

PRESS RELEASE
1st December 2015

Technology SME awarded £1m development contract to improve care for people with learning disabilities

An innovative partnership, led by technology SME v-connect, has been awarded almost £1m to improve the care of people with learning disabilities in the community.

The project, BOLD-TC (Better Outcomes for People with Learning Disabilities – Transforming Care), will link video-consultation with local or remote vital sign monitoring and the ability to measure the impact of these systems on individuals and those that support them. New models of care will be co-developed bringing together people with learning disabilities, supported by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and national learning disability charity, Hft, as well as being supported by a range of other partners [1].

v-connect is a communication service which connects those who need care to their primary, secondary or social care providers, as well as family members or other healthcare professionals, through simple-to-use video communication using their TV, tablet or mobile device.

The project will install video-communication equipment in people's homes and explore development of the following technologies in collaboration with care providers and their clients:

- multi-way video calling between the clients, family, primary, secondary and social care;
- remote video and other services through mobile devices helping to keep both the client and their carers connected;
- the option of remote monitoring of blood pressure and other vital signs to identify and address any issues as soon as possible;
- evaluation of information collected as part of normal daily activities, as well as monitoring health and wellbeing outcomes.

Starting in October 2015, the project aims to help people with learning disabilities to remain in their community, increasing their independence and improving their health and wellbeing, as well as supporting people to be more engaged in community activities.

Adam Hoare, Managing Director of v-connect said: 'This is a really exciting cross-disciplinary project, which has the potential to transform the way we support people with learning disabilities to manage their own health and wellbeing.

'It is vital that, if people are going to embrace and trust video-conferencing to support their health and wellbeing, the system is both robust and secure. v-

connect provides an established and comprehensive service that provides both of these things, as well as being focused on improving outcomes for people with learning disabilities.'

This project is funded through a Phase 2 development contract, awarded by the Small Business Research Initiative (SBRI) Healthcare competition. This programme was launched by NHS England in partnership with the Academic Health Science Networks. The Telehealth Telecare for Learning Disabilities brief was led by the Yorkshire & Humber Academic Health Science Network, which aims to identify projects, which use innovative products and services to improve the physical and mental health of people with learning disabilities. The SBRI Healthcare Phase 1 development contract proved the concept of using the v-connect system with people with learning disabilities and phase two is an extension of the concept developing prototype services underpinned by new technology developments.

The project aims to develop and enhance models of care, which are underpinned by technological solutions.

Ends

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[1] A full list of partners involved in the BOLD-TC project is:

- **Red Embedded Systems Ltd.** - provides v-connect, a video communications service www.v-connect.co.uk
- **Rescon Ltd.** - provides Lincus, a data capture, storage and analytics tool. www.rescontechologies.com
- **Hft** - a charity supporting people with learning disabilities and their families. www.hft.org.uk
- **Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council** - a local authority covering 310,000 people in the West Midlands. www.sandwell.gov.uk
- **Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG** - Sandwell and West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group is a membership organisation involving 100 GP practices serving around 547,400 patients across the Sandwell and West Birmingham area. sandwellandwestbhamccg.nhs.uk
- **Changing Our Lives** – a charity working with disabled people of all ages and backgrounds to deliver solutions to each particular need, and strive to achieve positive, individual-focused outcomes around rights, health and social inclusion. www.changingourlives.org

- **The DLF at Shaw Trust** – The DLF brings together comprehensive knowledge of assistive technology with expertise of practitioners to provide information, advice, training and business tools. Working within the Shaw Trust, one of the largest, national third sector providers of welfare to work and social care programmes, the DLF can draw on the direct experience of people with learning disabilities and their community supporters. www.dlf.org.uk
- **The Bayswater Institute** – an academic institute seeks to help organisations integrate human and social considerations with economic, structural and technical ones in the design and development of organisations and work. bayswaterinst.org
- **Janet Cobb** - an independent health consultant with considerable experience in learning disabilities.
- **David Atkinson** - an independent consultant nurse and co-developer of the Health Equalities Framework.

v-connect is the service developed by Red Embedded Systems Ltd. based on more than 12 years experience in video telephony and over six years collaborating with care organisations to deliver care using communication technology. With v-connect underpinning care services in primary, secondary and social care the focus is on better outcomes for people and their carers as well as the care system. By offering a comprehensive service, supplying all of the infrastructure and technology necessary to deliver a successful service, our partners can concentrate on what they do best - deliver care.

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