



WORKSHOP

Proposal no.: 004111

Socio-economic assessment of assistive technology in service delivery practice
Italy, Milano, 25-26 September 2008



Information Society
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2008 AAATE International Workshop “**Socio economic assessment of Assistive Technology in service delivery practice**” was held in Milano, Italy, on September 25-26, with an attendance of over 50 experts from Europe (Austria, Belgium, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands), USA and (Australia). It was organized by the Biomedical Technology Department of **Fondazione Don Gnocchi** Onlus, the largest private non-profit organization in the field of disability and rehabilitation in Italy.

The workshop was a very fruitful and effective interdisciplinary event, giving the opportunity to all participants to learn from each other’s experience, to investigate how socio-economic assessment mechanisms could be integrated into service delivery practice, and to discuss possible roadmaps for all actors involved, including the AAATE, to promote advancement in this field.

The workshop consisted of three sessions.

The first session (**Issues and challenges**) investigated the foundations of the subject, by addressing the general issues and the main challenges related to the applications of cost effectiveness assessment methods/techniques in service delivery practice, in policies development and in market strategies. Speakers included Jan Persson from Sweden (**Cost-effectiveness of AT: applications and importance in policy development**), Lorenzo Mantovani from the International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (**Evidence of AT outcomes: what can we learn from pharmacoeconomics**), Renzo Andrich from Italy (**The AT cost side: how to measure the social cost of AT interventions ?**), Gert Jan Geldelblom from The Netherlands (**Outcomes assessment: the missing link**) and François Junique from the Unit ICT for inclusion of the European Commission, Information Society & Media DG (**Assistive Technology - a bright future in Europe?**).

The second session (**National experiences**), chaired by AAATE Board Member Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf, presented practical examples of how socio-economic assessment has been implemented in service delivery practice at national or regional level in various Countries . Contributors included Ulf Keijer from Sweden (**Assistive Technology in the Ordinary Living. Cost and benefit studies**), Ingrid Schraner from Australia (**Issues with cost-effectiveness analyses of AT based on the ICF**), Valerio Gower from Italy (**Economic models for AT service delivery**), Ricard Barberà from Spain (**Assistive products in Home Assistive Services: analysis of costs and benefits**), James Lenker from the United States (**AT-ISI: a tool for quantifying mobility-related AT devices and services**) and Aoife Callan from Ireland (**Willingness to Pay for Technology: Findings from an Irish Pilot Study**).

The third session (**The way forwards**), consisted of a brainstorming where all participants had the opportunity to contribute. It attempted to identify research priorities and recommendations for possible future actions at national, European or international level that could help improve the quality of AT service delivery systems.

Overall, this workshop – the first one ever held tackling this subject in such a comprehensive manner – was a useful and inspiring event that will bring about significant advancement in this area.



PREPARING AND RUNNING THE WORKSHOP

1.1 Invitation / Nomination / Decision for a chair

The idea of this workshop stemmed from today's increasing demand for evidence of the cost-effectiveness of assistive technologies.

Policy makers and financing agencies need such information to properly allocate resources, control how efficiently they are used, stimulate the market, identify priority

areas for research, understand possible wider implications at an overall societal level; professionals working in health care and social services – within today's climate of accountability calling for evidence based practice - need to know whether their AT choices have proved effective within the rehabilitation programme, useful for the client, and efficient in using resources; industrialists need evidence of the added value their products or services may offer in comparison to those of other competitors; users and user organizations require to be fully involved in decision making processes and bring their expertise in this discussion.

The proposal for this workshop was formulated by AAATE Member Renzo Andrich at the 2007 AAATE Assembly in San Sebastian, Spain. Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus – the largest private non-profit organization in the field of disability and rehabilitation in Italy – offered to host the event and co-fund the organization. The AAATE Board and Assembly approved and mandated Mr Renzo Andrich as workshop chair.

1.2 Agreement with CWST

Fondazione Don Gnocchi put forward a co-funding request to AAATE through the CWST project. The request was approved for a maximum amount of € 3.000. The agreement between AAATE/CWST and Fondazione Don Gnocchi was signed on June 30, 2008.



Socio-economic assessment of assistive technology in service delivery practice

Milano, Italy, 25-26 September, 2008
Polo Tecnologico Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus

AGREEMENT

The CWST project will support the organiser of the AAATE 2008 workshop on the following topics:

- Financing invited speakers of the plenary sessions.

The overall financing support from the CWST project will be a maximum of € 3.000,-.

This financing support will only become available upon submission of a signed final report of the workshop; a section about the CWST contribution will be part of this final report in which will be described what has been reached thanks to the CWST funding.

The final report will be delivered in the preferred CWST layout, along with an event evaluation chart and a detailed list of the expenses borne by the organizers for which the financial support is requested, and the bank coordinates (IBAN & SWIFT) for the money transfer.

Agreed by

Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus
Renzo Andrich

CWST
Harry Knops

Date: 25 June 2008

Date: 30 June 2008



1.3 Seminar / Workshop Office

Workshop Chair and Office

Mr Renzo Andrich

Polo Tecnologico Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus

Via Capeceletro 66, 20148 Milano Italy renzo.andrich@siva.it

Secretariat

Ms Cristina Magrone

Ph +39 02 40308305 fax +39 02 4048919 email cmagrone@dongnocchi.it

1.3.1 Information, Invitation, Flyer

A first announcement (**annex 1**) was sent out in September 2007. The workshop flyer (**annex 2**) was sent out in May 2008.

1.3.2 Registration

The registration deadline was September 5, 2008. 56 persons registered and attended, as from the enclosed list (**annex 3**)

1.3.3 Contributions: Keynote Invitations, Submissions

The programme was built based on selected submission, including a number of invited speakers. The submission form was sent out in January 2008 (**annex 4**). About 20 submission were received within deadline April 30. 12 of them have been accepted.

1.3.4 WWW tools and WWW page

The conference tool was adapted for the needs of a workshop. Due to the limited number of participants planned, finally the tool was not used for the organisation. Nevertheless the adaption of the tool was not useless because now a "freeware"-version is accessible.

For publication of proceeding the official AAATE website www.aaate.net was used. The workshop was also promoted by CWST-webpage as well as by the OCG-journal.

1.4 Budget: Sponsoring, Accounting

Participation to the workshop was restricted to AAATE members, and was free-of charge. In order to be entitled to participate, many people purposely registered as AAATE members, with led to an increased membership of the Association.

Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus offered for free the following facilities and own personnel:

- Meeting rooms
- Secretariat
- Organisation staff (excluding audiovisual technicians)

It also provided the following services, thanks to funds available from national projects:

- Catering for all participants (2 refreshment breaks and 2 lunches)
- Social event on Thursday evening

University of Linz offered for free the following own personnel:

- Coordination and financial management 137,70

The CWST contribution supported the following expenses:

- Travel and accommodation invited speakers 807,79 €
- Printing of handouts/material provided by speakers 465,60 €
- Audiovisuals and technical services for the workshop 1.720,00 €
- Organisation, preparation and reporting 669,00 €
- Adaption of conference tool 413,93 €
- Travel and hotel for Harry Knops 330,00 €

Workshop 08a / D19	01/07/08	28/02/09	Milano/Italy, 25-26/09/2008			
Expenditures	non costed		CWST			Detailed description
	IS	AAATE	IS	AAATE	OCG	
Staff costs	138	0	834	113	136	
Organisation	138		420	113	136	Coordination, preparation and reporting
Conference Tool			414			Adaption
Travel and hotel costs	0	0	0	383	0	
				383		Travel and hotel Harry Knops
Subcontract	0	0	0	2.993	0	Agreement with Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus
Overheads			167	99	27	
Total expenditures	138	0	1.001	3.589	163	

Overview	non costed	CWST
Staff costs	138	1.083
Travel and hotel costs	0	383
Overheads		194
Total expenditures	138	1.660

Without the support of CWST a workshop of such high quality wouldn't be possible.

