

INDEPENDENT

ICT Enabled Service Integration for Independent Living

The INDEPENDENT project sets out to develop and pilot an integrated set of ICT-enabled services to deal with a range of threats to independent living common to older people. By means of innovative usage of ICT, current “silos” in service delivery are broken down to allow for cooperation across relevant care sectors and participation of family members.

Background & objectives

When it comes to supporting older people living in the community, today's reality is still characterised by fragmentation and bureaucracy in current service provision resulting in disjointed and patchy medical care and support. The potential of ICT-enabled forms of support such as telecare and telehealth could be exploited in a more effective way if they were not, as today, embedded in healthcare and social care services delivered in "silos". Against this background, INDEPENDENT sets out to define, deliver and pilot a digital infrastructure supporting coordinated cross-sector delivery of timely support to prevent older people from slipping out of safe independent living and maintaining quality of life.

Approach

INDEPENDENT pursues a dedicated programme of service process innovation complemented by adaptation of technology. The digital support infrastructure and related services are set up and piloted :

- using appropriate existing technology to provide as many older people as possible with digital access to the support services they need,
- augmenting and opening sectoral care platforms to enable coordinated cross-sector support delivery,
- developing cooperative care applications to run on informal care platforms,
- adopting a clearly demand-driven, inclusive approach and avoiding all technology 'push'.

An integrated set of support services combating a range of threats commonly faced by older people are piloted at six sites across Europe, including Dublin (IE), Hull (UK), Milton Keynes (UK), Malaga (ES), Trikala (GR) and Geldrop (NL).

The INDEPENDENT services are adapted to the specific circumstances prevailing at the individual pilot sites, e.g. respecting differences of legal and regulatory frameworks and provision in health and care services. To adequately cater for the particular circumstances prevailing at each site, each pilot develops a clear initial focus on one or more relevant issues to be addressed in developing their digital support infrastructure in line with the INDEPENDENT approach and thus improving support service delivery.

Expected impact

INDEPENDENT enables current support services to overcome limitations of sectoral telehealth and telecare and empower informal carers and the voluntary / Third Sector to participate in delivery of support. Wider deployment of INDEPENDENT services after the project is supported by a dedicated programme of socio-economic service evaluation.

Project consortium

Overall, the pilot brings together twenty partner organisations across six European Member States. It has started in January 2010 and will come to an end in December 2012. The project is part-funded by the European Unions Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.

For further information please look-up the project web site (www.independent-project.eu) or contact the project coordinator empirica

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