**Electronic information systems and social work: principles of participatory design for social workers**

**Abstract**

The introduction of electronic information systems (IS) to human service organizations has been heavily critiqued, most notably for the ways that they may undermine frontline social work practice. Socio-technical design has been proposed as one means to redesign IS and a key element of this approach is the involvement of practitioners in the design process. Social workers, though, may be ill-prepared to engage in such processes. Reflecting on the findings of a program of research which aims to contribute to future designs of IS that support frontline practice, the aim in this article is to provide some guidance for social workers that will assist them to be active and effective participants in the future development of IS.

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