1.5 Local Facilities

1.5.1 Workshop Rooms

The workshop was held in the "Cardini Room" of the Rehabilitation Centre S.Maria Nascente of Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus in Milano. The room capability was 60 people. Wide space for coffee breaks was available just outside the room. Participants staying at lunches used the internal restaurant of the rehabilitation centre.

1.5.2 Presentation Technology

Mainly PPT Slides

1.5.3 PCs, Internet Access

Cables for Internet Access were available in the rooms for participants carrying their own laptop.

1.6 Hotel: Reservation, Booking, Co-operation

Each participant was responsible for her/his travel and accommodation. For those who required accommodation assistance, agreements were taken with a local travel agent - **Raumflug Viaggi**, Via Capecelatro, 75,

1.7 Special needs arrangements

1.7.1 Sign language and induction loop

No request was made by participants for such facilities.

1.7.2 Braille print

No request was made by participants for such facilities. However, the proceedings can be downloaded from the AAATE website as accessible digital files.

1.7.3 Accessible PCs

No request was made by participants for such facilities.

1.7.4 Guidance

No request was made by participants for such facilities, although available on request

1.7.5 Support staff

No request was made by participants for such facilities

1.7.6 Accompanying persons

No separate programme was foreseen for accompanying persons. They could attend the workshop as the participants.

1.8 Evaluation, Quality Control

1.8.1 Questionnaire for participants (print/online)

No questionnaire was submitted to participants.

1.8.2 Evaluation Report

The workshop was very successful in terms of attendance (over 50 participants, while previous AAATE workshops used to gather less than 20 people), contents, commitment in discussion, atmosphere, social programme, and results. The third session (see results in the following chapter) was very productive in terms of detecting **further research priorities** and issuing **recommendation for action**. The organisation was smooth and no critical problem was detected.

1.9 Final Programme

Thursday, September 25, 2008

Satellite meeting

h. 11.00

AAATE National Contacts pre-meeting (only for AAATE national contacts persons)

h. 14.00

Welcome and registration

Introductory Session

h. 14.30

- *Angelo Bazzari – President of Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus*
- *Grazia Conforti – Representative of the Regional Government of Lombardy*
- *Renzo Andrich – Chair of the Workshop*
- *Message by Ferruccio Fazio – Deputy Minister of Welfare*

1st Session: Issues and challenges

Chairperson: Pierluigi Emiliani - National Research Council. Firenze (Italy)

h. 15.00

Cost-effectiveness of AT: applications and importance in policy development

Jan Persson

Center for Medical Technology Assessment, Linköping University (Sweden)

h. 15.20

Evidence of AT outcomes: what can we learn from pharmacoeconomics

Lorenzo Mantovani

International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR)

h. 15.40

The AT cost side: how to measure the social cost of AT interventions ?

Renzo Andrich

Polo Tecnologico Fondazione Don Gnocchi. Milano (Italy)

h. 16.00

Outcomes assessment: the missing link

Gert-Jan Gelderblom

Vilans, Hoensbroek (The Netherlands)

h. 16.20

Assistive Technology - a bright future in Europe?

François Junique

European Commission, Information Society & Media DG, Unit ICT for inclusion

h. 16.40

Round table

h. 17.00

Refreshment break

Satellite meeting

h. 17.30
AAATE AGM

Social event

h. 21.00
Dinner downtown (MamaCafè Restaurant)

Friday September 26, 2008

2nd Session: National experiences

Chairperson: Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf – AIAS Bologna Onlus. Bologna (Italy)

h. 9.00
The AT outcome side: what is worth measuring ?
Jeffrey Jutai
University of Western Ontario - Lawson Health Research Inst. London (Canada)

h. 9.15
Assistive Technology in the Ordinary Living. Cost and benefit studies.
Ulf Keijer
Royal Inst. Technology, School of Architecture and Built Env. Stockholm (Sweden)

h. 9.30 I
issues with cost-effectiveness analyses of AT based on the ICF
Ingrid Schraner
*School of Economics and Finance and Social Justice and Social Change
Research Centre, University of Western Sydney (Australia)*

h. 9.45
Economic models for AT service delivery
Valerio Gower and Massimo Memmola
Polo Tecnologico Fond. Don Gnocchi - Cerismas Milano Catholic University (Italy)

h. 10.00
Assistive products in Home Assistive Services: analysis of costs and benefits
Ricard Barberà
Biomechanics Institute of Valencia, Universitat Politècnica de Valencia (Spain)

h. 10.15
AT-ISI: a tool for quantifying mobility-related AT devices and services
James Lenker
University of Buffalo (USA)

h. 10.30

Willingness to Pay for Technology: Findings from an Irish Pilot Study
Aoife Callan
Irish Centre for Social Gerontology. Galway (Ireland)

h. 10.45 Questions time

h. 11.00 *Refreshment break*

3rd Session: The way forwards

Chairperson: Renzo Andrich – Polo Tecnologico Fond.Don Gnocchi. Milano (Italy)

h. 11.30

Free discussion facilitated by study questions

Closing Session

h. 12.30

- *Anna-Liisa Salminen – President of the AAATE*
- *Furio Gramatica – Chief Scientific Officer Polo Tecnologico Fond.Don Gnocchi*
- *Renzo Andrich – Chair of the Workshop*

h. 13.00

Lunch

Post-meeting events

h. 14.00

Visit to selected facilities of Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi

- The Assistive Technology Service
- The DAT Smart Home
- The Biomedical Technology Department)

h. 16.00

Conclusion

1.10 Proceedings: Minutes, Reports, Handouts, Slides, Materials

The proceedings of the workshop consisted of printed abstracts (handed out at the workshop) and full Power Point presentations (published in the official AAATE website after the workshop, in PDF encrypted format). All the material is freely downloadable from www.aaate.net, as shown in this picture:

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AAATE International Workshop 2008

19/6/2008

International Workshop

Socio-economic assessment of assistive technology
in service delivery practice

Milano, Italy, 25-26 September, 2008

Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus

Summary

Nowadays, there is an increasing demand for evidence of the cost-effectiveness of assistive technologies. Policy makers and financing agencies need such information to properly allocate resources, control how efficiently they are used, stimulate the market, identify priority areas for research, understand possible wider implications at an overall societal level; professionals working in health care and social services - within today's climate of accountability calling for evidence based practice - need to know whether their AT choices have proved effective within the rehabilitation programme, useful for the client, and efficient in using resources; industrialists need evidence of the added value their products or services may offer in comparison to those of other competitors; users and user organisations require to be fully involved in decision making processes and bring their expertise in this discussion. Studies on this subject started to appear in literature quite recently. Most of them are still struggling with fundamental research questions: others work at developing, field-testing and validating specific instruments or methodologies; overall, knowledge has greatly advanced on this topic in the recent years. However, it seems that transfer of such knowledge into policy development and service delivery practice is still in the early stages. The AAATE 2008 International Workshop offered a significant contribution on this issue. It brought together experts from all over the world that have developed expertise in this subject or are carrying out significant field experiences. The workshop included invited speakers, round table and discussion sessions. It gave the opportunity to all participants to learn from each other's experience, to investigate how socio-economic assessment mechanisms could be integrated into service delivery practice, and discuss possible roadmaps for all actors involved including the AAATE, to promote advancement on this topic.

