Session I: The first presentation will be dedicated to overviewing the development and the progress of adaptation and implementation of WHO iSupport. The second presentation will focus on the adaptation of iSupport in Uganda. The presentation will inform the utility of iSupport in Sub-Sahara Africa. Based on individual semi-structural interview data from Tunisia, the third presentation will highlight that caregivers' experience and needs are valuable for cultural adaptation of iSupport.

Session II: The first presentation will demonstrate how facilitator-enabled iSupport intervention would change the interaction and engagement in learning among Chinese caregivers living in Australia and Greater China. The second presentation will focus on adapting iSupport in Switzerland using a community-based participatory approach. The third presentation will show the potential benefit of raising awareness of the Russian society about dementia after the implementation of iSupport through digital technologies. The fourth presentation will report on the co-design of an adapted version of iSupport for young caregivers.

The symposium is expected to inform further development, improvement and implementation of WHO iSupport for diverse cultural background. This will be not only valuable information for participants who are interested in iSupport but also for those (interested in) investigating interventions developed in another cultural setting.

iSupport: the online support program for caregivers of people with dementia

Author(s): Pot, A.M.[1], Seeher, K.[2]

Affiliation(s):

1 Erasmus School on Health Policy & Management, Erasmus University Rotterdam

2 World Health Organisation, Geneva, Switzerland

Correspondence Email: pot@eshpm.eur.nl

Objective: In this first presentation, we will present iSupport, WHO's skills training and support program for caregivers of people living with dementia, and summarize the theoretical and empirical background for its development and cultural specific adaptations, and the lessons learned so far. WHO iSupport consists of 23 sessions in total, covering five modules: (a) what is dementia (one session); (b) being a carer (four sessions); (c) caring for me (three sessions); (d) providing everyday care (five sessions) and (e) dealing with changing behaviour (ten sessions).

Methods: The overview that we will present in this session will be based on the fast growing evidence on the adaptation and implementation of iSupport described in the scientific literature.

Results: First steps have been undertaken to translate and adapt WHO iSupport systematically and culturally fair for several countries and specific target groups and first studies on the impact have been carried out. Published results from India, Portugal, Australia and Brazil will be summarized, also discussing some experienced barriers for implementation related to the way the intervention is provided and implemented, also related to cultural issues.

Conclusion: The scaling of programs like WHO iSupport remains challenging. Ongoing research shows that interventions for caregivers of people living with dementia especially in LMICs such as India require further consideration. However, low uptake and adherence help us better understand which barriers caregivers face and how future research might tailor iSupport and other online programs better to carers' needs.

Support and training programmes such as iSupport, are more important than ever in the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. They present a real opportunity to help to reach the global target set by WHO that 75% of countries will provide support and training programmes for caregivers of people living with dementia by 2025.