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Remote medical monitoring means better care

Innovations in telemedicine offer patients the possibility to enjoy better monitoring of their health and safety while reducing unneeded trips to the doctor. The SPES project helps encourage use of this technology by implementing a tele-health platform that serves people dealing with respiratory problems, dementia, disabilities and social exclusion in four central European cities.

Geographical isolation can be a problem for anyone, but it is especially difficult for those who have chronic illnesses and need frequent medical care. As they seek to bridge the gap between patients and care givers on the regional and local level, health service providers need to be able to test and adopt e-health instruments. Working in cooperation with a transnational team, and some of the most advanced technology providers within each region, SPES helps encourage innovative and shared solutions in the field of telemedicine. The result is that patients and caregivers have better communication, an improvement that amounts to enhanced

geographical integration of the regions involved. The SPES project implements an information-communication technology platform that is connected to different medical devices and installed in a patients' home. The platform creates a link with medical care providers and a system that is able to monitor the patients' health status. The SPES platform can also connect other patients and can serve as social communication channel. The platform is based on a low-cost personal computer and offers a user-friendly graphic interface. It provides the patient with a user entertainment system; it interacts with the health provider's call centre

“ She is delighted to find songs in her memory book that she liked listening to in her youth. I can see that from her smile. ”

Woman whose mother suffers from dementia commenting on progress made thanks to SPES brain stimulation software

through a central server; and it functions as a telemedicine system, collecting medical data through sensors deployed at the patients' home.

Solution enhances people's lives

By exploiting this easy-to-use telemedicine solution, patients can lower their displacement costs and reduce the time they might spend visiting care providers, such as hospitals, general practitioners or medical centres. The reduction in travel time and improved medical monitoring enhances the quality of patients' daily lives and their general well-being. For example, in Ferrara, Italy, an SPES initiative provided patients suffering from breathing problems with a system that can remotely monitor their health status via a pulse oximeter and other non-invasive medical devices – all of which work while the patient stays comfortably at home. The SPES pilot in Vienna endeavours to enhance the quality of life of older persons with dementia using localisation devices that do not restrict their movements. In Boskovice, Czech Republic, 40 mobility-impaired clients are trained in a range of registered social services, such as education and social and professional integration. And in Kosice, Slovakia, older persons are able to enrich their daily routine with various communication and social features that allow them to get involved in leisure activities or to receive psychological support. Along with operating these pilot efforts, the SPES project contributes to better cooperation between the regions participating in the issue of tele-assistance applications. The project does this by encouraging cross-border collaboration on the highest political level, initiating a dialogue on the supra-regional level and promoting innovative developments between the partner regions.

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Mobility impaired seniors in Brno pilot who are trained in a range of registered social services

80

Percentage of patients in Ferrara pilot who appreciated the ability to easily visualize and store their clinical data

36

Million people worldwide suffer from dementia