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**Factors  
modifying the  
public attitudes  
towards life  
extension  
technologies**

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# We need to persuade people to extend life, but we are not good at it so far...

- life extension technologies (LET) advocates report lack of interest for longevity
- multiple concerns and objections arise when we communicate the idea of life extension to the general public
- We don't know what people need to hear to become our supporters, do we?

# LET advocates shall be familiar with the studies of public attitudes towards LET

- From intuition to evidence: modifying factors are numerous and diverse
- Each of them shall be taken into consideration

## Do we have hidden followers?

More likely to support LET:

- Man
- People interested in science
- Individualistic (independent) people
- Healthy people

## Does the social situation matter?

The interaction between the doctor and the patient is affected by the level of trust

This level is defined by the overall quality of interaction in the society

The more trust in the authorities in general, the more likely people will trust the doctor and use the offered healthcare innovation

## Initial message is crucial

- **Desirable lifespan:**

6-11 years more than the average life expectancy in the given country

- **Desirable healthy lifespan:**

Several human lives or indefinite life

The amount of anticipated benefit certainly influences the forming of health behavior

## Plausibility of LET

- If people don't know what aging is, how they can evaluate the feasibility of LET development?
- Explain that aging is not an ephymeral beast stealing one's vital energy that cannot be manipulated
- Provide more details about what aging is, about the processes that constitute aging and more facts proving the plausibility to successfully influence these processes according to the studies in animals and in humans

# Severity of the condition to treat

- People **support** the development and the implementation of the healthcare innovations **to treat the disease**, but **object** their usage **for enhancement (life extension)**
- How we can explain aging so it would look more similar to a disease?
- To build a bridge between aging and manifestation of age-related diseases

# Providing additional information that the prospective supporters are claiming

- To make an informed decision concerning LET development and usage people want more information than medical specialists normally provide
- Add some facts from economy, ecology, law, demography, psychology, sociology and other sciences to draw more accurate picture of future and remove ungrounded fears

## Discuss the concerns

### Personal

- Prolongation of illness period
- Lack of money
- Separation from relatives
- Restriction to procreate

### Social

- Overpopulation
- Burden to welfare system
- Unequal access
- Harm to the environment

## Remind the appealing factors

### Personal

- More time with family
- Wider life experience
- More achievements
- Option to remain healthy
- Efficacy and safety of the treatment
- Ability and right to procreate and raise children

### Social

- Increase in humanity knowledge
- Equal access
- Financial stability
- Important specialists (scientists, doctors) can live longer and make a greater impact

# How to talk about life extension in the most productive way?

- Start with explaining the processes behind aging to turn it from an imaginary evil spirit into a list of real processes
- Proceed with explaining how these processes can be manipulated to preserve health and protect from severe diseases
- Speak of longevity or life extension only after building the bridge between aging and disease
- Mention specific personal and social benefits that shall be anticipated to strengthen the support
- Provide the facts from other sciences at request to remove the ungrounded fears

## Best studies to read

- Partridge, B., Lucke, J., Bartlett, H., & Hall, W. (2009). Ethical, social, and personal implications of extended human lifespan identified by members of the public. *Rejuvenation research*, 12(5), 351-357.
- Underwood, M., Bartlett, H. P., Partridge, B., Lucke, J., & Hall, W. D. (2009). Community perceptions on the significant extension of life: An exploratory study among urban adults in Brisbane, Australia. *Social science & medicine*, 68(3), 496-503.
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- Perry, D. (2004). Someone's knocking on the laboratory door. *Rejuvenation research*, 7(1), 49-52.
- <http://healthextension.co/uncovering-a-desire-for-extended-lifespan/>
- <http://www.davidewingduncan.com/whenim164/survey-results.html>
- <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/08/06/living-to-120-and-beyond-americans-views-on-aging-medical-advances-and-radical-life-extension/>