Proceedings[Workshop programme and abstracts](#)

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[Workshop Press Release](#)

Type of file: pdf (33 Kb)

[Jan Persson - Cost effectiveness of AT: applications and importance in policy development](#)

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[Lorenzo Mantovani - Evidence of AT outcomes: what can we learn from pharmacoconomics](#)

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[Renzo Andrich - The AT cost side: how to measure the social cost of AT interventions?](#)

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[Gert Jan Gelderblom - Outcomes assessment: the missing link](#)

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[Paul Timmers and Francois Junique - Assistive Technology a bright future in Europe?](#)

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[Ulf Keijzer - Assistive Technology in the Ordinary Living: Cost and benefit studies](#)

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[Ricard Barbera - Assistive products in Home Assistive Services: analysis of costs and benefits](#)

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[Ingrid Schraner - Issues with cost-effectiveness analyses of AT based on the ICF](#)

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[James Lenker - AT-ISI: a tool for quantifying mobility related AT devices and services](#)

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[Valerio Gower and Massimo Memmola - Economic models for AT service delivery](#)

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[Aoife Callan - Willingness to Pay for Technology: Findings from an Irish Pilot Study](#)

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[Minutes of the final brainstorm](#)

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In the following, the abstracts of the presentations are reported.

Cost-effectiveness of AT: applications and importance in policy development

Jan Persson

Centre for Medical Technology Assessment

Department of Medical and Health Sciences, Linköping University (Sweden)

Correspondence address: jan.persson@ihs.liu.se

The need for rational policy development

The escalating progress in technological advances and changes in demographics as well as citizens' attitudes and demand for services are factors that have put a hard pressure on the health care system. Only a small part of new innovations can be adopted. The need to allocate resources in an efficient way is increasingly crucial. Basic principles for such prioritization are based on ethical values as well as knowledge of effectiveness and cost-effectiveness.

Evidenced based AT service delivery

In the field of medicine the evidence base is rapidly expanding. The conscientious explicit use of current evidence in decision making forms the basis for EBM. Meta-analysis of previous studies, reported in the Cochrane and other data bases, provide input in decision making. Through analysis of cost per quality adjusted life years gained (QALYs), ranking based on cost-effectiveness is possible and forms a base for priority setting in health care. A variety of reasons are behind the lack of good evidence for judging the value of AT. This will be discussed at the workshop together with a report of state of the art regarding cost-effectiveness. To summarize, available studies often show that AT delivery is very cost-effective, although the studies are weak. This means a dilemma, where EBM may hamper innovation in the AT field. On the other hand, more studies, better methods for decision making (probabilistic modelling) and revision of evidence grading (see the GRADE system) may support the AT field. It is therefore necessary to discuss how to develop the policy making process. Crucial issues are interaction between researchers and policy makers, stronger involvement from AT developers and manufacturers on the issue of diffusion of innovation, and development of criteria for adoption and implementation of innovations.

Evidence of AT outcomes: what can we learn from pharmacoeconomics

Lorenzo Mantovani

*International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR), and
Center of Pharmacoeconomics Federico II University of Naples (Italy)*

Correspondence address: lorenzo_mantovani@hotmail.com

The aim of health professionals is to provide patients with the best possible care. Unfortunately, in doing this, they face financial and economic difficulties: the demand for health care – because of past successes and because of the emergence of effective new technologies – has often exceeded the available financial and human resources. As a result, health care interventions have been evaluated not only for their quality, safety and effectiveness, but also for their costs, with the aim of investigating their efficiency. Economic evaluations put into relation costs and consequences of health care programmes and calculate indices of efficiency.

There are three main techniques used in full economic evaluations of health care programmes: cost effectiveness analysis (CEA), cost utility analysis (CUA) and cost benefit analysis (CBA). All techniques address the issue: “Which is the cost to reach a unit of effect?” The main difference among the techniques is the unit of measurement used to quantify the effects. In a CEA, effects are expressed in natural units, such as death avoided or life year gained: a cost per life year gained is a common result of a CEA. In a CUA the effect of health care are usually measured in terms of quality adjusted life years (QALY’s), a single index which incorporates information on both quantity and quality of life. A cost per QALY gained is a common result of a CUA. In a CBA, also effects are turned into monetary values, using appropriate, complex methods. A cost to benefit ratio or a net cost are common results of a CBA.

Based on the above, applications of health economic concepts and methods to Assistive Technologies will be discussed.

The cost side: how to measure the costs of AT interventions

Renzo Andrich

Polo Tecnologico Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus. Milano (Italy)

Correspondence address: renzo.andrich@siva.it

The overall cost of an AT intervention includes product costs (related to purchasing, fitting, using and maintaining the selected AT product) and process costs (related to assessing the client, selecting and delivering the AT product, training the user, following-up, fulfil the related administrative procedures). For a proper understanding of the economic impact of an AT intervention, both components should be analysed in term of “social cost”. The presentation elaborates on the concept of “social cost” as the main indicator of the economic impact of an AT intervention, depicts a possible mathematical model, and describes how alternative AT solutions can be compared in terms of their social cost.

Product costs can be easily estimated by means of the SCAI (Siva Cost Analysis Instrument). It takes into account all costs borne during the product lifecycle including the human assistance – whether formal or informal – needed to operate the device. The social cost of the same AT device may be very different if used in different

contexts. A recent study¹ investigated on the possibility to infer repeatable social cost figures for various categories of AT equipment. The first finding is that – not surprisingly – most AT solutions, though very expensive in terms of initial purchase price, lead to considerable savings in social costs, due to the reduced assistance burden. The second major finding is the marked variation in the social costs of different individual cases where similar AT solutions were implemented, suggesting difficulty in establishing repeatable social cost figures for a given device. As a matter of fact, the social cost depend on the individual context of the implemented AT solution, and on its inter-relationship with the other AT solutions composing the whole individualised AT programme.

Process costs can be analysed by tracking the costs borne by all actor involved (the user, the professionals involved, the Bodies responsible) through the various stages of the process: the *initiative*, the *assessment*, the *prescription*, the *authorisation*, the *decision*, the *delivery/verification*, the *use training*, the *follow-up*. A case study will be presented to show how these costs can be calculated and lead in certain cases to figures that are sometimes of the same magnitude of the product costs of even higher. Process costs are seldom considered as an issue in most AT public service delivery systems: today cost containment strategies are mainly based just on purchase prices negotiation. Conversely, maximising the process efficiency (e.g. by simplifying procedures) and increasing the process effectiveness (e.g. by ensuring high-quality assessment when selecting the product, and monitoring the product when in use to detect the outcome) may also lead to significant savings in AT interventions, while increasing the user's satisfaction and reducing the risk of device abandonment.

Outcomes assessment: the missing link

Gert Jan Gelderblom

Vilans, Hoensbroek (The Netherlands)

Correspondence address: g.gelderblom@vilans.nl

Many technologies that mature in the mainstream consumer market can be adopted for applications offering specific support to people with impairments. Part of these applications are indeed developed from a technology driven perspective in academia or Research & Technology Organisations. Unfortunately, most of these applications never outgrow the stage of prototyping. Although the needs of end users are the motivation for initiating such technology development, in practice most of these applications will never benefit the population intended for. This holds true for many domains of technology from high end to low end technologies. After concluding initial usability tests, systems should be evaluated in field trials and ideally subjected to clinical trials.

¹ Andrich R, Caracciolo A (2007): Analysing the cost of individual assistive technology programmes. *Disability and Rehabilitation: Assistive Technology*, 2007; 2(4):207-234

However, as the comparison with most interventions in healthcare runs dry regarding the methodology to be applied for such testing, the domain of Assistive Technology (AT) faces a major challenge in developing a common methodology aimed at establishing the outcomes of assistive technology. But with the methodology the awareness for the need for such research needs to rise in order to convince policy makers and financiers of AT of the socio-economic need for providing effective AT devices.

To illustrate the role of outcomes research in the acceptance of AT within the established financing structures two examples will be presented. In the first example the research into cost-effectiveness of a robot manipulator is placed in the process towards final acceptance of the device in the Dutch healthcare insurance system. In the second example the absence of cost-effectiveness insights for devices supporting the use of therapeutic elastic stockings led to rejection of the devices despite very strong indications of major potential effects on financial savings and increased independence and user participation.

The lack of financing for provision of AT devices should rather be seen as a consequence of the absence of outcomes research instead of vice versa.

Assistive Technology: a bright future in Europe?

Paul Timmers, François Junique

European Commission, Information Society & Media DG, Unit ICT for inclusion

Correspondence address: Paul.Timmers@ec.europa.eu

The speech will reflect on the future of the assistive technology field in Europe, based on feedback from policy, research and deployment activities at European level and internationally. The audience will be asked for their advice on action to help making that "a bright future for AT" a reality.

The AT outcome side: what is worth measuring?

Jeffrey W. Jutai¹, Graham J. Strong², Hideki Ariizumi³

1. University of Western Ontario and Lawson Health Research Institute (Canada)

2. University of Waterloo, School of Optometry (Canada)

3. Wilfrid Laurier University, Department of Economics (Canada)

Correspondence address: jjutai@uwo.ca

Traditional approaches to economic analysis focus on cost-effectiveness, cost-utility, and cost-benefit, and make assumptions about the valuation of health and functional states that may not be wholly appropriate for users of assistive technology devices

(ATDs). Moreover, these approaches are not well-suited to researching models for predicting ATD use and discontinuance.

This paper describes a dynamic programming approach that is compatible with the Consortium for Assistive Technology Outcomes Research (CATOR) conceptual framework for ATD outcomes research and designed to model the process from device selection through to longer-term outcomes.

In the first phase of our investigation, 226 first-time recipients of low vision assistive devices were assessed bi-weekly for 6 months, then monthly for another 6 months. We were able to demonstrate the feasibility of doing dynamic process modelling and obtaining clinically meaningful results. We showed that the expected returns from device use (in terms of the likelihood of continuing to use the device initially received) were greater early within the first year of device use than later on. This model of the relationship between device history and expected return was better supported by the data than a model that predicted the same returns no matter how long individuals had been using their devices. We were also able to demonstrate dissociation between the effects of low vision rehabilitation on functional vision and psychosocial impact of low vision devices. This is important because it had been assumed that vision status alone should predict device use and associated impact on subjective quality of life. We have learned that the dynamic modelling may be improved in several important ways by including more socioeconomic data on the following variables in the next phase of investigation: (a) socioeconomic status, (b) family circumstances (principally, social support), and (c) financial resources of ATD users.

Assistive technology in the ordinary living: cost and benefit studies

Ulf Keijer, Greger Sandström

*Royal Institute of Technology, School of Architecture and the Built Environment,
Stockholm (Sweden)*

Correspondence address: ulf.keijer@arch.kth.se

In three municipalities in Sweden ten to twenty elderly with acquired cognitive impairment at each location took part in a project on the introduction of assistive technology to ordinary homes of elderly people.

The project aimed to explore the potential of assistive technology to facilitate the daily life of cognitively disabled persons in their own homes. The technology was intended to support the individual and her capacity, and postpone the need for moving to institutional care. Also a few month of postponement could mean a lot, both to the individual's feeling of being treated well and to the societal concern regarding the lack of enough appropriate accommodation and service for the increasing number of vulnerable older people. The typical participant of the project was a person, 60 years of age or older experiencing obvious problems in her daily life due to initial or more pronounced stages of Alzheimer's disease (dementia) or

other cognitive disabilities. The applied technologies varied significantly between the individuals. Also, the project aimed to identify organisational and administrative obstacles for the delivery of appropriate services, and, if possible, to find ways to overcome them.

Cost and benefit studies were carried out attempting to quantify the benefit in monetary terms of different assistive equipments aimed to support the individual living on her own or her close relatives. Expertise in various fields related to this comprehensive area was engaged in a study group during a number of meetings in order to attain consensus on a set of open questions. The main difficulty addressed was how to assess the benefit of a specific technology and assign a specific economic value to it. It became possible to show that the applied methodology was productive of assessing appropriate measures to evaluating the pay-off periods for a number of assistive devices

Issues with cost-effectiveness analyses of AT based on the ICF

Ingrid Schraner

School of Economics and Finance and Social Justice Social Change Research Centre, University of Western Sydney (Australia)

Correspondence address: i.schraner@uws.edu.au

In a first part the paper outlines three economically relevant dimensions of AT users, namely whether their impairment is constructed as 'disability' or as 'frail elderly', whether the AT system used is a relatively high-cost or low-cost one, and whether the AT user disposes of the funds to purchase the AT system s/he needs or is dependent on other funding agencies and their decisions as to what can be purchased. These three dimensions form a dice, within which a particular AT user can be positioned, allowing us to identify potential clusters among a number of cases studied.

The second part briefly presents the approach to ICF-based cost-effectiveness analyses of AT systems, which is currently undergoing a pre-pilot in Australia. We first define effectiveness as the activities & participation achieved by the AT user based on the environmental factors present in a particular situation. We then identify the costs of having provided environmental facilitators and removed environmental barriers in this current situation. Our cost-effectiveness analysis then compares effectiveness and costs in the current situation of a particular AT user with those in a situation where s/he has optimal assistance (based on what is technically possible today).

Having outlined the basic approach, the presentation then highlights the conceptual movement that starts with the AT user at the centre of the analysis and his or her activities and participation. The movement is presented as one from a particular

activity and participation to others that are also achieved, and from there to other persons who benefit from the same facilitators provided and barriers removed.

The third part briefly highlights some of the key conceptual achievements of an ICF-based cost-effectiveness analysis, in particular its ability to overcome some of the limitations of cost-utility and cost-benefit analyses of AT devices and systems, which tie these forms of economic analyses to normalisation and a medical model of disability.

Economic models for AT service delivery

Valerio Gower¹, Massimo Memmola²

¹ Polo Tecnologico Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus. Milano (Italy)

² CERISMAS, Faculty of Economics, Catholic University of Milano (Italy)

Correspondence address: vgower@dongnocchi.it

The presentation will offer a preview of the findings of a Study carried out on behalf of the Italian Ministry of Health. A systematic method has been developed to help the National Health Service Ministry to take decisions on the reimbursement amount for each item of the National List of AT products eligible for provision (“Nomenclatore”). The method is different for custom-made products (e.g. individualized orthoses) and for off-the-shelf products (e.g. a standard wheelchair).

For custom-made products a spreadsheet has been developed - based on a mathematical model – able to track all physical production factors (e.g. time spent by each worker, components and other resources used), value them according to given parameters, add appropriate indirect costs and markup and eventually lead to the product price. The definition of the reimbursement amount involves three steps: the manufacturer fills-in the spreadsheet, leading to a proposed price; the Ministry carries out random audits on a sample of manufacturers, by means of on-site visits where the production cycle is observed to check whether it is consistent with the data declared in the spreadsheet; decision is finally taken as whether to accept the proposed price or to redefine it on the basis of the audit.

For off-the-shelf products, a price monitoring system has been developed and implemented on the national information database of assistive technologies (www.portale.siva.it). The company responsible for the Italian market of each product listed in the database is required to declare – besides the technical data - the product configuration in terms of “Nomenclatore” codes and the related prices to the public. Printouts can be obtained from the database showing comparative overviews for each “Nomenclatore” code, with the products characteristics and prices distributions. In this way the Ministry avails a transparent tool to negotiate the purchase price of the product, based on comprehensive knowledge of the market prices.

For off-the-shelf products that need individual customization, the cost of the related professional work is calculated separately (through a method similar to the custom-made products).

Assistive products in Home Care Services: analysis of costs and benefits

Ricard Barberà¹, Rakel Poveda¹, Lucía Fernández¹, Francisco Ródenas², Jorge Garcés²

¹*Instituto de Biomecánica de Valencia. Universitat Politècnica de València (Spain)*

²*PoliBienestar. Universitat de València Estudi General (Spain)*

Correspondence address: ricard.barbera@ibv.upv.es

The aim of this presentation is to comment the main results of the project DISAD, funded by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Secretary for Social Security. During this project the Incorporation of Technological Assistive Products in the extension of Home Care Services were analysed, considering different levels of capabilities (Barthel Scale) and degrees of intervention in the home environment (including low and high cost elements).

One of the key points has been to identify groups of user's needs, related to activities of daily living, not attended by the Home Care Services and where the incorporation of Technological Products could have a greater impact. The selected activities of daily living (ADL) have been: showering and bathing, toileting and transfer to and from a wheelchair. For these three activities three levels of intervention are analysed. From all the possible scenarios we have selected three in order to calculate risk and uncertainty: Actual Net Value and Internal Rate of Return.

AT-ISI: a tool for quantifying mobility-related AT devices and services

James Lenker¹, Laura Shoemaker¹, Marcus Fuhre², Jeff Jutay³, Louise Demers⁴, Frank DeRuyter⁵

¹*University at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY (USA)*

²*National Institutes of Health, Damascus, MD (USA)*

³*University of Western Ontario, London, ON (Canada)*

⁴*University of Montreal, Montreal, QC (Canada)*

⁵*Duke University, Durham, NC (USA)*

Correspondence address: lenker@buffalo.edu

This session will describe a related experience of CATOR, the Consortium of Assistive Technology Outcomes Research, which is based in the United States and Canada. Conducting socio-economic assessments of AT interventions requires valid methods for measuring AT devices and services, which can then be associated with overall costs. To address this need, we are developing the Assistive Technology Intervention Specification Instrument (AT-ISI), a tool for systematically quantifying mobility-related AT devices and services.

The AT-ISI is being developed over 4 project phases:

1. Achieve a classification of mobility-related AT devices.
2. Achieve a classification of mobility-related AT services.
3. Develop v.1.0 of the AT-ISI for quantifying mobility-related devices and services.
4. Pilot testing and psychometric evaluation of the AT-ISI at selected service delivery sites.

The AT-ISI will offer three benefits:

1. Mobility device researchers will have a common terminology for reporting interventions in a manner that facilitates comparison with other studies evaluating socio-economic outcomes;
2. Mobility device researchers will have a tool for developing AT treatment protocols and assessing the fidelity with which the protocols are administered; and
3. Others may emulate our methodology to develop versions of the AT-ISI that are appropriate for other AT device types (e.g., augmentative and alternative communication) and associated services.

We face 4 challenges that are perhaps common to our colleagues in other countries:

1. Identifying an optimum granularity of our tools – i.e., one that allows detailed specification of AT interventions without placing undue burden on clinical staff.
2. Evaluating the reliability and validity of our tools.
3. Appropriateness of our tools in multiple clinical AT settings (e.g., hospital, outpatient centre, work setting, and school district).
4. Generalisability of our tools to countries outside of the U.S.A. and Canada.

Eliciting Preferences for Technology in the Care of Older People in Ireland

Aoife Callan, Eamon O'Shea

Irish Centre for Social Gerontology, National University of Ireland, Galway (Ireland)

Correspondence address: aoifecallan@gmail.com

In Ireland, as within Europe, informal care has been the cornerstone in long term care provision for older people. The evident changing demographics and increasing female participation in the labour force, however, indicate that reliance on informal care will no longer be a sustainable model of long-term care. As a result, Ireland is looking to innovative solutions, such as Information Communication Technologies (ICT), to assist with the care of older people.

This paper presents the findings of a social-audit of randomly selected participant groups representative of the general population in Ireland. The purpose of the audit was to identify public attitudes to ICT based technology interventions in the care of older people and to test methodological issues associated with stated preference techniques. Each group was presented with scenarios that offer different possible

future government actions relating to the care of older people. The scenarios included; a family care grant program, a home care package program and a number of technology based programs covering physical, psychological and social needs. Participants were then asked to state their preferences concerning those actions and asked to value the actions through a dichotomous choice willingness to pay question.

Findings indicate a positive willingness to pay for the technology based programs with strong preferences for the falls prevention technology over cognitive or social connection technology. Participants displayed weak preferences for either of the human care programs. Findings also suggest that scope effects, information bias and convergent validity should be given strong consideration with regard to evaluating technology using stated preference techniques.

2 FINAL REPORT: Policy Support Paper

2.1 The Most Important Results

The workshop was a very fruitful and effective interdisciplinary event, giving the opportunity to all participants:

- to learn from each other's experience, in order to better proceed with ongoing researches
- to investigate how socio-economic assessment mechanisms could be integrated into service delivery practice, and
- to discuss possible roadmaps for all actors involved, including the AAATE, to promote advancement in this field.
- To identify areas needing more understanding and scientific evidence
- To identify action deserving investment.

Overall, this workshop – the first one ever held tackling this subject in such a comprehensive manner – was a useful and inspiring event that will bring about significant advancement in this area.

