and designing a variety of formats for this: Digital educational events (e.g. webinars and videos) were carried out with local partners and national cooperation partners in 2020. In 2021, the program included face-to-face courses, showcases, health days and specialist days.

Qualification:

The training of digital health ambassadors aims to make digitisation in health, medicine and care understandable and tangible for all citizens. The Baden-Württemberg State Media Center (LMZ) organizes and hosts training courses in the form of on-site events or location-independent webinars and qualifies interested parties to become certified health ambassadors. The ambassadors are continuously looked after by the LMZ and receive further information on current developments in the digital healthcare system as well as the opportunity to exchange ideas and network with other ambassadors at day events and training courses.

With the qualification process, citizens should be provided with contact persons in order to learn skills and abilities from them, so that reservations and obstacles to digitization in the healthcare sector can be reduced.

Citizen participation:

What should digitisation in healthcare look like? What challenges, opportunities and risks do citizens see? Which developments are desired? Digitisation - not only in the healthcare sector - can and must be actively shaped by the public. This requires new participation formats: community workshops where you can not only get information but also develop your own ideas. Thematic workshops with experts on eye level with the citizens. Forums for stakeholders from senior citizens' councils and other civil society organisations to form opinions from the grassroots level.

Participation at the interface between digitisation and the topics of health, medicine and care create new impulses for politics, business and the health system. The Center for General Academic Continuing Education (ZAWiW) at the University of Ulm works with the other project partners to design participation formats, implement them as examples and evaluate them with a focus on the conditions for successful participation.

Resources

The Gesundaltern@bw project is funded by the Ministry for Social Affairs, Health and Integration with funds from the state of Baden-Württemberg.

Compliance with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

The project is in line with SDG 4 and others.

Innovation(s)

Innovative elements of the concept are first of all the unique combination of the three project areas information, qualification and participation. This holistic approach guarantees improvements on different levels.

In addition, the project as such addresses innovative developments in society – and helps a specific target group to tackle them.

Evaluation

The project is being evaluated by the Institute for Gerontology (IfG) at the University of Heidelberg, both at the level of information transfer, at the level of the multiplier principle and at the level of participation formats. On the one hand, quantitative and qualitative evaluation research is carried out in all three areas (information, qualification, public participation). On the other hand, possible effects and changes of such offers and intervention measures are to be examined at the individual level (citizens, health ambassadors).

Success parameters

Number of activities and persons involved, feedback of participants above a certain level of satisfaction, criteria to measure the general impacts to be defined.

Impact

It is intended that more seniors use digital tools in the field of health extensively.

Impediments

A main challenge was the corona pandemic that made personal trainings impossible. In online classes, only people could participate that already possessed some basic digital skills and that were able to enter online conference systems. The pandemic, however, at the same time pushed the use of digital tools by seniors. With view to digitalised processes in the context of the pandemic (e.g. digital booking of a vaccination, corona app, digital information on corona test results) also senior citizens increased the use of such applications.

Replicability

The concept shall be replicated in different municipalities in Baden-Württemberg. On the basis of the general concept and the project evaluation, there is a high potential for transfer.

Concluding remarks

Staying connected in the digital world is a key aspect of participating in social life – this project tackles this challenge.

Website/Social Media profile(s) of the initiative

<https://www.lfk.de/medienkompetenz/seniorinnen-und-senioren/gesundalternbw/ueber-das-projekt-gesundalternbw> (central website)

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