

# Technology to help in the home



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Go to <http://content.socialcare.wales/resources-guidance/improving-care-and-support/people-with-dementia/technology-to-help-in-the-home> for the latest version.

Find out how assistive technology can enable people to live more independently in their own home and communities.

## **What is assistive technology?**

Assistive technology takes many forms but is simply a piece of equipment or technology that aims to compensate for the symptoms of a person's dementia, increasing their safety or improving their quality of life.

For example, assistive technology and telecare can help a person to know if it is night or day by having a night/ day clock, or to find a lost item.

Assistive technology may be 'stand alone', such as a medicine prompt, or part of a telecare system, for example a flood detector.

The potential for assistive technology to support people with dementia is huge and is often under used.

It may reassure family carers by alerting them if their relative gets up during the night, for example.

Technology can be linked. For example, a bed sensor may be activated if a person gets out of bed, which not only alerts the carer but simultaneously turns on the bedside lamp so that the person can see where they are going.

## **Monitoring people for their safety**

Sophisticated 'life style monitoring' systems are available that use motion sensors to transmit information remotely to support workers or family and friends.

'Safe Walking Technologies' are widely available and can help to locate someone when out and about.

These can give the person with dementia more confidence to continue to do the things they've always done, knowing that help is available if needed.

Like any other technology, it's finding the right thing for the right person.

## **What's best for the person with dementia?**

The person living with dementia must be involved in decisions about using any of these technologies.

If there's any doubt about the person's capacity to consent to assistive technology, the [Mental Capacity Act](#) will apply.

A capacity assessment will be completed and for those individuals who are found to lack capacity, decisions will be made in their best interests.

Assistive technology is not the answer to everything and will not suit everybody. Some people may not get on with medicine prompts for example or may be unsettled by alarms or voice prompts.

Good assessment is key.

## **Assistive technology doesn't replace human contact**

Assistive technology can never replace human contact, which is vital for people living with dementia.

But when used intelligently it can reduce stress for the person with dementia and those around them.

Technology is forever changing. With smart phones and electronic tablets in common use, technology is connecting people across the world with Skype, Face Time and WhatsApp.

It gives us all opportunities to play games, do crossword puzzles, to research or look at old photographs and reminisce.

With new apps and devices being developed, the full potential has yet to be realised.

## **Useful resources**

Find out more about using technology to help in the home.

[At Dementia \(information resource about assistive technologies\)](#)

[How dementia friendly technology could help you](#)

[Living made easy - catalogue of 11,000 independent living products](#)

[How telecare has helped Miss Watkins \(p.14\)](#)

[Video - Ode: an electronically released fragrance that can stimulate appetite around mealtimes](#)

## **Research links**

Improve your practice by accessing the latest research findings.

[Memory technology library - trialling assistive technology with people with memory problems](#)

## **We want your feedback**

Help us to improve the Dementia resource for care professionals by telling us what you think about it in our short [four question survey](#).