Call for papers

Special Issue on the Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems

Infrastructures for healthcare (IHC): Action research, Interventions, and Participatory Design.

Theme

There is a mounting pressure on the Western healthcare system due to the prospects of a lack of resources in the future caused by demographic changes in the population as well more demands for better treatment and care. As a result, healthcare authorities and organizations look for ways to streamline and standardize these processes through better patient- and information flow.

ICT and Information infrastructures (Electronic Patient Records, Telemedicine, laboratory systems etc) are considered as having a strategic role for dealing with these issues both for supporting clinical personnel in their daily work as well as for providing decision support, improving efficiency and workflow across institutional, departmental and professional boundaries.

At the same time, many healthcare organizations are committed to local organizational change projects through so-called LEAN and quality improvement projects where clinical personnel participate in identifying organizational bottlenecks and subsequently suggest and implement solutions. However, currently many local initiatives do not appear to be connected to larger ICT strategies, indicating that there is a potential with information infrastructure that is not realized. This presents challenges for managers, practitioners as well researchers on how to address these issues: how to intervene in this heterogeneous landscape in order to ensure impact on "real" practical settings.

Given the demands and promise for larger *changes* in the healthcare sector, it is also evident that the inherent characteristic of an information infrastructure pose several challenges on how to manage and exploit these technologies efficiently. An Information infrastructure in healthcare is typically compound of many interdependent information systems, is spanning several organizational levels and is in different ways embedded in various clinical practices. Many of the large-scale systems in healthcare are also purchased through costly bid for tender processes involving representatives from managers, ICT personnel and external consultants, suggesting that the degree of user involvement at best is limited.

This implies that the size, scope and inertia of existing information infrastructures makes it an open question of how to change these technologies, which role users can play in designing new functionality, and how studies of large-scale infrastructures can induce operational changes. In addition, there are methodological questions related to which part of the infrastructure should be studied, in which phase, and for how long time period.

We particularly invite contributions which methodologically are based on ethnographic/case/field studies.

Topics of particular interest include, but are not limited to:

- Change and management of healthcare information infrastructures
- Implementation and adoption of infrastructures

- The role of the clinical users in tailoring infrastructures
- Participatory and interventionist approaches related to information infrastructures
- Action research in large-scale infrastructural settings.
- The role of researchers in studying infrastructures
- Reflections on practical impact – what is it, methods, and how to achieve it?
- Balancing of different viewpoints and interests in large-scale infrastructural projects.
- Scaling and sustainability of infrastructures
- Workplace studies of healthcare practices.

Submission guidelines
Maximum length: 10000 words including references
Full papers are to be submitted to SJIS online review system: http://aisel.aisnet.org/sjis/

Important dates
Initial submission of full papers: 30 September 2013
First round of reviews sent to authors: 30 November 2013
Revised paper from authors due: 30 January 2014
Second round of reviews sent to authors: 30 march 2014
Revised paper from authors due: 30. May 2014
Third editorial review: 30 June 2014
Revised paper from authors due: 30 August 2014
Publication anticipated: 30 October 2014

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