

Welcome message from David Heaney, Project Director



Welcome to the first edition of the Implementing Transnational Telemedicine Solutions (ITTS) Project eNewsletter!

With a partnership spanning six northern European countries, ITTS is implementing ten demonstrator telemedicine projects, at scale, and is funded by the [EU Northern Periphery Programme 2007-2013](#). The projects are varied both in terms of health application and the technology used, focussing on video consultation, self-management using smartphones, and home-based health services.

ITTS aims to improve health care accessibility, situating services within local communities or patients' homes, normalise telemedicine technology into everyday practice in these areas, and cultivate transnational communication and knowledge exchange.

The aim of this eNewsletter is to spread the word about our progress. We are at an exciting point in the project, as we start to implement the demonstrator projects. We hope these updates will be interesting and helpful, and we would like to invite you to follow our progress throughout the project's duration. If you would like to sign up to receive this biannual eNewsletter, please contact us at: itts@abdn.ac.uk – and do forward it to friends and colleagues who might be interested.

Until next time,

David Heaney

ITTS Project Director

Associate Director of the Centre for Rural Health, University of Aberdeen

In this issue ...

- [ITTS on the web!](#)
 - [Collaborate to Innovate](#)
 - [News Highlights](#)
 - [International Telemedicine Advisory Service](#)
 - [Partner Focus: Norwegian Centre for Integrated Care and Telemedicine \(NST\)](#)
-

ITTS on the web!

Earlier this summer we were proud to launch the new project website. Although it is still early days in terms of site development, we hope that it offers a good overview of what the project is all about.

Thanks to all those involved in helping to create what, we hope, will be an invaluable resource for the project. As always, feedback is welcome so please feel free to send us your thoughts and suggestions for improvements!

[Visit the new ITTS website >>](#)

...wait, there's more! You can now also keep up-to-date with all the latest project news on *Facebook* and *Twitter*.



Collaborate to Innovate

Central to ITTS is the transnational nature of the project. This international collaboration will be key to our success in achieving our goal of creating sustainable telemedicine solutions to the health care access problems facing the Northern Periphery



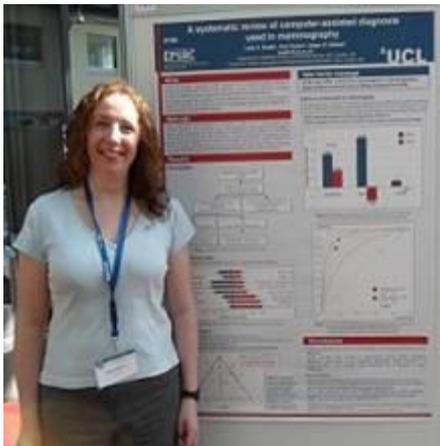
areas. The knowledge exchange ITTS fosters allows experience and expertise to be shared, letting us build on previous knowledge and results, and the projects will reap the rewards. Together we can discuss best practice, avoid and overcome pitfalls and merge the wealth of experience that each country has amassed, putting it to good use.

An initial example of the transnational nature of ITTS comes from the meeting earlier this year in Galway, Ireland, where both researchers and clinicians from the six countries came together to discuss the goals of the ten demonstrator projects. Experiences and needs from the different countries were considered, highlighting both differences and areas of commonality. From these workshops, strong business cases and routes to implementation for each project were developed and are now being put into practice.

This core knowledge sharing aspect allows us to learn from each other, meaning that the project will have benefits such as:

- Defining best practice and increasing its uptake across the Northern Periphery
- Facilitating organisational learning through exchange of ideas, policies and experience
- Maximising potential project impact on both national and EU-wide policy change
- Forming international clinical networks and collaborations, sustainable beyond the formal completion of ITTS

One such international network is the International Telemedicine Advisory Service (ITAS), a group consisting of academic experts, clinicians and policy makers, which has been created by ITTS. They advise on various aspects of the project, but we hope will also have a wider role beyond ITTS. More information about ITAS can be found in the section [below](#).



Dr Leila Eadie

ITTS Project Researcher

“I am very happy to be part of the ITTS Project. I think it has a great deal to offer the field of telemedicine research: it goes beyond the many short trials of equipment and aims to create sustainable services. But more than that, the transnational aspect means that the countries involved can learn so much from the widely differing knowledge and experience that each possesses. I’m looking forward to visiting the Partner countries to see the solutions in action and working with the data collected to produce results that I hope will help future telemedicine applications.”

News Highlights

3rd Annual Telehealth and Telecare Summit, Glasgow

On 15-16 May, Holyrood Magazine hosted the 3rd Annual Telehealth and Telecare Summit in Glasgow. [David Heaney](#), Associate Director of the Centre for Rural Health (University of Aberdeen) and Project Director for the [Implementing Transnational Telemedicine \(ITTS\) Project](#), was invited to speak at the 2-day event which explored the role of telehealth and telecare in the design of future healthcare services in Scotland. Other guest speakers included Nicola Sturgeon MSP and Dr. George Crooks, Director of the Scottish Centre for Telehealth and Telecare (SCTT).



