
POTENTIAL CHALLENGE FOR THE AAL PROGRAMME CALL 2016: “LIVING WELL WITH DEMENTIA”

PROBLEM RELEVANCE (based on a.o. WHO and JPND).

People with dementia are confronted with a syndrome that affects their memory, thinking, behavior and ability to perform everyday activities. The average duration of dementia is between 2 and 10 years. Existing treatments for neurodegenerative diseases are very limited and only treat the symptoms, rather than addressing the cause. Dementia is strongly linked with age.

Dementia is overwhelming not only for the people who have it, but also for their caregivers and families and impacts them physically, psychologically and economically. In Europe different forms of dementia are affecting >7 million people and this figure is expected to rise considerably over the next decades. It currently costs approximately €130 billion per annum to care for people with dementia across Europe and it is one of the leading medical and societal challenges faced by EU society. Alzheimer’s disease is particularly expensive to manage due to its insidious onset, its ever-increasing levels of disability and the length of time over which the condition extends itself.

Living a meaningful and enjoyable life in their own home environment for as long as possible is the wish of many people with Mild Cognitive Impairments (MCI)/dementia. Also national, regional and local policies stimulate living at home with support from informal carers, social networks, volunteers and professional care. Moving to a nursing home usually is the consequence of the overburdening or loss of informal carer(s).

ICT/smart technologies offer enormous potential to integrate solutions that can not only support people with MCI/dementia in different stages (mild, middle, severe dementia) to ‘live well’ in their own environment, but also helps to detect changes in behaviour, preventing the decline and retarding the progress of impairment. Furthermore, ICT/smart technologies can support partners/families, informal and professional carers. There will be more value for customers if solutions are integrated into relevant packages that can be adapted over time according to individual wishes and changing needs of people with dementia and their carers.

Integrated innovations – if substantially validated - can make a relevant contribution to the creation of dementia-friendly societies, municipalities and communities. Social services innovation will play an important role in these developments.

UNMET NEED

In Europe different forms of dementia are affecting >7 million people and this figure is expected to double every 20 years as the population ages. It currently costs approximately €130 billion *per annum* to care for people with dementia across Europe (JPND).

MARKET OPPORTUNITY

The potential market is growing due to increasing numbers of people with dementia and the people who are interacting with them (informal and professional carers, but also the larger community).

The market consists of consumers (people with MCI/dementia and their families), as well as public and private sectors (care/welfare organisations, municipalities, (health) insurance, regions, transport, housing, city planning etc.).

Much attention should be given to address and involve all relevant stakeholders in appropriate ways.