

# Call for papers

## **The 4<sup>th</sup> international workshop on Infrastructures for Healthcare (IHC): Action Research, Interventions, and Participatory Design.**

13 – 14 June 2013

The University of Tromsø, N-9038 Tromsø, Norway

### **Theme**

Pressure on the Western healthcare system is mounting due to the prospects of scarce resources caused by demographic changes as well as greater demand for better treatment and care. As a result, healthcare authorities and organizations are looking for ways to streamline and standardize these processes through better pathways for patients and improved information flow.

ICT and information infrastructures (electronic patient records, telemedicine, laboratory systems, etc) are regarded as having a strategic role in dealing with these issues, for supporting clinical personnel in their daily work as well as for providing decision support, improving efficiency and workflow across institutional, departmental and professional boundaries. At the same time, many healthcare organizations are committed to local organizational change projects through LEAN and quality improvement projects, where clinical personnel participate in identifying organizational bottlenecks and subsequently suggest and implement solutions. However, many local initiatives do not appear to be connected to larger ICT strategies at present, indicating that an information infrastructure perspective offers an unrealized potential. This presents challenges for managers, practitioners and researchers on how to address these issues: how to intervene in this heterogeneous landscape to ensure impact on “real” practical settings.

Given the demands and opportunities for larger *changes* in the healthcare sector, it is also evident that the inherent characteristics of an information infrastructure pose several challenges on how to manage and exploit these technologies efficiently. An information infrastructure in healthcare is typically a compound of many interdependent information systems, spanning several organizational levels, and embedded in various clinical practices in different ways. Many of the large-scale systems in healthcare are also purchased through costly bid for tender processes involving representatives from managers, ICT personnel and external consultants, suggesting that the degree of user involvement is limited.

The size, scope and inertia of existing information infrastructures thus raise critical questions about how to change these technologies, which role users can play in designing new functionality, and how studies of large-scale infrastructures can induce operational changes. In addition, there are methodological questions related to which part of the infrastructure should be studied, in which phase, and for what period.

We wish to bring international researchers, healthcare professionals, IT professionals, administrators, and IT enterprises together to discuss these issues. We particularly invite contributions that are methodologically based on ethnographic/case/field studies. Topics of particular interest include, but are not limited to:

- Change and management of healthcare information infrastructures
- Implementation and adoption of infrastructures

- The role of clinical users in tailoring infrastructures
- Participatory and interventionist approaches related to information infrastructures
- Action research in large-scale infrastructural settings.
- The role of researchers in studying infrastructures
- Reflections on practical impact – what it is, methods, and how to achieve it
- Balancing of different viewpoints and interests in large-scale infrastructural projects.
- Scaling and sustainability of infrastructures
- Workplace studies of healthcare practices.

### **Organizers**

- Gunnar Ellingsen, University of Tromsø, Norway
- Pernille Bjørn, IT University of Copenhagen, Denmark

### **Keynote speakers**

- Professor Trisha Greenhalgh, Queen Mary, University of London, UK
- Professor Kjeld Schmidt, Copenhagen Business School, Denmark
- Tor Arne Viksjø, CEO, DIPS ASA, Norway
- Anne-Lise Härter, Department Director, The Norwegian Directorate of Health

### **Special issue in a journal**

Participants from the workshop will be invited to submit articles to a special issue of a peer-reviewed journal. This will be designed as an open call. The workshop at the University of Tromsø is the fourth of a series where the first three workshops took place in Denmark: first at the Technical University of Denmark, then at the University of Copenhagen, and most recently at the IT University of Copenhagen. Each of the workshops has resulted in a special issue of a journal:

Winthereik, B. and Bansler, J. (2007). Connecting practices: ICT infrastructures to support integrated care (eds). *International Journal of Integrated Care*, Vol. 7, No. 16

Bansler, J.P. and Kensing, F. (2010). Information infrastructures for health care: Connecting practices across institutional and professional boundaries (eds). *Computer Supported Cooperative Work*, vol. 19, pp. 519-520.

Bjørn, P. and Kensing, F. (2012). Infrastructures in healthcare: Global healthcare (eds.). *International Journal of Medical Informatics* (in press).

### **Submission**

A short paper of 4 pages.

### **Important dates**

- Deadline for submission: 22 February 2013
- Notification of acceptance: 1 March 2013
- Conference: 13–14 June 2013.

### **Link to workshop web-page**

<http://site.uit.no/infrahealth/>