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GEOGRAPHIC

Continent
Europe (EU)

Country
Australia
United Kingdom

BASIC DETAILS

Language
English

Sector: Communication

Title (EN): The eMale: Prostate cancer, masculinity and online support as a challenge to medical expertise

Abstract description (EN):

This article argues that experiences of, and attitudes towards, online communities are deeply embedded in understandings of masculinity, the perceived character of the Internet, and changes in the roles of the patient and the expert within decision-making processes. Drawing on the accounts of a group of Australian men with prostate cancer and prostate cancer specialists, this qualitative study explores experiences of online support groups. Results point to three unexplored and important factors influencing how both patients and clinicians perceive and experience online support. Firstly, online support groups provide some men with a method of managing constraints posed by dominant constructions of masculinity within their experiences of prostate cancer, allowing for increased sharing and intimacy by limiting inhibitions associated with face-to-face encounters. However, other men view online support

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rt groups as havens for deception and misinformation, and computer-mediated communication as a highly problematic form of social interaction. Finally, this article shows how some medical specialists experience online support groups as a threat to their expert status and control over decision-making processes, outlining the nature and possible implications of their responses to this threat.

Keywords: Internet, Masculinity □, Online support, Prostate cancer

Free Comments:

The eMale: Prostate cancer, masculinity and online support as a challenge to medical expertise(2005) Journal of Sociology, 41 (1), pp. 87-104.

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Authors:

Lastname	Initial
Broom	A.

ENGENDER EDITOR

Firstname: Carina

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Lastname: Furnée
Email: c.furnee@maastrichtuniversity.nl
Institution: Maastricht University
InstitutionURL: <http://www.maastrichtuniversity.nl>