EASPD PCT Newsflash 1

Dear members, we are happy to present you the first newsflash from the Interest Group in Person Centered Technology (PCT). We hope you enjoy reading the latest news!

New Technology and Support Services:

In 2012 EASPD restarted its special Interest Group on Person Centred Technology (IG on PCT). This interest group will monitor all relevant policy and technology developments, important for the disability sector. The core group committed for two years to form the basis for a broader and active membership. The group will focus on services delivering residential and community based support using PCT, and on service providers working in the field of technology assessments and provision.

The IG on PCT aims at improving and fostering the uptake of Person Centred Technology (PCT) in everyday practice by EASPD members and in society in general. Based on a user centred, user empowering and user involving approach people with disabilities should benefit from new technological developments both in terms of person centred technology and access to the mainstream information society. By exploiting and expanding partnership and networking, information and innovation transfer, project development, research and lobbying EASPD should become a leading organisation in promoting and advancing PCT based service provision.

EASPD uses the concept of 'Person Centred Technology', defined to include specialist (e.g. telecare) and mainstream (e.g. quick cooling hobs) technologies that can be used to enhance people's independence and safety making them less dependent on carers. This concept is believed to be especially suitable and important in the communication with its members and other service providers. It is accepted, however, that the more accepted definition such as 'assistive technology' or 'telecare' might need to be used in particular forums, debates, networking activities, publications or project bids.

Since the establishment, a core group of the IG on PCT assumes the responsibility for the working of the IG. This core group started to work on the activity areas detailed above. The core group consists of

Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf, Head of the Projects Office of AIAS Bologna onlus; Vesa Salmi of the ASPA Foundation in Finland; Steve Barnard, Director of Information Systems at Hft; Lidija Krstevska Dojcinovska from the Macedonian organisation 'Open the Windows'; Luk Zelderloo, Secretary General of EASPD.

The Interest Group also works closely together with AAATE, represented by Klaus Miesenberger, member of the scientific board of AAATE, and member of the core group of the IG on PCT.

Facilitator of the group is Sonia Staskowiak (EASPD). If you want to be part of this interest group or would like to keep informed, please contact Sonia.staskowiak(at)easpd.eu.

The editorial board

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News from the UK

The economic recession in the UK has triggered renewed enthusiasm for mainly telecare and telehealth. A change in commissioning means that control of social and healthcare budgets will be managed by Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) that is led by doctors.

Telecare is still seen as the best means of saving on staff and carers time, helping to keep someone in their own home using mainly safety features of telecare.

Telehealth is mainly recommended as a means of remotely monitoring people's long term conditions that include VCOPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease), Diabetes, Heart Condition etc. The hope is that people will be able to stay at home longer saving on hospital beds.

Access to both telecare and telehealth is still through a prescriptive route that

means there is a belief that there is 'something wrong' with you!

There is some growing awareness that telecare and telehealth can form part of a drive to increase awareness and understanding of person centered technology (PCT). PCT, of course, can include telecare and telehealth but can also include mainstream technology (quick cooling hobs) and increasingly smart phone applications. The latter is available to consumers and there is an increasing move to move PCT much more into a consumer market.

There are two projects in the UK that highlight the interest in developing PCT into a more consumer led approach and at scale. The first is 'Dallas' (developing assisted living lifestyles at scare). This project has identified four UK based

communities that are looking at developing technology solutions that are interoperable and challenge traditional approaches. The desire is to encourage people to take more control of their own lives, health and wellbeing that requires technology to be more available and accessible with the technology and records to be interoperable. The project hopes to influence over 150 thousand lives.

The second project, led by the Department of Health, is called '3 million lives'. This started looking at telehealth in isolation but the project is increasingly aware of the need to broaden its definition. However, there is no additional funding for this project which hopes will touch 3 million lives on the basis that increased use of telehealth will make economic savings but requires a complete change in approach and payment for telehealth solutions.

Interesting times!!!

Steve Barnard

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ICT-AT education for persons with disabilities

Two European lifelong learning projects (ViPi and ATLEC project) will come to an end and the final Symposium (4 December 2013, Brussels) will present their outcomes within a wider framework of learning, employment and independent living for people with disabilities.

The two projects are complementary as VIPI focuses on the development of skills in ICT for (young) adults with disabilities and ATLEC on skills and competences in ICT based Assistive Technologies.

The Symposium has a twofold aim: raising awareness among gate-keepers and policy makers on the need for ICT and ICT-AT training and on the other hand providing concrete curricula, methods and tools produced in the project.

Highlighting needs and showing material to tackle those needs, is considered a valuable contribution to further equal opportunities and the participation of people with disabilities in learning and employment.

The symposium therefore presents academic and experience-based contributions, while interactivity, dialogue and information exchange is sought in parallel sessions and in the exhibition.

Other relevant projects and experiences are therefore invited to contribute with a poster or by sending leaflets to enrich the exhibition.

Please consult http://www.vipi-project.eu & http://www.atlec-project.eu for more information on the projects and for programme updates.

Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf

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European Care Certificate to include PCT learning outcomes

Care workers play a fundamental role in making sure their clients can full benefit from the advantages of Person Centred Technology. Especially in care institutions the use or nonuse of personal enabling technology heavily depends on the awareness of the care workers and on their professional preparation

Nevertheless many professional standards in the care sector, and the training leading to them, lack specific reference to the importance of PCT for the participation and inclusion of people with disabilities and elderly, and how this is related to the spirit of the UN Convention on the Rights of people with Disabilities. The standard of fundamental learning outcomes for those working in the care sector at the basis of the European Care Certificate (ECC) (link: www.eccertificate.eu) is in the process of being updated, including learning outcomes referring to the use of person centred technology and technology for care. It is expected that this will pave the way for an increasing awareness of the workforce in the coming years with benefits for social integration of elderly and people with disabilities and for the entire social care environment.

Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf

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Assistive Technology in Mainstream Primary Education in the FYR Macedonia

The last three years, Open the Windows is active in the field of mainstream primary education of students with disabilities. Since the beginning of 2010, the organization implements the Project for e-Accessible Education, funded by USAID.

The project conveys the message that children with disabilities are capable of following mainstream instruction if given the opportunity. It raises the awareness of key actors in the field of education on the need to provide students with disabilities with assistance and support to overcome the barriers they face in their daily life and in particular in education.

For the first time 21 primary schools from all over Macedonia were provided with accessible equipment and software and more than 400 school professionals were trained on the assistive technology use. In the following period it was planned the project to involve ten more schools.

These efforts are complementary to the strategic long-term educational policies of the Government of Macedonia to both modernize the educational system, by increasing the use of computers and ICT, and improve the mechanisms for better inclusiveness. Also, the project is supportive of Macedonia's adherence to the obligations emerging from the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ratified in the end of 2011).

Open the Windows is the only organization in Macedonia and in the wider region that creates and disseminates new and original ideas making IT available for persons with disabilities. It is a service provider for persons with various disabilities (intellectual, physical and visual), helping them use computers and the Internet by adapting the technology to their needs. Based in Skopje, OtW was registered in 2005 as a non-profit (non-governmental) organization.

Lidiya Krstevska

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News from Finland

Finland is now in the process of merging small municipalities into larger, financially more sustainable municipal entities and, as a part of it, the major restructuring of social and health care services. At this moment, these ongoing changes affect to all developmental activities carried out in Finnish social and health care, ICT, PCT/AT and all other areas.

In recent years, a great deal of public resources has been directed to the development of standards, architectures and specifications to support the national IT infrastructure for social services. The national development program TIKESOS to improve the utilization of IT in social services was launched in 2005 and finished in 2011. Its main goals were (a) to harmonize the client information systems in social services, (b) to develop electronic documentation and (c) to produce specifications for nationally organized electronic preservation and sharing of documents (archive).

A challenging state of affair is the fact that the developments in ICT are agile and difficult to predict – in nature very different from the context of where ICT is to be implemented: slowly changing and slowly acting bureaucratic structures of public authorities in both local and national level. This applies, of course, more or less to all European and other developed countries with a long and stable history of governmental traditions.

Ten years ago, the Nokia-driven boost in Finnish economy and technological innovations was at its peak – since then, the hype has calmed down for apparent reasons - international economic downturns and drawbacks of Finnish IT industry. However, assistive and person-centered technology continues to be developed and applied successfully – this obviously can be done without hype or extensive media visibility. Good examples of this are e.g. The KÄKÄTE Project on PCT for the elderly

(www.ikateknologia.fi/en/) and FAIDD's Tikoteekki – ICT Centre for people with learning disabilities (http://papunet.net/tikoteekki/in-english.html).

Vesa Salmi

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The European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing

With the Innovation Union strategy the European Commission aims to enhance European competitiveness and tackle societal challenges through research and innovation. One way in which this is to be achieved is with Innovation Partnerships. Their unique strength is that they will address weaknesses in the European research and innovation system (notably, under-investment, conditions which are not sufficiently innovation-friendly, and fragmentation and duplication), which considerably complicate the discovery or exploitation of knowledge and, in many cases, ultimately prevent the entry of innovations into the market place.

The European Commission has identified active and healthy ageing as a major societal challenge common to all European countries, and an area which presents considerable potential for Europe to lead the world in providing innovative responses to this challenge. The pilot European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing will pursue a triple win for Europe: enabling EU citizens to lead healthy, active and independent lives while ageing; improving the sustainability and efficiency of social and health care systems; boosting and improving the competitiveness of the markets for innovative products and services, responding to the ageing challenge at both EU and global level, thus creating new opportunities for businesses.

This will be realised in the three areas of prevention and health promotion, care and cure, and active and independent living of elderly people. The overarching target of this pilot partnership will be to increase the average healthy lifespan by two years by 2020.

The pilot Partnership will aim to achieve this by bringing together key stakeholders (end users, public authorities, industry); all actors in the innovation cycle, from research to adoption (adaptation), along with those engaged in standardisation and regulation. The pilot partnership provides these actors with a forum in which they can cooperate, united around a common vision that values older people and their contribution to society, identify and overcome potential innovations barriers and mobilise instruments.

