Biomedical and Health Informatics Lecture Series
Tuesday, June 2, 2009
12:00 - 12:50 p.m., Room T-498

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"Informatics Applications to Support Caregiving"

Informal caregivers of home and hospice care play an essential role in the delivery of care services to their loved ones often not without adverse effects on their own health. Many initiatives call for the inclusion of informal caregivers in the planning and delivery of health services. ACT (Assessing Caregivers for Team Interventions) is such a framework that aims to successfully integrate family caregivers and patients into one unit of care. The ACT approach is based on the ongoing assessment of the caregiver background context, primary, secondary and intrapsychic stressors as well outcomes of the caregiving experience and subsequently, the design of appropriate interventions by the interdisciplinary health care team. Given geographic barriers and time constraints, information technology can play an essential role in facilitating the assessment of the caregiver-patient dyad as one unit of care and the communication between all involved stakeholders. This presentation will introduce two NIH funded studies examining the role of information technology for hospice caregivers. The first study focuses on the use of telehealth to allow caregivers to participate in hospice interdisciplinary meetings and the second study describes the technology enhanced delivery of a problem solving intervention for hospice caregivers.

George Demiris is an Associate Professor of Biobehavioral Nursing and Health Systems at the School of Nursing and Biomedical and Health Informatics, at the School of Medicine, University of Washington. He is the Graduate Program Director of the Biomedical and Health Informatics Graduate Program at the School of Medicine and the Director of the Clinical Informatics and Patient Centered Technologies Program at the School of Nursing. He obtained his MSc degree in Medical Informatics from the University of Heidelberg, Germany and his PhD degree in Health Informatics from the University of Minnesota. His research interests include the design and evaluation of home based technologies for older adults and patients with chronic conditions and disabilities, smart homes and ambient assisted living applications and the use of telehealth in home care and hospice. He is the Chair of the International Medical Informatics Association (IMIA) Working Group on Smart homes and Ambient Assisted Living, the Chair of the Human Factors Special Interest Group of the American Telemedicine Association (ATA) and the Lead Convener of the Technology and Aging Special Interest Group of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA).