



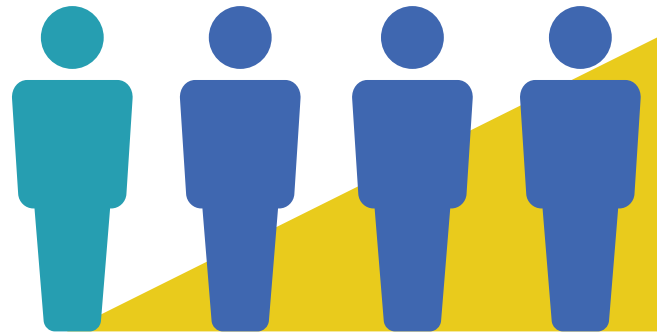
DESIGNING TECHNOLOGY THAT CARES

CAREGIVERS' EXPERIENCES DRIVE THE DESIGN PROCESS

Written by Jacquie Eales, Janet Fast & Jennifer Boger, on behalf of DATCares Team

MARKET

In 2012 more than 1 in 4 Canadians (8.1 million of them) had cared for a family member or friend with a long term health problem, disability or age-related condition within the last year. But nearly half (46%) had ever provided care to a loved one¹. And these numbers are forecast to continue to grow as the population continues to grow older and disability rates continue to increase². This is a substantial market.



CHALLENGE

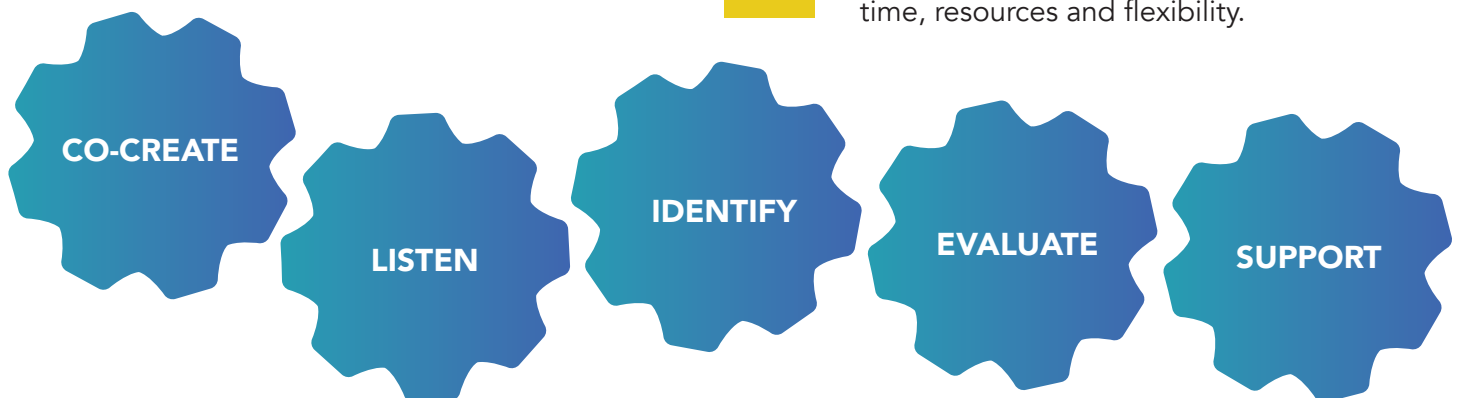
"AT DOESN'T SOLVE ALL PROBLEMS AND SHOULD ONLY BE APPLIED WHERE IT ADDS VALUE, OTHERWISE IT MAKES CAREGIVERS' LIVES EVEN MORE DIFFICULT." ~Researcher

Designing assistive technologies that support family caregivers' holistic needs starts by using their experiences to drive the design process. Understanding caregivers' unique needs and complicated lives is critical to developing successful strategies for the development, communication and adoption of technologies to effectively support family caregivers.

SOLUTION

"HEARING THE STORIES OF THE CAREGIVERS AND THE CHALLENGES THEY FACE... HELPS TO MAKE THE PROBLEM MORE REAL." ~Designer

Caregiver-centred empathic design is a process that integrates caregivers in such a way that their experiences and expertise drive the design, solving their real life problems to improve their well-being and ultimately, to succeed in the marketplace. Key components of this approach are: co-creating better or innovative solutions; actively listening to and empathizing with caregivers' stories; developing a shared representation of the design problem; evaluating external sources of inspiration or potential solutions; and allowing adequate time, resources and flexibility.



Funding provided by: 

 Canadian Institutes of Health Research
Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

 RESEARCH INSTITUTE for AGING
Schlegel Centre for Learning, Research and Innovation in Long-Term Care



¹ Sinha, M. (2013). Portrait of caregivers, 2012. Ottawa ON: Statistics Canada, Ministry of Industry. Available <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-652-x/89-652-x2013001-eng.htm>