

Paper Category:	Gerontechnology/ e-health
Paper Title: (Arial Font; 14 Pt Size)	Differences in device availability, internet usage and digital health literacy between older and younger adults
Abstract Body: (Arial Font; 12Pt Size)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • Objectives • Method • Results • Discussions and Conclusions
<p>Background</p> <p>Digital health literacy is the ability to use digital devices to search for and understand health information, and put it into context. Digital technology is common in healthcare and there is a growing amount of health-related information online. Previous studies found that older adults have lower digital health literacy.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <p>To compare differences in device availability, internet usage and digital health literacy between younger and older adults.</p> <p>Methods</p> <p>This descriptive cross-sectional study recruited a convenience sample of adults from seven primary care clinics from January to June 2023. Demographic characteristics, availability of internet-enabled devices and internet usage were collected. Digital health literacy was measured using a validated tool; eHealth Literacy Scale (eHEALS). Scores ranged from 8 to 40; higher scores indicate higher digital health literacy.</p> <p>Results</p> <p>Of 246 participants, 40.7% were older adults aged 65 and above; median age was 63 (IQR 15). 52.4% were male, 76.0% Chinese and 93.9% had secondary education and above. Majority (96.7%) had one or more internet-enabled devices. Significant difference was observed in number of devices and age groups; 62.1% of younger adults had three or more internet-enabled devices compared to 38.0% for older adults ($X^2(2)=16.887$, $p<0.001$). Many participants (77.5%) used the internet daily. A higher percentage (87.7%) of younger adults used the internet daily, compared to 62.0% for older adults ($X^2(1)=20.767$, $p<0.001$). eHEALS score was significantly lower in older adults indicating lower digital health literacy compared to younger adults, 27.4 versus 30.6, ($t(163.9)=3.934$, $p<0.001$).</p> <p>Discussions and Conclusions</p> <p>Broad availability of internet-enabled devices and high daily usage of internet provides opportunities to leverage on internet-based platforms for health promotion and education. Lower number of devices, internet usage and digital health literacy among older adults as compared to younger adults highlights the need to further engage and support older adults in digital health literacy and utilization.</p>	

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