

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Exploring Older Adult Home Safety Education with Photo Elicitation Via Telehealth

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A multiple case study design was used for this inquiry. Photo elicitation was used with six participants, well older adults, to draw out their stories and experiences related to home safety. Each participant was engaged in three "rounds" of photography based on provided prompts and an interview followed each round. Interviews took place online through VSee, a HIPPA-approved web-based video conference program. These interviews were seen as a version of telehealth—with an educational focus. In the analysis of the interview transcripts and other data collected (e.g., home health safety instrument, SAFER-HOME, v. 3, used during initial and final in-person meetings with the participants, researcher journals), I endeavored to understand whether or not narrative learning, a form of adult learning, was facilitated. So, in essence, I wanted to know if the photo elicitation process—with participant-produced photos—was an antecedent to narrative learning. Additionally, I endeavored to understand if and how this process can be an effective tool for education-based telehealth services, which could benefit health care professionals such as occupational therapists and their clients. Findings include the value of photos to support narrative learning, the value of narrative learning related to home safety education, the use of friend narratives by women, collaborative

cognition, and confidence. Procedural findings (i.e., findings related to the methods employed) include the abstract versus concrete nature of a photo assignment, challenges with older adults and technology, and the challenge of building rapport in a web-based format. Overall, participants showed small changes in their SAFER-HOME, v. 3 scores indicating they made a small number of environmental modifications. Findings were examined in light of the existing literature and indicate that within a wellness context, home safety education for older adults can be delivered effectively via telehealth when using photo elicitation as an antecedent to narrative learning.