

**Tunstall Working with EU Partners to Develop Support Services Platform for Unpaid Carers**

*iCarer is a guidance and learning services platform designed to alleviate the stresses and strains associated with caring duties*

**September 2014 -** Tunstall Healthcare, the leading provider of technology enabled care services, is developing a new integrated health and care platform to help support informal, or unpaid, carers who look after older or vulnerable people.

Changing demographics and lifestyles means more people are becoming informal carers, combining caring duties with paid employment and other activities. Some may be caring for parents or older relatives, while also caring for children at the same time. These situations can place increasing stress on carers and their families.

The iCarer project involves talking to carers to identify what they need to help them in their daily lives. This knowledge combined with continual feedback has helped to shape the design of the solutions.

The iCarer system will identify and analyse activities of daily care and psychological wellbeing of carers via discreet monitoring and interactions, enabling a carer’s stress levels to be considered. Through the proactive system, carers can be offered help and advice to improve care through personalised e-learning and have access to a supportive network of experts and other formal carers.

Jim Charvill, Group Director for Enterprise Architecture at Tunstall said: “The iCarer platform is not designed to replace the care that people provide. Rather, it will support daily activities and act as a ‘virtual carer’ to improve the care provided, whilst at the same time supporting the carers themselves.

"When combined with the e-learning framework, network support and other monitoring and assistance services, iCarer’s adaptive and holistic services will help to reduce stress and promote wellbeing.”

The system will include Tunstall’s lifestyle monitoring services ADLife, providing informal carers with the information they require to support them in their care duties. The project also involves the use of secure cloud computing, which means the services provided by the iCarer platform will be interoperable and accessible wherever and whenever needed.

Jim added: “Taking existing technologies, such as standard tablets or smartphones, and determining how they can be integrated with additional platforms to help support informal carers, is a hugely exciting and rewarding part of the project. It also supports the work we’re doing with [Carers UK](http://uk.tunstall.com/media/resources/carers) and as a member of [Employers for Carers.](http://www.tunstall.co.uk/news/383/tunstall-healthcare-joins-employers-for-carers)”

Employers for Carers is the national membership forum for employers supported by Carers UK. The purpose of the forum is to ensure that business owners retain staff with caring responsibilities; not only so they can continue paid employment, but also because it makes sense for the business.

iCarer is a three-year project funded through the Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) Joint Programme, involving Tunstall and partners from Belgium, Ireland, Spain, Slovenia and the UK. The Partner consortium includes Federation of Pensioners' Organization of Slovenia, Nottingham City Council Telecare Service, Nottingham Trent University, Pyxima, S3 Group, Spanish National Institute of Health & Universidad Politécnica de Madrid.

To find out more about the iCarer project visit [www.icarer-project.eu](http://www.icarer-project.eu)

**Note to Editors**

This project is partly funded by the European Commission and the following national bodies under the AAL Joint Programme (Project number: AAL-2012-5-239):

[Agency for Innovation by Science and Technology](https://www.dropbox.com/s/n8d284o8szy5g1f/Agency%20for%20Innovation%20by%20Science%20and%20Technology.PNG?dl=0)

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**About Tunstall**

Tunstall Healthcare Group is the market leading provider of telehealthcare solutions, with over 3.6 million users globally. Tunstall’s solutions support older people and those with long-term needs, helping them to live independently by effectively managing their health and well-being. Its solutions have been proven effective in the world’s largest telehealthcare trial. Tunstall provides technology, services, expertise and advice to millions of people enabling them to lead independent more fulfilling lives. For more information on how telehealthcare can improve quality of life, visit [tunstall.com](http://www.tunstall.com) or follow them on Twitter [@TunstallHealth](https://twitter.com/TunstallHealth). The latest news and insights from Tunstall can also be found at [blog.tunstall.com/](http://blog.tunstall.com/)

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