TECHNOLOGY BRINGING ASSISTED LIVING INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

WHEN people hear the words ‘assisted living’, chances are they will think of the traditional pendant alarm that can be worn around the neck. If you or someone in your family wears one of these devices, there is a good chance that Tunstall Emergency Response is the company monitoring the device and any alerts it sends out.

“We are the largest provider of ‘telecare’ services in Ireland,” explains Tunstall MD James Doyle. “We have a 24/7 monitoring centre, which fields about 450,000 calls per annum – so we’re very experienced in this area.

“The traditional assisted living device would be the pendant alarm that people are familiar with – but the technology is evolving all the time, and new innovations can really benefit the people we help care for.”

Tunstall has recently joined forces with another Irish company, Motech Group, to provide a next-generation assisted living experience – through a device called the CareClip, designed by Motech. The CareClip is a matchbox-sized device, worn by the user. This is supported by a secure web portal and a mobile app that provide the family member and/or carer with instant, accurate data as to their loved one’s wellbeing.

The CareClip has two-way communications to allow for instant contact from a person in a response centre, a family member or carer. The family member and/or carer can use the app to assure themselves of their loved one’s safety and wellbeing at any time.

“The CareClip uses the most innovative and secure technologies available,” says Paul Flavin, CEO of Motech.

“Traditionally an ‘assisted living’ monitoring service would be restricted to the home or residential care unit, due to the technology available. Motech wanted to extend this level of service and support, to allow people get the same reassurance 24/7 – wherever they are,” he explained.

James from Tunstall continues: “We get approached on a regular basis by companies who have new pieces of technology. Motech’s CareClip

The HSE and eHealth Ireland recently showcased the current innovations in Health as well as innovations from the future in Trinity Science Gallery in Dublin.

This two day event was part of the eHealth Innovation week which started with a Hackathon to deliver solutions for patients with Bi-Polar disorder. This event was the first of its kind, and featured a host of health innovation exhibitions, demonstrations, presentations and devices which can enable innovations in healthcare today and into the future.

Speaking at the event, Tony O’Brien, Director General of the HSE, said, “This event provides a timely opportunity for the HSE and eHealth Ireland to showcase the innovations currently being developed and delivered within the Health Service and the innovations that will be available to us in the future with the help of digital technologies. These innovations are part of building a better healthcare service for the patients we serve now and into the future.”

The EH2030 exhibition included exhibits from suppliers, SMEs, start-ups and a new HSE initiative - the QIC Programme - which encourages clinically led innovation. This is an eHealth Ireland led internal innovation programme, facilitating the ability to deliver disruptive technologies and innovative platforms capable of transforming the Irish healthcare system by 2020.

Richard Corbridge, HSE Chief Information Officer, said, “Disruption in digital health is here. Digital Health is a driving force in healthcare reform. Mobile technologies and elements like Internet of Things solutions will be the dominant platforms to access and create digital information. Research suggests that 83pc of businesses will be digital by 2020 we need to work with SME’s and the public to be

ABOVE: Richard Corbridge, Chief Information Officer, HSE (left) and Tony O’Brien, HSE Director General, pictured together experiencing the virtual reality headsets during the HSE / eHealth Ireland Innovation Showcase held in the Science Gallery, Trinity College Dublin. PIC. ROBBIE REYNOLDS.
is the best device that we’ve seen. It does exactly what we would want it to do.” The CareClip works while a person is at home and also while they are out and about, therefore allowing both physical and social interaction with the community.

“This is achieved by combining the best mobile communications with GPS satellite technology and rigorous adherence to data security and privacy.

The CareClip allows the wearer to send an alert if in need of assistance, and it provides automatic fall detection. It also allows for highly accurate location identification in the event of an alert – it will display where the person is instantly (accurate to within 5m).

The CareClip will even alert if the wearer is out of a ‘safe zone’ or entering a ‘non-safe zone’, giving an increased level of reassurance and independence. James says: “Motech’s device has been comprehensively field-trialled, and its ability to roam across all the different networks is one aspect that we’re particularly delighted with. We’ve taken it to known black spots, where there is very poor phone signal coverage, and it has worked every time.”

The CareClip has two-way communications to allow for instant contact from a person in a response centre, a family member or carer.

The family member and/or carer can use the app to assure themselves of their loved one’s safety and wellbeing at any time. Both James and Paul explain that what the CareClip really offers is peace of mind to families, carers and wearers themselves.

“Technology can never be a panacea,” says James, “but technology such as this can be an enabler – it’s an enabler for promoting independence and hopefully giving increased quality of life to both the wearer and their family or carer.”

The HSE and eHealth Ireland welcome this global event to Ireland and see it as an important step on the path towards building a better health service.”

To learn more about the events of the Health Innovation Showcase or Health Innovation Week visit www.eh2030.com.

innovative and agile in our projects to provide the appropriate healthcare that citizens need.

“This is the first time that a Health Innovation Week has been hosted in the EU. The Health Innovation Showcase is part of the Health Innovation Week currently being hosted in Dublin.

EPILEPSY AND TECHNOLOGY – BRIDGING THE GAP

TAKING the care of an individual from the hospital into the community is not a new concept. However, the sharing of the most relevant and up to date information between tertiary and primary care has often been delayed and fragmented, requiring the way in which we communicate relevant information to change.

The electronic patient record (EPR) was designed to share all relevant patient information between members of the multi-disciplinary team both in the hospital and the community setting at the touch of a button, in an effort to enhance patient care.

The opportunity and necessity to use healthcare data/information intelligently has never been greater.

The technology is now available to healthcare professionals to allow the delivery of a variety of epilepsy services to multiple sites to include maternity care. The use of the EPR in maternity services has enhanced the sharing of information between obstetrics, primary care, neurology services and the patient.

The information gathered on the EPR is readily available allowing the various clinicians on site to make prompt informed decisions in caring for the woman with epilepsy. The woman with epilepsy is then more likely to have a greater awareness of her own condition, thus allowing her an influence into her care.

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FURTHER INFORMATION

To find out more call 1850 247 999 or go to www.tunstallemergencyresponse.ie