

Multimedia Appendix III:

An overview of the constructs and items belonging to the three main outcome measures.

Appendix to:

Overberg R, Otten W, De Man A, Toussaint P, Westenbrink J, Zwetsloot-Schonk B. How breast cancer patients want to search for and retrieve information from stories of other patients on the Internet: an online randomised controlled experiment.

Constructs: 1. 'Satisfaction with the search process'

1.a. Opinion about the search facility (Cronbach's alpha = .88):

Five 5-point semantic differentials:

- poor ... good
- difficult ... easy
- not at all helpful ... very helpful
- unpleasant ... pleasant
- not convenient ... convenient

1.b. Opinion about the number of search options (Cronbach's alpha = NA):

Response categories: 'too few', 'quite few', 'not few, not many', 'quite many', 'too many'

- What is your opinion on the number of search options?

(For analysis, this item was recoded into 3 points 1=negative opinion ('too few' or 'too many'), 2=slightly negative opinion ('quite few' or 'quite many'), and 3= positive opinion ('not few, not many'))

1.c. The extent to which the search options enable finding the information one was looking for (Cronbach's alpha = .75):

Response categories: 'disagree', 'disagree a bit', 'neither disagree nor agree', 'agree a bit', 'agree'.

The ways in which I could search...

- ...did *not* enable me to find what I wanted to know.
- ...did enable me to find information that is important to me.
- ...did *not* enable me to find stories that were helpful to me.
- ...did enable me to find what I was searching for.

1.d. Recommendation to others' and future own use (Cronbach's alpha = .82):

Response categories: 'yes', 'probably yes', 'maybe yes, maybe not', 'probably not', 'no'.

- Would you recommend others to search for stories in this way?
- Would you yourself search more often for stories in this way?

1.e. Overall satisfaction with the search facility (Cronbach's alpha = NA):

One 10-point semantic differential:

- very poor ... excellent

Constructs: 2. 'Satisfaction with the stories retrieved'

2.a. Opinion about the stories retrieved (Cronbach's alpha = .71):

Six 5-point semantic differentials:

- poor ... good
- difficult ... easy
- not at all helpful ... very helpful
- not informative ... informative
- frightening ... not frightening
- I already knew everything ... everything was new to me

2.b. Opinion about the number of stories retrieved (Cronbach's alpha = NA):

Response categories: 'too few', 'quite few', 'not few, not many', 'quite many', 'too many'.

- What is your opinion on the number of stories retrieved?

(For analysis, this item was recoded into 3 points 1=negative opinion ('too few' or 'too many'), 2=slightly negative opinion ('quite few' or 'quite many'), and 3= positive opinion ('not few, not many'))

2.c. Opinion about the list of stories displayed after a search (Cronbach's alpha = .76):

Response categories: 'disagree', 'disagree a bit', 'neither disagree nor agree', 'agree a bit', 'agree'.

- It was clear to me which story from the list I had to click onto to find the information I was looking for.
- The list of retrieved stories displayed after a search, was *not* helpful to me.
- It was difficult for me to decide which story I should read first.
- The way in which the list of retrieved stories was displayed, was clear to me.

2.d. The extent to which the stories retrieved covered one's information need (Cronbach's alpha = .82):

Response categories: 'disagree', 'disagree a bit', 'neither disagree nor agree', 'agree a bit', 'agree'.

- I have found the information I was looking for.
- I am *not* satisfied with the information I have found.
- The information satisfied my expectations.
- I did *not* find the information I wanted to know.

2.e. Recommendation to others' and future own reading (Cronbach's alpha = .77):

Response categories: 'yes', 'probably yes', 'maybe yes, maybe not', 'probably not', 'no'.

- Would you recommend others to read these stories?
- Would you yourself read more of these kinds of stories?

2.f. Overall satisfaction with the stories retrieved (Cronbach's alpha = NA):

One 10-point semantic differential:

- very poor ... excellent

Constructs: 3. 'The stories' impact on coping with breast cancer'

3.a. The stories' impact on coping with breast cancer (Cronbach's alpha = .85):

Response categories: 'disagree', 'disagree a bit', 'neither disagree nor agree', 'agree a bit', 'agree'.

By reading the stories:

- ...I have learnt things.
- ...I view things differently.
- ...I am able to understand my feelings better.
- ...I see that certain emotions accompany learning to live with breast cancer.
- ...I know what to do.
- ...I see that others have experienced the same things.