2.2 The workshop results in detail

Several areas were detected as ***needing more understanding and scientific evidence***, such as:

- AT for people with dementia; ethical & privacy issues related to AT
- success factors in the use of AT (when AT solutions work or not, why and for whom);
- prospective applications to AT of new emerging method in medical technology assessment;
- inventory and comparison of methods to carry out socio-economic assessment;
- what to do with the outcome measurement figures;
- how to transfer socio economic AT assessment methods to other Countries;
- the concept of "total" service delivery;

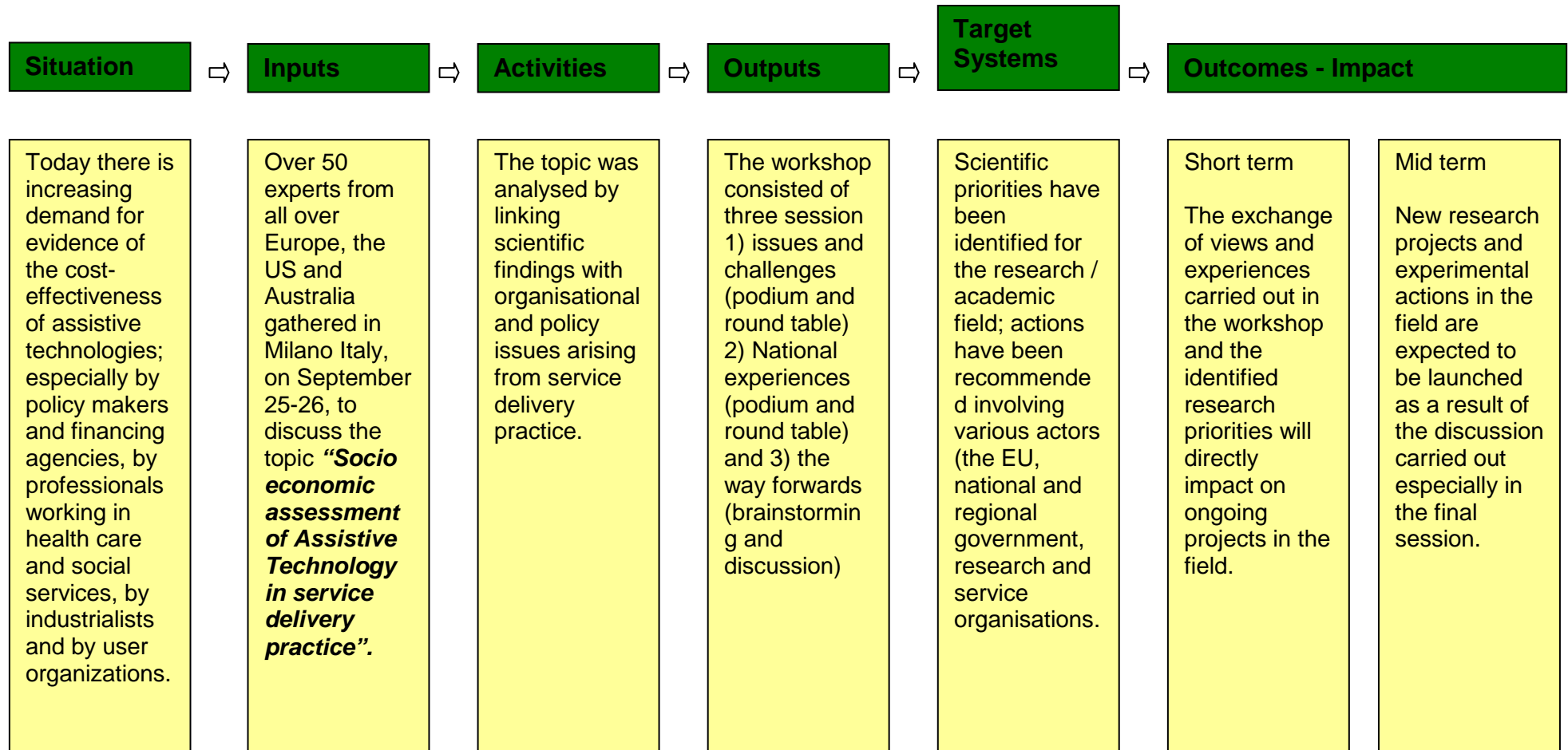
- measuring the costs/savings of keeping people (especially the elderly) at home Vs moving to institutional care facilities; better defining the concept of “benefit” in relation to cultural & economic factors;
- establishing hierarchies in benefits, either at individual or societal level;
- reliability of methods based on willingness to pay; methods for validating costs / outcomes analyses of interventions;
- what are the differences among the perspectives of users, market players, funders and society;
- societal impacts of AT technology (e.g. ability to cope with the decreasing labor force in the welfare area);
- prospective impact of the emerging virtual world (e.g. second life) in opening new horizons for people with disabilities.

Some **actions** were identified as important and thus deserving investment:

- developing guidelines & standards for service delivery (minimum quality levels);
- developing guidelines & standard for researchers in the field, such as guidelines and checklists on reporting clinical trials;
- mapping the state of the art of research, so as to detect where knowledge is already solid or gaps still exist;
- involving housing organizations in this kind of research;
- building and maintaining a EU research network;
- funding a large scale EU research to collect and verify findings / experiences from the various EU countries, along with comparison data from the US;
- funding projects to develop assessment methods for AT developing countries;
- collaborating with the pharmacoeconomics environment.

3 Event Evaluation Form

AAATE: DL 19 – Workshop Socio-economic assessment of assistive technology in service delivery practice Italy, Milano, 25-26 September 2008



ANNEX ONE – FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT

Sent out in September 2007



Association for the Advancement of Assistive Technology in Europe
www.aaate.net

International Workshop

Socio-economic assessment of assistive technology in service delivery practice

Milano, Italy, 25-26 September, 2008
Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus

Nowadays, there is an increasing demand for evidence of the *cost-effectiveness* of assistive technologies. Policy makers and financing agencies need such information to properly allocate resources, control how efficiently they are used, stimulate the market, identify priority areas for research, understand possible wider implications at an overall societal level; professionals working in health care and social services – within today's climate of accountability calling for evidence based practice - need to know whether their AT choices have proved *effective* within the rehabilitation programme, *useful* for the client, and *efficient* in using resources; industrialists need evidence of the added value their products or services may offer in comparison to those of other competitors; users and user organisations require to be fully involved in decision making processes and bring their expertise in this discussion.

Studies on this subject started to appear in literature quite recently. Most of them are still struggling with fundamental research questions; others work at developing, field-testing and validating specific instruments or methodologies; overall, knowledge has greatly advanced on this topic in the recent years. However, it seems that transfer of such knowledge into policy development and service delivery practice is still in the early stages.

The workshop will bring together experts from all over the world that have developed expertise in this subject or are carrying out significant field experiences. The workshop will include invited speakers, round table and discussion sessions. It is intended to give the opportunity to all participants to learn from each other's experience, to investigate how socio-economic assessment mechanisms could be integrated into service delivery practice, and discuss possible roadmaps for all actors involved, including the AAATE, to promote advancement on this topic.

