

Wellbeing Group November 2021

It has been announced that the Northwest NHS Innovation Agency won the prestigious Health Services Journal award this month as Provider Collaboration of the Year for their AF (Atrial Fibrillation – one form of irregular heartbeat) Ambassador work. This involves volunteers visiting various events including some of our own U3A meetings, testing people for the possibility that they might have the condition. Anyone testing positive is referred to their GP for further tests, as AF can be instrumental in causing strokes, so it means that preventative measures can be taken if the diagnosis is confirmed. Congratulations to our ambassador, Joy Taylor for all her hard work.

The November meeting of the Patient and Public Involvement Senate of the Innovation Agency received two interesting presentations which are described below.

1. Biodose (<https://www.biodose.co.uk/biodose-connect/>)
This is described as a 'smart' medication dosage tray. The intention is for this to be used in care homes and also in the community and is based on the 'blister pack' system where a patient's medication is prepacked in dosage trays marked with times of the day and days of the week. The difference with this system is that it can be pre-set to produce an alarm when the medication dose is due, and then record if it has been taken., triggering an alert if the dose is missed. The alert can be transmitted to the patient or the carer, depending on the needs of the patient.
2. Wellheeled (<https://www.wellheeled.net/>)
The presenter explained how he has designed some socks that are suitable for diabetic people as well as others with foot problems. They are made with a sustainable yarn and have seams that are unlikely to cause irritation as well as a wide cuff meaning that the socks will not restrict the circulation. It is hoped that the product will be available in the next few months.

There was also an update on the OpenCare, the artificial intelligence system for reading MRI scans of the heart which is claimed to read the scans more quickly and accurately than a human would be able to do. A doctor would of course still check the results, but the intention is to generally speed up the whole process. The developers are now focusing on receiving approval and certification from the relevant authorities.

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