

Scottish Network Secures £2 Million to Develop Technology for Dementia Independence

March 26, 2025



A collaborative Scottish network, Consolidate, has been awarded £2 million in funding to explore and develop technological solutions that enable individuals living with dementia to maintain independent lifestyles. The network, a partnership between Heriot-Watt University, the University of Strathclyde, and Age Scotland, will focus on creating technologies that enhance social, mental, and physical capabilities for those affected by dementia.

This initiative addresses the growing challenge of dementia, with rates expected to rise significantly across the UK. In Scotland alone, approximately 90,000 individuals are currently living with dementia, a figure projected to increase substantially in the coming decades.

The Consolidate network aims to address the disparity between the desire of most dementia patients to remain at home and the challenges posed by the condition. Research indicates that maintaining functional capacities can slow dementia progression, and this project will explore how technology can facilitate this.

Professor Alan Gow of Heriot-Watt University highlighted the potential of technology, stating, “Technology has immense potential to support people living with dementia, from virtual assistants to smart sensors and robots.”

The three-year program will focus on developing accessible and personalized technological tools, co-created with individuals living with dementia, to support various stages of the condition. Professor Mario Parra Rodriguez of the University of Strathclyde emphasized the shift away from a “one-size-fits-all”

approach, stating, “Consolidate moves away from the ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach as it aims to support the development of new technologies that can adapt to the changing needs of diverse populations living with dementia.”

The network also includes partnerships with Alzheimer Scotland, Meeting Centres Scotland, Carers Scotland, the Community Renewal Trust, and NHS boards across Scotland.

This project is one of four funded by UK Research and Innovation’s Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and the National Institute for Health and Care. Professor Charlotte Deane, EPSRC Executive Chair, stated, “We are investing in research that could lead to new technologies and innovations that will help keep people safe and independent.” This funding underscores the commitment to finding innovative solutions to support individuals living with dementia and improve their quality of life.