

Technology Strategy Board

Driving Innovation

MEDIA ALERT

18 March 2010

Technology Strategy Board investment in new technology for Assisted Living

The Technology Strategy Board today signalled its commitment to supporting innovation in Assisted Living by announcing it will invest £6.5 million in six collaborative research and development projects that will develop new technologies to help the elderly and those with long-term health conditions.

The projects will address the need for health and care technologies to embrace the changing telecommunications environment. While many of the sensors that will be required for remote health and care services are available now, the six research and development projects will look to combine these with advanced telecommunications and computing technologies, in order to address the care and support needs of the 21st century.

Explaining the background to the investments, Graham Worsley, who leads the Technology Strategy Board's Assisted Living Innovation Platform, said:

“Our aim is to support the development of technologies that will lead towards truly independent living for those with long-term conditions and the elderly. In the longer term, the opportunities are for the development of entirely new services in which health and care follow the individual and are delivered wherever and whenever needed.”

The six projects will bring together the best of the UK's expertise from over 50 organisations, including from industry, the health and care professions, charities, local authorities and universities. Bringing healthcare technologies, such as monitoring devices and sensors, together with advanced communications technologies would allow information to be communicated between people and their health and care professionals quickly, and from any location. For example, sensors could send someone's updated health data direct to their healthcare provider, without the need for a visit. Or a change in a patient's condition could be notified instantly to their doctor, carer or to family members, whether or not they are at home. Developing such technologies while ensuring that the privacy of each user is protected is one of the key challenges being addressed by each of the projects.

The public sector investment of £6.5m includes £1m from the Department of Health National Institute for Health Research and over £900,000 to participating universities from the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council.

The projects will last up to three years and are due to be completed by 2012/13. This is the second major investment by the Technology Strategy Board in innovative Assisted Living technology, following an investment in 2008 of £5.5m in nine projects in the area of 'User Centred Design'.

Notes to Editors

1. The Technology Strategy Board is a business-led executive non-departmental public body, established by the government. Its role is to promote and support research into, and development and exploitation of, technology and innovation for the benefit of UK business, in order to increase economic growth and improve the quality of life. It is sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). For more information please visit: www.innovateuk.org.
2. The Assisted Living Innovation Platform (ALIP) is delivering a wide-ranging programme to enable the ageing population and those with long-term health conditions to live with greater independence. Launched in November 2007, the ALIP brings the Technology Strategy Board together with the Department of Health, primary care trusts, research councils, local authorities, academia, industry and third-sector organisations to develop technologies and services that will enable individuals to receive support at home. For more information please visit: www.innovateuk.org/ourstrategy/innovationplatforms/assistedliving.ashx
3. Any media enquiries should be addressed to the Technology Strategy Board's media relations consultant or manager (see below).
4. Companies and other organisations seeking information about funding competitions should visit the competitions page of the Technology Strategy Board website – www.innovateuk.org, email support@innovateuk.org or phone the helpline on 0300 321 4357.

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