

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Mental health trust calls on community to support trailblazing Internet of Things dementia trial**

Fourteen hundred people are needed from across Surrey and North East Hampshire for a £5 million ground-breaking Internet of Things technology trial that could transform the lives of people with dementia and their carers.

The trial, the first of its kind in the UK, is being led by Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and is part of an NHS drive to modernise healthcare for the benefit of older people with long term health problems.

Called TIHM (Technology Integrated Health Management) for dementia, the trial will help clinicians to remotely monitor the health and wellbeing of people with dementia so they can intervene earlier to help someone avoid a crisis and unnecessary hospital stay. It is also hoped the trial will relieve pressure on carers and help people with dementia to remain independent for longer.

The trial is funded by NHS England and Innovate UK and involves key local partners, including the Alzheimer's Society, the University of Surrey, Kent Surrey Sussex Academic Health Science Network and six Surrey and north east Hampshire NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups. Also involved is the Royal Holloway University of London and nine technology innovators.

To take part in the trial, a person must live in Surrey or NE Hampshire and have a diagnosis of mild to moderate dementia. They must also have a carer who is willing to participate in the study. Surrey and Borders Partnership is looking for 700 people with dementia and 700 carers to get involved. Half of the people with dementia will be randomly selected to receive the technological devices. The remaining half will form the control group and continue with their care as usual.

People receiving the technology will have their homes kitted out with non-invasive devices, such as sensors, apps and trackers. These will connect to each other via the 'Internet of Things' and work together to collect and analyse different pieces of information, that will be securely managed, about a person's health and patterns of behaviour.

The data will enable the devices to identify if there is a problem. If there is, mental health professionals will be immediately alerted and a decision taken about the action needed. This may mean a clinician is sent out to visit the person or a call is made to the carer.

Technological devices in the trial include sensors attached to objects such as fridges, kettles and beds. These can, for example, detect if someone is following normal patterns of behaviour for eating and drinking or is at risk of dehydration and whether they are unusually restless at night. The technology will not replace any existing face-to-face contact with health or social care staff.

Dr Ramin Nilforooshan, leading dementia specialist at Surrey and Borders Partnership, said: “The technology is designed to alert us to any changes in behaviour or any changes in wellbeing that could signal someone is becoming unwell or that they are in trouble. For example, they may be developing a urinary tract or lower respiratory infection. We could detect the early signs/symptoms of those infections and successfully treat them at home.

“We know that people with dementia do not respond well to being in hospital – and that their symptoms can worsen in this environment so it is much better if we can treat them before they need to be admitted for acute care.”

The Alzheimer’s Society, which is a partner in TIHM for dementia trial, is recruiting an army of 150 trained volunteers who will keep in regular touch with participants, offering them their support.

850,000 people in the UK have a form of dementia\* and in Surrey an estimated 16,800 people have the condition with that figure set to rise to 19,000 by 2020.\*\* In NE Hampshire, more than 2,500 people are predicted to have dementia by 2020.\*\*

Of the 10,507 people over 65 with a formal diagnosis of dementia across Surrey and North East Hampshire, 55 per cent are admitted to hospital each year.\*\*\*

Dr Helen Rostill, Director of Innovation and Development at Surrey and Borders Partnership, said: “This is an exciting trial that could make a significant difference to the lives of people with dementia and their families. With a growing elderly population, it is right that we examine innovative new technologies, such as the Internet of Things, to see what we can do to help people live better lives in their own homes and help them avoid stays in hospital that we know they can find very distressing.”

People keen to find out more about the trial and register their interest, should go to: [www.sabp.nhs.uk/tihm](http://www.sabp.nhs.uk/tihm)

