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## Developing an Web-Based Education and Counseling Program for Elderly Heart Failure Patients

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**Background:** Designing an appropriate Web-based intervention requires knowledge of what patients deem most important. However, previously studied interventions have not been designed to meet the specific learning needs of elderly patients. We conducted the current study to 1) describe how an Web-based program that targeted the needs of elderly patients was developed; and 2) assess participants' perception related to their experiences accessing the web site. **Methods:** The Internet-based program was designed and developed using a two-step process. Informational resources specific to the needs of study participants (n = 69) in phase one were identified and incorporated into the Web-base program that was drafted for the study. The second phase of the process entailed obtaining data to support the acceptability and feasibility of the intervention. The research team provided 12 patient volunteers access to the web-based program. After 2 weeks we contacted the volunteers and asked them about their experiences with accessing and navigating through the web page. **Results:** Six items were identified by participants as their top three educational needs: 1) Need to have honest explanations given in understandable terms; 2) Need to receive instruction about what to do in an emergency; and 3) Need to receive information about how to go about making lifestyle changes. The participants reported that the program was an easy-to-use method to find information relevant to heart failure self-care. Overall, participants rated the intervention components highly. On a four-point scale from (0) no difficulty to a lot of difficulty (3), 83% reported no difficulty with using the website. **Conclusion:** This pilot study reports on the use of a Web-based self-care management web site among older heart failure patients. We demonstrated that persons naïve to computers can and will use Internet resources to obtain information when given adequate instructions on how to access the Web pages. Our findings support that one of the most important issues when developing a health information system is that its design and content is anchored on what consumers really want and need.