

Promoting older adults' wellbeing and coping in Northern Finland

 Innovation image

"IKÄEHYT"

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Organisation: Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences

Country: Finland

Level of government: Local government, Regional/State government

Sector: Education, Health, Social protection

Type: Methods, Public Service

Launched in: 2012

Overall development time: 9 months

Link to the innovation's website

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Description

This innovation deals with service design as a participation enhancing tool in public health and social services. The project is piloting innovative service design methods with service providers, personnel, third sector actors, third agers and elderly people living in assisted living facilities. The process consists of co-designing, envisioning, testing, prototyping and implementing. The main goal is to support elderly people and personnel's wellbeing and inclusion by co-developing services and working methods.

The project combines research and practice to improve participants' empowerment. One central principle is to produce knowledge of the lives of elderly people and working methods in elderly care, and to use this knowledge as a basis for co-developing services. Co-design can be understood as a user-shared design process where the service is designed collaboratively with service users, local residents, service providers and professionals. Usability of the service is more likely to be achieved when the users' needs and ways of thinking are the starting point for the design process, and when the users' feedback is taken seriously.

Service design methods provide an innovative way for residents to participate in the planning and development of service provision through user-driven innovation activities. Increasing indoor and outdoor amenities and enhancing a sense of community were the concrete development targets.

Why the innovation was developed

The main factor which led to the development of the innovation was an ageing population. There was a need to: a) develop services for older persons; b) increase services' accessibility, and c) support older persons' independent living. The driving force behind the innovation is a viewpoint according to which a more comprehensive understanding of old age requires changes in the way that services are provided for older persons. New methods are needed to ensure older persons' empowerment and participation.

Objectives

Develop staff capacity, Improve access, Improve effectiveness, Improve service quality, Improve social equity, Improve user satisfaction, Increase citizen engagement

- To support elderly people and personnel's wellbeing. Co-operative and inclusive services (users, personnel and providers) will improve the service quality of elderly care.
 - To increase indoor and outdoor amenity and enhance sense of community.
 - To improve user and employee satisfaction through a sense of community, participation and dignity of the elderly.
 - To meet political priorities as enhanced citizen engagement, anti-ageism.
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Main beneficiaries

Elderly people, Government staff, People with disabilities

- Residents and their close relatives of the nursing home for elderly (present and future residents).
 - Personnel of nursing home.
 - Third sector actors.
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Existing similar practices

Service design for elderly

In public administration of my country

Savonia University of Applied Sciences in Kuopio

University of Applied Sciences in Kuopio has a research project called "service design for elderly" funded by the Finnish Fund for Innovation and Technology at Savonia. In this project, service design was used to innovate service concepts that promote multi-channel and public-private sector service solutions.

<http://palvelumuotoiluakaantynville.blogspot.fi>

Service design for elderly

In the private sector, civil society or elsewhere

SNOOK public service design company, Glasgow, Scotland.

Similar private projects in small scale are managed by SNOOK public service design company in Glasgow, Scotland.

<http://wearesnook.com/snook/>

Results

Service quality

Responsiveness:

The quality of service is increased due to user-driven development. Co-design methods have increased communication between residents and personnel.

Other:

Also local stakeholders' involvement has increased due to the use of co-design methods. Method has also increased local self-supportive development (development targets: indoor and outdoor amenity, sense of community) and contributed to the ensuring of continuity of development.

User satisfaction

Participation and inclusion of residents and personnel has increased. Control over one's physical and psycho-social environment is also increasing.

Other improvements

A new method of developing (i.e. co-design) is applied. A method that is sensitive in taking into account different parties' needs.

Evaluation

There was a user based evaluation through questionnaires, audio and video taping of workshops.

Development

Design

- The innovation was developed by the University of Lapland (Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Social sciences) and Kolari (Northern Finnish municipality) as part of Lapland University Consortium of the project.
- The Faculty of Art and Design had been using service design and especially co-design methods during several years and the results were promising in the private sector. Service design has a growing role in the public sector and it is a new research area also at the international level. The University of Lapland wanted to focus more on public sector service design and the IKÄEHYTY project was a great platform to test co-design methods in the fields of social and healthcare services.
- Actors: municipality actors, personnel, third sector, older persons, project coordinators, researcher, designer.
- Agreement on common development target through discussion, data collection and analysis.

Design time: 4 months

Testing

Methods were used in different phases of the design process: research phase, concept/design phase and operational phase. The following co-design methods have been used in workshops:

- Character profiles (envisioning).
- Storytelling (envisioning).
- Group sketching (ideation).
- Motivation matrix (implementation).
- Year clock (implementation).

The aim was to use methods to support communication, to create common understanding and to create an overall picture of the service and through that to find service challenges to solve together in groups. The IKÄEHYTY team was facilitating this process but when the groups started to implement their service ideas, responsibility started to transfer to personnel.

Testing time: 1 month

Implementation

Tools used:

Co-operative planning and implementation of plans through division of responsibilities and planning of continuous action.

Resources used:

- Direct costs:
 - Staff costs: EUR 8 000.
 - Travel costs: EUR 1 000.
 - Office costs: EUR 1 000.
- Indirect costs:
 - Lapland University Consortium offers office space and virtual meetings: about EUR 500.
- Resources from other organisations:
 - Personnel from the municipality participating in the innovation process. Their resource is about EUR 10 000.
 - Civil society organisations and charities: 10 days.

Implementation time: 3 months

Diffusion

- Creation of applicable model.
- Service design workshops have been implemented in public service sector (especially elderly services) in six Northern Finnish municipalities.
- That groundwork was vital for the IKÄEHYTY project because it was possible to repeat this specific innovation's best practices (methods, process structure) e.g. in Enontekiö, and Sodankylä municipalities.

Diffusion time: 1 month

Challenges and solutions

Financial challenges, reconciliation of needs and available means, participation of older persons with challenges (e.g. dementia).

Ensuring the even-handed participation: since in this specific case most of the clients were people with dementia etc., it was challenging to involve them. There was also a different working culture where customer's participation was lower. IKÄEHYTY-team used several visual tools that seemed to solve the problem.

Instilling of new methodology (new in social and healthcare): the first aim from the client point of view was that they wanted to develop an environment but after the design process, the client started to understand that development work was about changing the working culture in the long term.

Partnerships

Library

Other Public Sector

The library's role in IKÄEHYTY project was to produce basic services to the small villages in addition to offer regular library services. The library's own bus offers library services to three Northern Finnish municipalities. People in small villages (sometimes as small as 8 people per village) want to live longer in their homes and this kind of "multi- services" can support that.

Local community college (Revontuliopisto) and Red Cross

Other Public Sector

They are supporting services for senior citizens e.g. concepts that have been produced in IKÄEHYTY project can be brought to implementation. These kinds of 3rd sector actors have an important role in continuity when providing basic services.

Service users

Other

Residents and relatives of the nursing home for elderly in the planning and implementation phase. They were part of co-designing and co-implementation.

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned

- Understanding the socio-cultural and physical context where the development is taking place is one the most important prerequisite for the successful co-design innovation process.
- One of the greatest challenges is to take into account groups that have challenges in e.g. communication (e.g. persons living with dementia). Preparation and acquiring expertise for these challenges is all important.

Conditions for success

The most important factors are enabling communication, engaging people, creating common understanding and overall picture. IKÄEHYTY-project team had a very important role when facilitating and supporting teams. All these factors must occur at the beginning of the design process. Actual brainstorming phase and the design phase were quite fluent, but when it came to the implementation phase, the guidance and tools were required.

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