The workshop will be held in the premises of the Don Gnocchi Foundation – a large rehabilitation hospital based in Milano, Italy - and will be organised by its Biomedical Technology Department (Polo Tecnologico). It will start on Thursday 25 September at 2 pm and end on Friday 26 September at 1 pm. The AAATE General Assembly will follow from 2 to 5 pm. All AAATE members are warmly invited to take part in this unique event in the beautiful city of Milano.

Contact

Renzo Andrich
Polo Tecnologico Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus
Via Capecelatro 66, 20148 Milano Italy
Renzo.andrich@siva.it

ANNEX TWO – FINAL PROGRAMME

Sent out in May 2008

AAATE



International Workshop

Socio-economic assessment of assistive technology in service delivery practice

MILANO, ITALY, 25-26 SEPTEMBER, 2008
POLO TECNOLOGICO
FONDAZIONE DON CARLO GNOCCHI ONLUS

PROGRAMME AND ABSTRACTS

Nowadays, there is an increasing demand for evidence of the cost-effectiveness of assistive technologies. Policy makers and financing agencies need such information to properly allocate resources, control how efficiently they are used, stimulate the market, identify priority areas for research, understand possible wider implications at an overall societal level; professionals working in health care and social services – within today's climate of accountability calling for evidence based practice - need to know whether their AT choices have proved effective within the rehabilitation programme, useful for the client, and efficient in using resources; industrialists need evidence of the added value their products or services may offer in comparison to those of other competitors; users and user organisations require to be fully involved in decision making processes and bring their expertise in this discussion.

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Thursday September 25, 2008

h. 11.30	Satellite meetings (restricted)
h. 11.00	National contacts pre-meeting (only for AAATE national contacts persons)
h. 14.00	Welcome and registration
h. 14.30	Introductory Session <i>* Angelo Bazzari - President of Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus</i> <i>* Representative of the Regional Government of Lombardy</i> <i>* Renzo Andrich – Chair of the Workshop</i>
h. 15.00	1st Session: Issues and challenges <i>Chairperson: Pierluigi Emiliani - National Research Council, Firenze (Italy)</i> This session will discuss general issues and challenges related to the applications of cost effectiveness assessment methods/techniques in service delivery practice, in policies development and in market strategies. The session will include presentations (20' each) by experts offering the research/academy, policy, industry/market and health/social services perspective. A round table will follow giving each speaker the opportunity to comment on each other's viewpoint.
h. 15.00	Cost-effectiveness of AT: applications and importance in policy development <i>Jan Persson</i> <i>Center for Medical Technology Assessment, Linköping University (Sweden)</i>
h. 15.20	Evidence of AT outcomes: what can we learn from pharmacoeconomics <i>Lorenzo Mantovani</i> <i>International Society for Pharmacoeconomics and Outcomes Research (ISPOR)</i>
h. 15.40	The AT cost side: how to measure the social cost of AT interventions? <i>Renzo Andrich</i> <i>Polo Tecnologico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, Milano (Italy)</i>
h. 16.00	Outcomes assessment: the missing link <i>Gert-Jan Gelderblom</i> <i>Vilans, Hoensbroek (The Netherlands)</i>
h. 16.20	Assistive Technology - a bright future in Europe? <i>Paul Timmers</i> <i>European Commission, Information Society & Media DG, Unit ICT for inclusion (EU)</i>
h. 16.40	Round table
h. 17.00	Refreshment break
h. 17.30	AAATE AGM
h. 19.30	Closure
h. 21.00	Social event: dinner downtown at MamaCafè Restaurant

Friday September 26, 2008

h. 9.00	2nd Session: National experiences <i>Chairperson: Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf – AIAS Bologna Onlus, Bologna (Italy)</i> This session will present practical examples of how socio-economic assessment has been implemented in service delivery practice at national or regional level all over the world. Each presentation will be allowed 15'. The purpose of the session is to learn from each other experience and highlight possible critical issues.
h. 9.00	The AT outcome side: what is worth measuring? <i>Jeffrey Jutai</i> <i>University of Western Ontario and Lawson Health Research Institute, London (Canada)</i>
h. 9.15	Assistive Technology in the Ordinary Living: Cost and benefit studies. <i>Ulf Keijer</i> <i>Royal Inst. Technology, School of Architecture and Built Environment, Stockholm (Sweden)</i>
h. 9.30	Issues with cost-effectiveness analyses of AT based on the ICF <i>Ingrid Schraner</i> <i>School of Economics and Finance and Social Justice and Social Change Research Centre, University of Western Sydney (Australia)</i>
h. 9.45	Economic models for AT service delivery <i>Valerio Gower and Massimo Memmola</i> <i>Polo Tecnologico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, and Cerismas Milano Catholic University (Italy)</i>
h. 10.00	Assistive products in Home Assistive Services: analysis of costs and benefits <i>Ricard Barberà</i> <i>Biomechanics Institute of Valencia, Universitat Politècnica de Valencia (Spain)</i>
h. 10.15	AT-ISI: a tool for quantifying mobility-related AT devices and services. <i>James Lenker</i> <i>University of Buffalo (USA)</i>
h. 10.30	Willingness to Pay for Technology: Findings from an Irish Pilot Study <i>Aoife Callan</i> <i>Irish Centre for Social Gerontology, Galway (Ireland)</i>
h. 10.45	Questions time
h. 11.00	Refreshment break
h. 11.30	3rd Session: The way forwards <i>Chairperson: Renzo Andrich – Polo Tecnologico Fondazione Don Gnocchi, Milano (Italy)</i> This session will consist of a free discussion facilitated by study questions. All participants will have the opportunity to contribute. The session will attempt to identify recommendations for possible future actions at national, European or international level that can help improve the quality of AT service delivery systems. The session will also investigate on possible roles the AAATE might play in this field.
h. 12.30	Closing remarks * <i>Anna-Liisa Salminen - President of the AAATE</i> * <i>Representative of the Italian Ministry of Health</i> * <i>Furio Gramatica – Chief Scientific Officer Polo Tecnologico Fondazione Don Gnocchi</i>
h. 13.00	Lunch
h. 14.00	Post-meeting events
h. 14.00	Visit to facilities of Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi (Assistive Technology Service, Smart Home, Biomedical Technology Department)
h. 16.00	Conclusion

Practicalities

Venue of the Workshop

Centro IRCCS S.Maria Nascente
Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus
Via Capecelatro 66, I-20148 Milano

*Location: near San Siro football Stadium and Racecourse
Nearest Metro Station: Lotto
(10' by bus 49 or 20-25' walk)*



The workshop is held in the premises of the Don Gnocchi Foundation – a large rehabilitation hospital based in Milano, Italy - and is organized by its Biomedical Technology Department (Polo Tecnologico). It will start on Thursday 25 September at 2 pm and end on Friday 26 September at 1 pm. The AAATE General Assembly will be held on Thursday evening, while a guided visit to the Don Gnocchi facilities – for all those interested – will be organized soon after the workshop on Friday from 2 to 4 pm.

Venue of the social event

Mamacafé Restaurant
via Caminadella 7, 20123 Milano

*Location: near St.Ambrogio Basilica and Catholic University
Nearest Metro station: S.Ambrogio
(10' walk)*



Secretariat

Mrs Cristina Magrone
Ph +39 02 40308305 fax +39 02 4048919 email cmagrone@donqnocchi.it

Accommodation

*Those who need assistance in finding hotel accommodation may contact the following Travel Agent:
Raumflug Viaggi
Via Capecelatro, 75, 20148 Milano; ph +39 02 40093806 Fax +39 02 40093807 e-mail raumflug@tiscali.it*

Attendance Certificate

Each participant will receive an attendance certificate at the end of the workshop.