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## **Notes to Editor:**

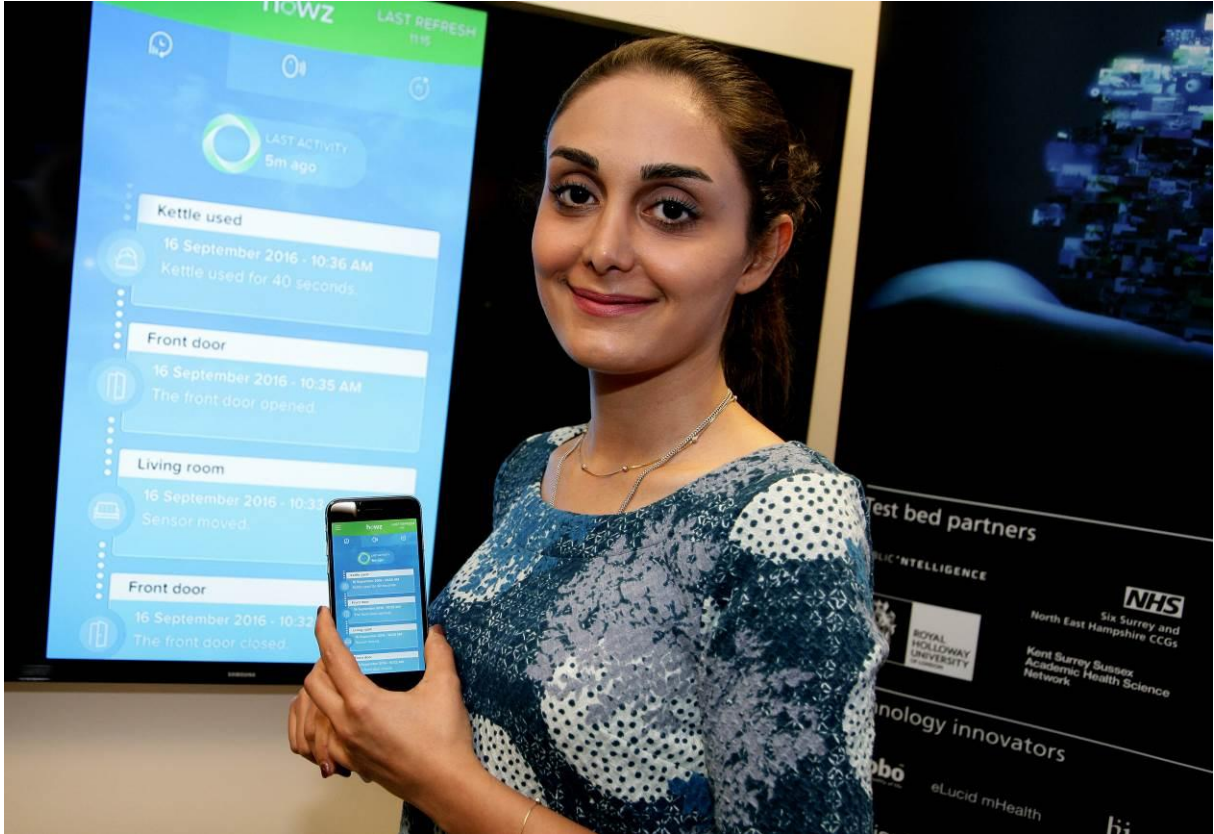
- TIHM for dementia is one of two Internet of Things test beds launched by NHS England to improve the way NHS services are delivered using new technology
- Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust has applied for the new Health Research Authority (HRA) – and the Research Ethics Committee for approval for the study
- The main partners in TIHM for dementia are: Alzheimer’s Society, University of Surrey, Royal Holloway University of London, Kent Surrey Sussex Academic Health Science Network, NHS North East Hampshire and Farnham Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS North West Surrey Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Guildford and Waverley Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Surrey Downs Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS Surrey Heath Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS East Surrey Clinical Commissioning Group, and Public Intelligence. There are also nine technology innovators: Docobo, eLucid mHealth, Halliday James, Safe Patient Systems, Arqiva, Vision360, Intelesant, Sensely and Yecco
- According to the Dementia Intelligence Network, in 2012/13 in England 20 per cent of hospital admissions involving people with dementia were for potentially preventable acute conditions including disease of the urinary system, pneumonia and lower respiratory infections. The Dementia Intelligence Network also reported that 26% of emergency admissions were short stay - that is for one night or less.

## **Sources**

- \*Alzheimer’s Society – [www.alzheimers.org.uk/statistics](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/statistics)
- \*\*Poppi (Projecting Older People Population)
- \*\*\*Surrey Atlas - <https://engage.dh.gov.uk/dementiachallenge/dementia-map/>



Image above: Gerald Hicks, Guildford





**Image above: Shirin Enshaeifar, University of Surrey – Demonstrates technology in the Monitoring Room**



**Image above: Dr Ivana Schnur with Gerald and Nicole Hicks from Guildford**