The pilot Partnership aims at improving the framework conditions for uptake of innovation, leveraging financing and investments in innovation and improve coordination and coherence between funding for research and innovation at European, national and regional level in Europe.

This altogether will foster innovation in products, processes and services, and in parallel facilitate the innovation chain and reduce the time to market for innovative solutions. Ultimately this will produce benefits for innovation's final users – the older people and care providers

Research organisations, public authorities, SME's and care providers can participate in various ways to the EIP.

For more information: http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/index_en.cfm?section=active-healthy-ageing

Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf

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Brussels on ICT and care: seeing is believing

At the European Commission momentum is building up around ICT for health and care. If we zoom in on DG CONNECT (for Communications Networks, Content and Technology), the launch of the eHealth Action Plan should absolutely be mentioned. It provides an overview of work to do in the upcoming years. To name a few elements that will definitely support to the application of ICT in health and care: patient centred care, patient empowerment and a good system for the exchange of medical data, simple, safe and secure across the EU.

The eHealth Action Plan themes are extremely relevant for the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, or EIP AHA. Currently the 6 EIP Action Groups are working hard at the implementation of their work plans. Sounds vague, I know, but really, it is exciting to witness how over 3000 European stakeholders, from smart start-ups and care-organisations to big industry and local governments are committing themselves to create breakthroughs in medication adherence, falls prevention, frailty and malnutrition, integrated care, independent living and age-friendly environments. In each of these initiatives the integration of health and care technologies in our society and economy is an important theme. In fact, it is very much about what has to be done to bring it within reach of us all, either via the market or via the our health care systems.

All these technologies could save many lives and structurally improve the quality of many more. When I visited Liverpool in January for the Conference 'Leading the Way in Assistive Technologies' I witnessed great examples. People with mental disabilities who after years of being ' institutionalised' finally got a home and a life of their own and even got a proper job!

The ' seeing is believing'-factor is really important when it comes to getting new technologies and new ways of providing care to be accepted by policy makers and authorities. Part of the EIP AHA are the Reference Sites: cities or regions that actively participate in the Action Groups and have best practices to show for that can be used in other areas as well.

The UK provided quite some candidates. On July 1 the selected Reference Sites will meet in Brussels for an Award Ceremony. So if you don't yet find what you need around the corner, then you know where to go for inspiration and advice.

Joost van der Vleuten

Policy Officer on DG CONNECT, European Commission

International collaboration among Assistive Technology Centres New opportunities

The Global Assistive Technology (AT) Centres Leadership Network, active since 2011, is keen on expanding its network in Europe.

AT Centres are competence and resource centres that provide services to people with disabilities, professionals and policy makers. In the next newsflash we will report more on this developing network and its activities.

For information: http://g3ict.org/resource_center/at_centers_leadership_network,
or contact Evert-Jan Hoogerwerf (hoogerwerf@ausilioteca.org).

Information on the AAATE Conference

AAATE 2013, September 19-22, Vilamoura, Portugal

Paper submission to the conference has closed and the review of the good amount of scientific work is in progress. AAATE 2013 will feature many presentations and sessions which are of high importance to service provision for people with disabilities and Person Centred Technology. The AAATE conference will host the Training Course "Bridging the Gap between Technology and Care when Implementing Person Centred Technologies/ Assistive Technologies and Information and Communication Technologies in Services" mentioned in this newsletter.

Keynote Speakers: http://www.aaate2013.eu/Keynote_Speakers.html
- Al Cook, University of Alberta, Canada
- Alan Newell, University of Dundee, U.K.
- Karin Astegger, EASPD - European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities, Austria
- Sarah Blackstone, Augmentative Communication Inc., U.S.A.
- Fraser Bathgate, Disabled Divers International, U.K.

Instructional Courses: http://www.aaate2013.eu/Instructional_Courses.html
- Driving to LearnT in a Powered Wheelchair: a Different Approach to Enhance Wakefulness, Cognition and Tool Use Abilities
- Ethical Issues in Assistive Technologies and Services for Older People
- How to Measure the Cost of Individual Assistive Technology Interventions
- How to Use Paper Engineering Techniques to Support the Development of Communication Skills in Children
- KT4AT : Knowledge Translation Tools for R&D Projects
- Smart Home IRIS at the University Rehabilitation Institute in Ljubljana
- Technology Education of Health Professionals: Challenges and Advantages
- The Use of Low Cost Robots for Cognitive Development of Children with Disabilities

Special Sessions:
- Alternative Human Computer Interfaces for People with Motor Disorders
- Design for All and Mainstreaming in Ambient Assisted Living - The Role of Networking
- ICT-Based Learning Technologies for Disabled People
- Implementing the UN Convention: the role of Assistive Technology Centres
- Power mobility: User experiences and Outcomes
- Predictors, acceptance and use of e-health technology by older adults and professionals
- (Semi-automatic) User Interface Generation
- Standardization within the Assistive Technology Field
- The development and implementation of "Care at a Distance"
- Using the cloud to enhance AT

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