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Anne Girault, Marie Ferrua, Aude Fourcade, Guillaume Hébert, Claude Sicotte, Muriel Mons, Sophie Beaupère, Naïma Mezaour, François Lemare, Anne Montaron, et al.

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CANCER PATIENTS' WILLINGNESS TO USE IT FOR THEIR HEALTH

A. Girault, M. Ferrua, A. Fourcade, G. Hébert, C. Sicotte, M. Mons, S. Beaupère, N. Mezaour, F. Lemare, A. Montaron, M. Ducreux, C. Guepratte, M. Di Palma, E. Minvielle

Gustave Roussy - 114 rue Edouard Vaillant - 94805 Villejuif - FRANCE

BACKGROUND

Recent changes in cancer care delivery (better survival rates, more outpatient care, oral therapies) are challenging current cancer care coordination practices
> IT could improve cancer care coordination

OBJECTIVE

- Understand patients' current access to IT
- Assess their willingness to use IT to manage their cancer.
- Identify the influence of sociodemographic factors

PATIENTS AND METHODS

1371 questionnaires collected among seven outpatient departments (medical oncology for prostate, breast, skin, head and neck, endocrine, gastric and cervical cancers, radiotherapy, radiology, anesthesia, hematology).

Questionnaire design :

- (i) Access and use of IT
- (ii) Willingness to use IT for their health
- (iii) Socio-demographics (age, gender, socioeconomic status, number of people in the household, and the type of locality they live in).

Statistical analyses performed with R ($\alpha = 0.01$)

RESULTS

I. Access and Use

- 71% used a mobile phone everyday
- 93% had access to Internet from home.
- Tablets and smartphones were still minority.

Participation level = 85%

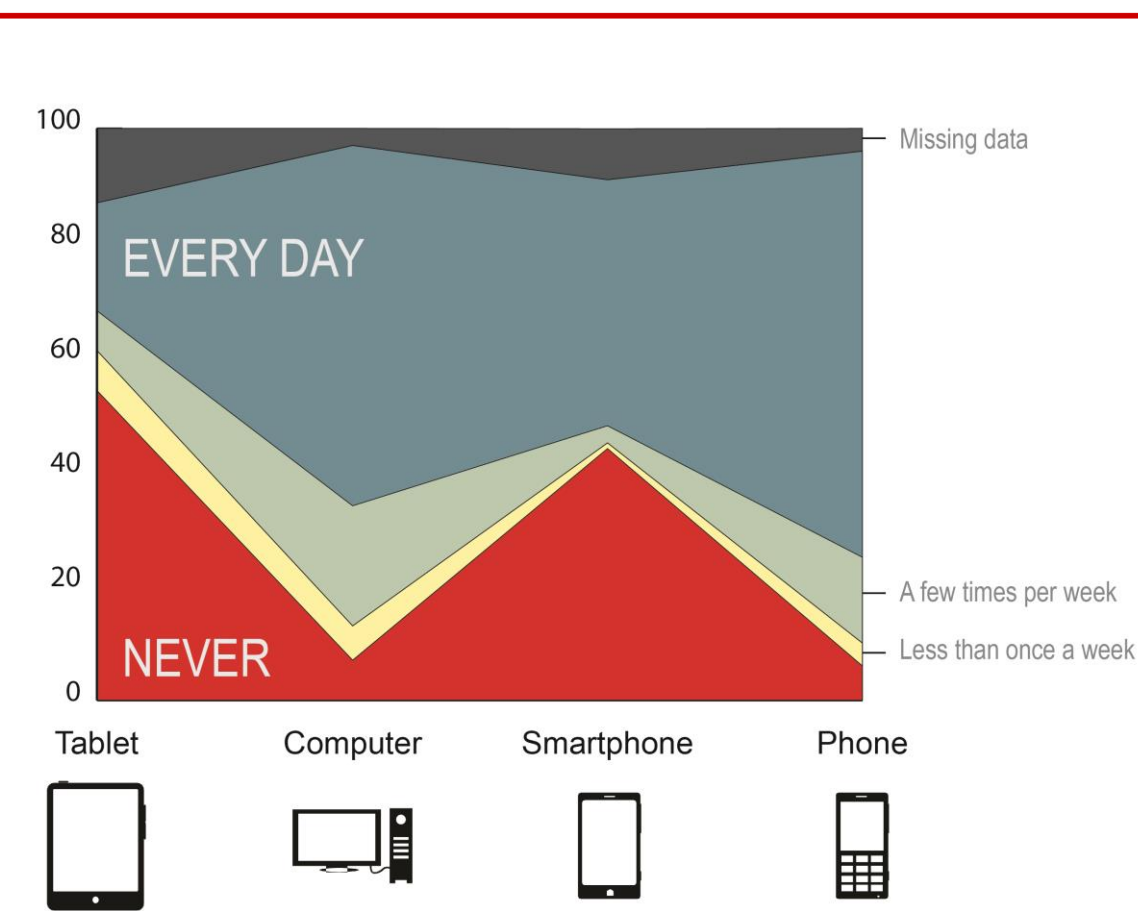


Fig. 1: Frequency of use per IT device

Influence of sociodemographics

- Age was negatively associated with the frequency of use of mobile phones and smartphones ($p < 0.001$) but correlation coefficients were not important (respectively, $r = -0.26$, $r = -0.27$).
- Age and employment status were predictors of the frequency of use of mobile phones and smartphones.

