

K. HØYLAND. User driven innovation: An approach to find new housing solutions for elderly. Gerontechnology 2016;15(suppl):82s; doi:10.4017/gt.2016.15.s.710.00 **Purpose** The changing demographic situation will be a major challenge for the Scandinavian welfare model. Three strategies mentioned in White papers¹ identify ways to bridge the gap between expectations to the welfare system and the increase in the elderly population. These strategies are new service models, new technologies and new ways of design neighbourhoods and housing solutions. 'User driven innovation' is a well-known strategy for developing new service models and new technologies^{2,3}. This paper will discuss how this approach can also be useful in early stage design briefs of buildings. In the literature on briefing, user involvement is described as being crucial; on the other hand, participatory design is often criticized as an 'enemy of innovation' because users may point to well-known solutions. **Methods** Researchers have been part of an early stage of process planning for new nursing homes in a Norwegian community. This field study is theoretically based on action research methods, trying to understand the needs of all who are affected of the field, then use this knowledge as a basis for new development – and address and test new ways of working. Premises for development lies in the identification of needs and researchers' active involvement in the practice field⁴. Knowledge about –'what works' are being produced, analysing why and how it works⁴. As part of the approach, workshops, meetings and evaluations of existing 'solutions' have been done. **Results & Discussion** Program processes involve many people and can last a long period of time. Basic elements for an innovative process are: (i) Pronounce and share –"What we want the environment to support"; (ii) Express and identify knowledge about different user needs (not describing solutions); (iii) Opening up for new solutions, by showing many different possibilities; (iv) Build or find examples of existing buildings that have succeeded in achieving the pronounced performances; (v) Evaluate buildings looking for success; and (vi) Establish a common 'language' to discuss and understand the various dimensions of the interplay between people and their environments. The architect's task is to convert series of visions about what the environment shall support into actual physical spaces. It is a matter of transforming abstract relationships into material reality. This transformation could be encouraged, and new solutions could be brought forward when several people are able to participate and be involved in the process.

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