

How dementia-friendly technology can benefit your life

Whilst not a solution for everyone, technology can work in a variety of ways to empower and support independence, manage risks, improve health, be enjoyable and aid loved ones.

Technology offers huge potential benefits for people living with dementia, whether it's:

- a familiar gadget such as a mobile phone or TV
- a specific telecare device to remind someone to take their medication
- an app to enable social interactions or memory stimulation
- technology which supports cognitive stimulation, leisure and social engagement
- or telehealth to enable health conditions to be monitored from home.

Families and carers tell us that the main issues they face include:

- Taking on a great deal of the day-to-day support and care in looking after loved ones often with very little support.
- Lack of support systems to connect with people and offer timely assistance.
- Difficulties obtaining helpful and succinct information for a range of needs.

More than 3 million people – one in nine of the workforce in the UK – juggle the responsibilities of caring and paid employment

Next steps to consider

- **Awareness** – It's important that everyone affected by dementia knows about the latest technology and where to refer for further information.
- **Perceptions of technology** – not everyone likes the idea of technology so it is important to use the correct language. It is not a replacement for personal support but it can help you to live well.
- **Person at the centre** – It is always about keeping the person living with dementia at the centre of decision making. Their views and consent should always be sought. If they can't offer these, an assessment of their views must be made involving those who know them best, and any decisions taken in the person's best interests (as laid out in Mental Capacity Act).
- **Access to information** – Accessible and easy to find information that lists where technology services are available in the local area with a [link](#) to this charter is advised.



How does technology help?

Technology can help people living with dementia, their families and carers with the following:

Issues	How dementia friendly technology can help
Anxiety about the person living with dementia, their safety and well-being when they are away	Support 24-hours a day, for example, an alert sounds when the gas has been left on, and sensors which turn the gas off automatically. Technologies that respond to the actions or inactions of the person and relay information to families or carers.
Inability for the carer to have regular breaks or respite care	Technology that links to a 24/7 Response Centre enabling families/carers to safely leave the person while they go out (e.g. to the shops or visiting friends).
Worsening health of the carer	The preventative nature of telecare/telehealth has been shown to reduce the level of hospital admissions and better manage health.
Getting to grips with medication	Medication reminders and monitored medication dispensers.
Injury and anxiety from falls alone at night	Bed sensors or movement activated lighting to reduce the risk of falls at night which send an alert to the Response Centre who will seek help.
Isolation and loneliness	A wide range of aids allow people to communicate by phone, video and chat. For example Talking Mats a symbol based communication system increases a person's ability to communicate none verbally whilst Telecare allows people to get out and about and meet others.
Difficulty obtaining useful information	Technology can be useful in helping families and carers remain well informed and support meaningful engagement with people at all stages in their dementia journey e.g. apps, YouTube and self-help forums such as Talking Point.

See further information on how technology supports people living with dementia and their families here:
alzheimers.org.uk/technologycharter

or for further information, email
programmepartnerships@alzheimers.org.uk