II. Willingness to use IT

- Patient attitudes toward e-health activities were mainly positive.
- A significant majority valued the possibility to enhance communication with providers

IT applications	useful/very useful	neutral	not useful/rather not useful	n/a
Have access to electronic medical records	80%	4%	15%	1%
Fill out a self-test about your health status	78%	5%	17%	0%
Communicate via emails with your physician	75%	5%	18%	2%
Schedule an appointment	71%	6%	22%	1%
Get information about disease/support	69%	12%	18%	1%
Get access to external contacts (psychologist, nurses,...)	66%	13%	20%	1%
Get help with medication monitoring (reminders, side effects)	61%	12%	26%	1%
Give access to a relative for using these functions	48%	14%	37%	1%
Receive a reminder for the appointment	44%	35%	20%	1%
Chat with peer patients	44%	23%	31%	2%
Communicate via video	36%	18%	44%	2%

Table 1: Patient's perceptions of e-health activities

Influence of sociodemographics

No significant gap among attitudes between the different patient groups could be identified.

III. Perceived ease of use of IT

- Above all, patients were not reluctant to use IT.
- 84% of the population studied declared to be able to use a computer, a tablet or a smartphone.
- Only 8% disagreed.

Influence of sociodemographics

Perceptions regarding ability to use IT were negatively associated with age and employment status.

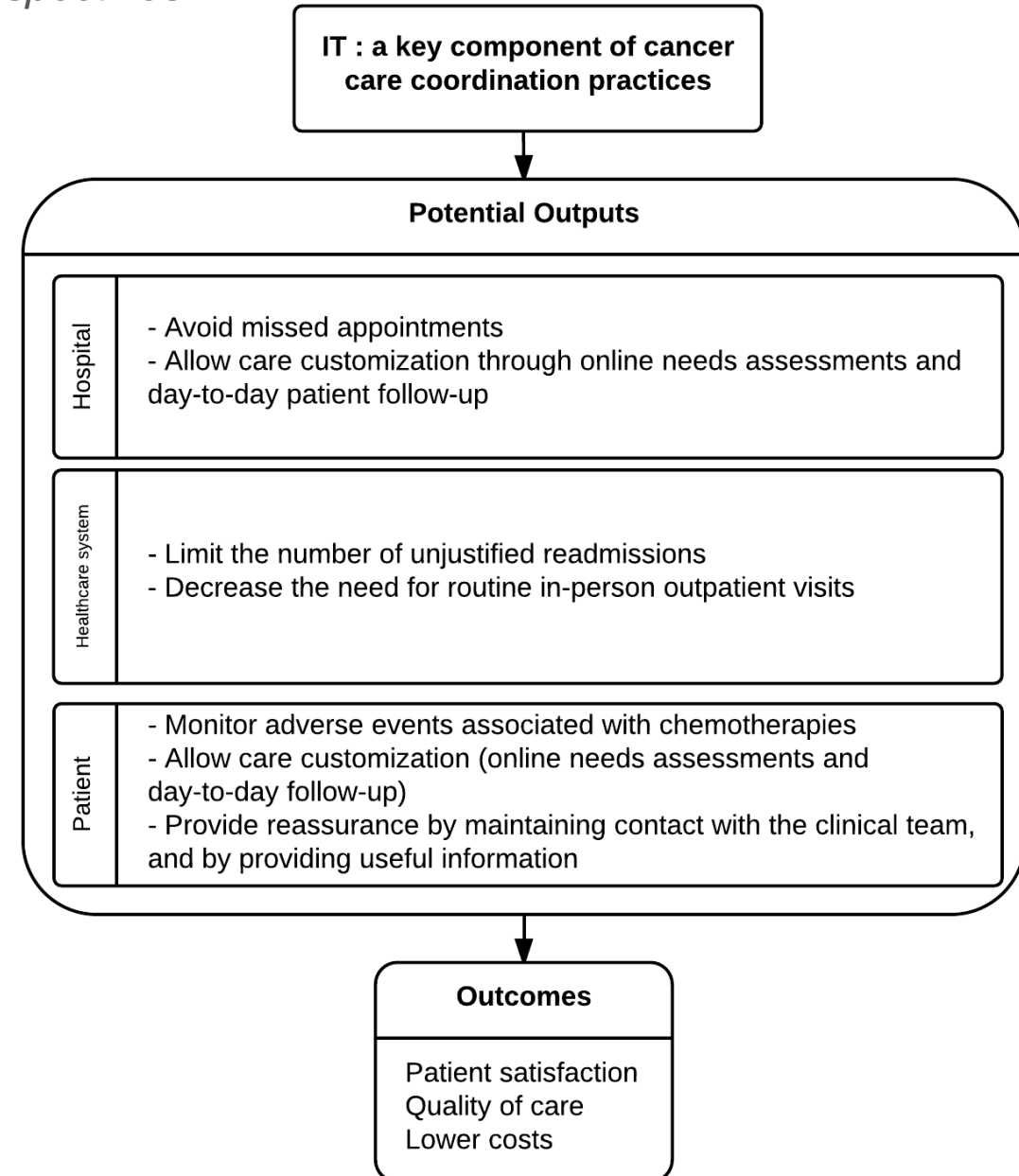
« i feel i am too old to use these technologies »
« i am afraid my personal data will not be protected »

Discussion

Challenges

- Comply with standards of privacy and security
- Anticipate the impact on doctor-patient relationships
 - Providers expected to be more responsive
 - Patients willing to maintain face-to-face hospital contact

Perspectives



Study limitations

- Sampling from a single centre => limited generalizability although overall access and intentions were consistent with the results found in other studies
- Risk of social desirability from respondents

CONCLUSION

- Access and use of IT were widespread among the studied population.
- Patients advocated for an extended use of IT in oncology, and above all:
 - the opportunity to have access to their electronic medical record
 - the possibility to increase communication with providers (via emails)
- Differences in perceived ease of use corresponding to age and socioeconomic status have to be addressed in the near future.