

# Congress on NeuroRehabilitation and Neural Repair



## Programme and Proceedings Book

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## **A focus group study to identify user requirements and attitudes towards assistive technology**

Bob Radder, Gerdienke Prange, Anke Kottink, Jaap Buurke, Hans Rietman

Roessingh Research and Development, Enschede, the Netherlands

**Background:** Arm/hand function declines with age or due to acute diseases such as stroke, which may be mediated by assistive technology. To enhance the chance for uptake of assistive technology, end-users should be involved early during its development to identify user requirements and attitudes towards assistive technology.

**Objectives:** The main objective of this paper is to examine the barriers, opportunities and requirements of elderly and stroke patients for assistive technology targeted at physical support of arm/hand function during activities of daily living (ADL) and rehabilitation of the arm/hand.

**Methods:** Five focus groups were conducted with varying target groups. In total, 11 health care professionals (e.g. physical therapists, occupational therapists, geriatric therapists), 4 stroke patients and 13 elderly participated. An interactive presentation with questions about arm/hand function problems and (dis)advantages of using assistive technology in ADL and arm/hand rehabilitation was held to stimulate discussions between participants.

**Results:** Participants mentioned that the device needs to be wearable, compact and lightweight. Regarding practical issues and usability of assistive technology, the device should be easy to use, quickly initialized and washable. All participants only want support for the particular function(s) that need(s) assistance. The device should primarily support grip/wrist force and hand opening.

**Conclusion:** All participants considered assistive technology useful to support ADL or rehabilitation of the arm/hand, if the device is easy to use, comfortable to wear and only supports the function(s) that need(s) assistance, without taking over his/her own function completely.

## **Associations between aerobic capacity and walking capacity after stroke; a cross-sectional analysis**

Jacqueline Outermans<sup>1</sup>, Ingrid van de Port<sup>2</sup>, Gert Kwakkel<sup>3</sup>, Anne Visser-Meily<sup>4</sup>, Harriet Wittink<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hogeschool Utrecht University of Applied Sciences, Utrecht, the Netherlands

<sup>2</sup>Revant, Breda, the Netherlands

<sup>3</sup>VU University Medical Centre, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

<sup>4</sup>Utrecht University Medical Centre, Utrecht, the Netherlands