

Aging Adult Monitor Research Plan Project

Background

The Aging Adult Monitor is a system that helps family caregivers monitor the health and safety of their aging loved ones and provides emergency alerts and other communications for the aging individual. It consists of a wristband worn by the aging adult which collects health and other information that can be monitored by family members or emergency personnel using an app (mobile and website). The system provides important information (medical, location, reminders, emergency contacts, history) to the family and/or medical staff, giving everyone peace of mind.



Research Goal

The goal of this research is to get a clearer picture of the concerns that caregivers have about their aging loved ones and those things that would give them peace of mind. This information will provide knowledge about what features should be included in the wristband and what information the caregivers can monitor.

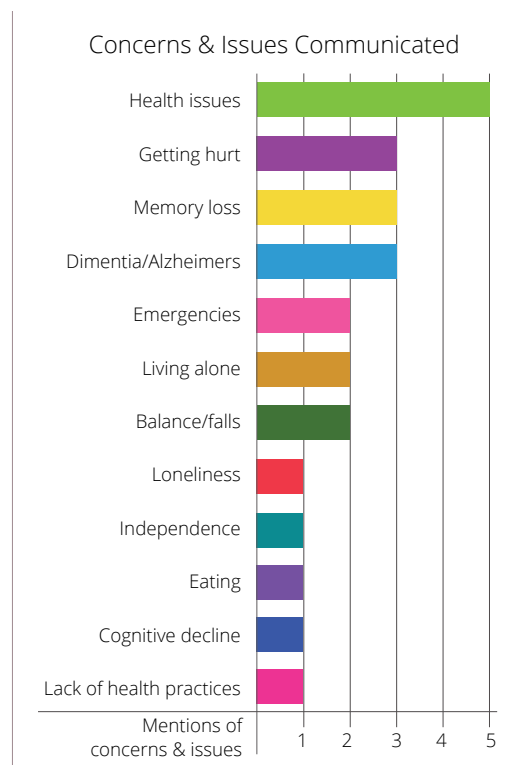
Findings

Communications

Two of the interviewees lived with the family members they were caring for. This made them much more knowledgeable about the health and well-being of their aging parents. It also provided them more peace of mind about their safety and health.

Others live varying distances from their loved ones and communications varied, but it was quite frequent in all cases. All of the caregivers speak to their loved ones several times a week, even if they can't see them nearly as often.

Communication provides a great deal of peace of mind for caregivers because it

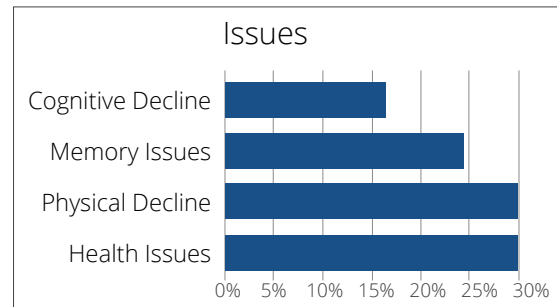


gives them knowledge about their loved ones' health and well-being. Some of the aging adults were more stubborn about communicating health issues. But even without the detailed knowledge about the aging adults' health, caregivers can follow trends, perceive changes, and monitor some aspects of their loved ones' lives if they communicate on a regular basis.

Most of us are not very knowledgeable about the many health issues with which older adults deal and it's generally not a topic that family members discuss in any detail. The caregivers who do not live with their loved ones lack much knowledge about their loved one's health history and medications.

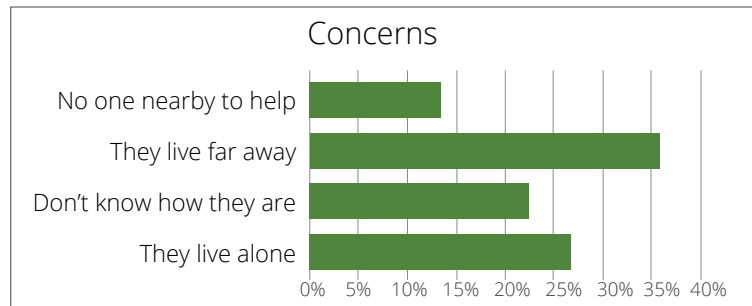
Issues

Some patterns are apparent about the issues and concerns that caregivers have about their loved ones. Most of us expect health issues to become more prevalent as we age, so it's no surprise that was a top issue.



Concerns

They were also concerned about their loved ones getting hurt. Decline of flexibility and balance are common issues with the elderly (Saxon, Etten, Perkins, Physical Change & Aging, 309). These concerns we're reflected in the emergencies aging family members had experienced. One third of all emergencies that were reported were due to falls.



Loneliness is also a concern that we don't always think about, but it's important to consider. Loneliness can lead to depression and lack of purpose (in life), both of which can lead to other issues in the lives of aging adults.

Peace of Mind

There were many things that could provide peace of mind for the caregivers. Many of these could be provided or improved by the wristband and app.