Workshop Chair

Dr Renzo Andrich
Polo Tecnologico Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus
Via Capecelatro 66, 20148 Milano Italy renzo.andrich@siva.it

AAATE

ANNEX THREE - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Family Name	First Name	State	Institution	Town	email
Ala-Uotila	Esa	FI	PIRAMK University of Applied Sciences	Tampere	esa.ala-uotila@piramk.fi
Alwin	Jenny	SE	Linköping University	Linköping	jenny.alwin@liu.se
Andrich	Renzo	IT	Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus	Milano	renzo.andrich@siva.it
Barberà	Ricard	ES	Universidad Politécnica de Valencia	Valencia	ricard.barbera@ibv.upv.es
Becker	Stig	SE	Swedish Institute of Assistive Technology	Vällingby	stig.becker@hi.se
Besio	Serenella	IT	Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus	Milano	serenella.besio@siva.it
Borghi	Filippo	IT	Helpicare	Bologna	fborghi@helpicare.com
Bringolf	Jane	AU		Wattle Grove NSW	janellan@bigpond.com
Callan	Aoife	IE	Irish Centre for Social Gerontology	Galway	aoifecallan@gmail.com
Caprino	Francesca	IT	Università Valle d'Aosta	Aosta	francesca.caprino@libero.it
Conforti	Grazia	IT	Regione Lombardia	Milano	grazia_conforti@regione.lombardia.it
Craddock	Gerald	IE	National Disability Authority	Dublin	GCraddock@NDA.ie
D'Amico	Antonio	IT	IAE Inclusion Alliance for Europe GEIE		antonio.damico@epist.org
Emiliani	Pier Luigi	IT	National Research Council	Firenze	p.l.emiliani@ifac.cnr.it
Garcia-Milà Vidal	Ignasi	ES	CVI - Independent Living Centre	Barcelona	cvi@cvi-bcn.org
Gelderblom	Gert-Jan	NL	Vilans	Utrecht	g.gelderblom@vilans.nl
Gower	Valerio	IT	Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus	Milano	vgower@dongnocchi.it
Gramatica	Furio	IT	Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus	Milano	fgramatica@dongnocchi.it
Hagen	Inger	NO	Forget-me-not AS	Oslo	hagen@forglemmegei.no
Hjort	Allan	DK	Zealand Care A/S	Holbaek	ahj@zealandcare.dk

Hlauschek	Walter	AT	Ceit Raltec gemeinuetzige GmbH	Schwechat	w.hlauschek@ceit.at
Hoogerwerf	Evert-Jan	IT	AIAS Bologna Onlus	Bologna	hoogerwerf@ausilioteca.org
Johnson	Ingela	IT	Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus	Milano	ingela.johnson@siva.it
Keijer	Ulf	SE	Royal Institute of Technology	Stockholm	ulf.keijer@arch.kth.se
Knops	Harry	NL	Next Generation 4 all	Heerlen	marloubeumers@ng4all.nl
Koppang Telnes	Lisbet	NO	NAV Hjelpemidler og tilrettelegging	Oslo	lisbet.koppang.telnes@nav.no
Laki	Tamas	HU	Rampa	Baja	rampa@rampa.eu
Laudanna	Elena	IT		Massa	elena.laudanna@tiscali.it
Lenker	James A.	USA	University at Buffalo		lenker@buffalo.edu
Lopez Lopez	Antonio	ES	CVI - Independent Living Centre	Barcelona	ignasi@cvi-bcn.org
Mantovani	Lorenzo	IT	Federico II University of Naples	Napoli	lorenzo_mantovani@hotmail.com
Mathiassen	Niels-Erik	DK	Danish Centre for Technical Aids	Taastrup	NEM@hmi.dk
Memmola	Massimo	IT	Catholic University	Milano	massimo.memmola@unicatt.it
Millet Pi- Figueras	Sandra	ES	CVI - Independent Living Centre	Barcelona	cvi@cvi-bcn.org
Montesano	Angelo	IT	Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus	Milano	amontesano@dongnocchi.it
Persson	Jan	SE	Linköping University	Linköping	jan.persson@liu.se
Pigini	Lucia	IT	Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus	Milano	lpigini@dongnocchi.it
Pla Masip	Lluïsa	ES	CVI - Independent Living Centre	Barcelona	cvi@cvi-bcn.org
Puurtinen	Hanna- Greta	FI	PIRAMK University of Applied Sciences	Tampere	hanna-greta.puurtinen@piramk.fi
Raninen	Kaste- helmi	FI	Pirkanmaan University of Applied Sciences	Tampere	kastehelmi.raninen@piramk.fi
Richter	Andreas	SE	Swedish Institute of Assistive Technology	Vällingby	Andreas.Richter@hi.se
Rodríguez- Porrero Miret	Cristina	ES	Ministry of Education, Social Services and Sports	Madrid	crodriguez@mtas.es
Salminen	Anna-Liisa	FI	STAKES	Helsinki	annaliisa.salminen@stakes.fi

Sammi	Minna	FI	City of Helsinki Health Care Centre	Helsinki	minnamaria.salmi@welho.com
Samuelsson	Kersti	SE	University Hospital	Linköping	Kersti.Samuelsson@lio.se
Schraner	Ingrid	AU	University of Western Sydney	South Penrith	I.Schraner@uws.edu.au
Seppänen	Sinikka	FI	PIRAMK University of Applied Sciences	^{NICW} Tampere	sinikka.seppanen@piramk.fi
Stenberg	Lea	FI	NHU Nordic development centre for rehabilitation technology	Helsinki	Lea.Stenberg@nuh.fi
Timmers	Paul	EU	European Commission	Bruxelles	paul.timmers@ec.europa.eu
Töytäri	Outi	FI	STAKES	Helsinki	outi.toytari@stakes.fi
Vaccari	Giulio	IT	Helpicare	Bologna	gvaccari@helpicare.com
Vater	Ira	IT	European Business Associates Srl		ira.vater@ebanet.eu
Wing	Adam	USA	Ablenet Inc	Roseville MN	awing@ablenetinc.com
Wintenberg	Erland	DK	Zealand Care A/S	Holbaek	ewi@zealandcare.dk
Wouters	Marc	BE	KOC	Bruxelles	Marc.Wouters@vaph.be
Pálsdóttir	Björk	IS			bjork@tr.is

ANNEX FOUR - ABSTRACTS SUBMISSION FORM



International Workshop

Socio-economic assessment of assistive technology
in service delivery practice

Milano, Italy, 25-26 September, 2008
Fondazione Don Carlo Gnocchi Onlus

Abstract Submission Form

To be sent to renzo.andrich@siva.it within April 30, 2008

Author (s) (Surname, First Name):

Authors' affiliation (name of the Institution or Company each author represents):

Author who will deliver the presentation in the Workshop:

E-mail address for contact:

What keyword best describes the perspective offered in the presentation (mark just one)

research/academy

policy

Market/industry

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services

Abstract of the presentation (1500 – 2000 characters spaces included):