Telehealthcare is clearly being promoted as the way forward for Scotland's healthcare service in an ever-changing, digital age. Strategic investment at this time of demographic change and economic downturn has the potential to transform health delivery and improve the quality and efficiency of a range of clinical services. Scotland is earning a reputation as an international leader in telehealth and telecare, boasting one of the largest and fastest growing life sciences communities in Europe.

Diabetes video consultation clinic

The first Scottish ITTS projects are now launching: a videoconsultation service for people with diabetes has opened its first clinic in Portree Hospital, Skye, and is due to start in September at Belford Hospital, Fort William. These remote areas previously were visited by consultants just a few times per year, requiring on average a 6-hour round trip each time, but the start of videoconsultations means that patients can talk to their consultant much more often, with video clinics planned most months, in addition to the face-to-face visits. It is hoped that this increased access will benefit both patients and hospitals, who are interested in developing the idea of videoconsultations further, allowing them to expand their range of services offered.

Smartphone project recognised in Health Innovation Awards

ITTS demonstrator project [Smartphones for Tracking Physical Activity](#) was recently nominated at Ireland's 4th Annual Biomnis Healthcare Innovation Awards. Shortlisted in the 'Primary Care Centre Initiative' category, the ITTS project gained recognition for its innovative approach to improving services in the local community.

For further information on the Biomnis Health Awards, visit:
www.healthawards.ie

International Telemedicine Advisory Service

At the core of the project lies the International Telemedicine Advisory Service (ITAS), a cluster of expertise comprised of academic experts, clinicians and experienced service providers, with representation from each of the Partner countries. ITAS will provide expert advice to the design, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of the project with the key function of ensuring excellence throughout all stages of the project.

Having met for the first time at the Project Partner Meeting in Galway, Ireland, the committee has made great strides and is now in the final stages of ratifying each of the business cases for the demonstrator projects. This is a significant milestone for the project as it heralds an exciting phase of activity: the project implementation stage.

Dr Trine Strand Bergmo

ITAS member, Norway

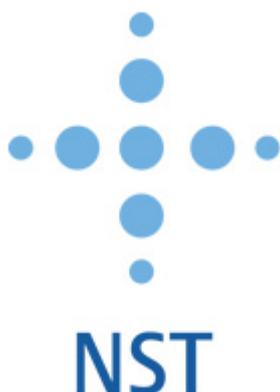
“ITAS with its transnational perspective and multidisciplinary approach will help promote best practice. ITAS will provide advice on design, implementation and evaluation and help ensure the uptake of cost-effective and sustainable telemedicine services throughout the project period.”



[Read more >>](#)

Partner Focus

Norwegian Centre for Integrated Care and Telemedicine (NST)



Norway continues to play a leading role in the application of telemedicine into health services. As a designated Collaborating Centre for the [World Health Organisation](#) (WHO), NST has been at the forefront of developing telemedicine services, and is recognised both regionally and internationally for its expertise in eHealth. With a strong emphasis on systems for preventive work,

researchers and industrial partners work closely together to develop innovative and sustainable products. The centre also offers an advisory service to public health services, supporting the implementation of telemedicine solutions with guidance on issues such as law, security, and which type of equipment is most suitable.

Transnational knowledge exchange is key to NST whose involvement in a number of European projects has afforded great experience, for example, NST were project partners in the recent [Northern Periphery Programme \(NPP\)](#) funded [Competitive Health Services](#) Project – the precursor to the ITTS Project. We are fortunate to have NST as a Partner in ITTS, and we are looking forward to our next Partner Meeting which they are hosting in Tromso in September.

[Read more >>](#)

Project Team, ITTS Norway



Left to right: Eli Arild, Undine Knarvik, Rita Irene Johansen, Stig Karoliussen, Astrid Grøttland, Siri Bjørvig, Merja Hannele Mourujarvi

QR Barcodes

QR (Quick Response) barcodes can be used to link instantly to useful online information, and if you haven't already made use of them, now is the time! Look out for these clever little squares on ITTS project leaflets and conference posters.



To find a QR-Code reader compatible with your smartphone, visit: <http://www.mobile-barcodes.com/qr-code-software>
Scan this QR code to take you to the NEW project website!

Did you know?

- It is estimated that mHealth could reduce overall elderly care expenditure by 25%!
- The use of telehealth results in a more stable population, using less acute healthcare resources: reduced hospitalisations (30-50%), and reduced hospital length of stay (24-48%)
- Telemedicine information allows triage and facilitation of targeted, expedited, interventions that can prevent acute-care-related emergency room visits and hospitalisations (up to 35% reduction of exacerbations)
- 80% of the world's population are within range of a mobile network, so mHealth can help those without broadband and internet...

Facts from: European Coordination Committee of the Radiological, Electromedical and Healthcare IT Industry (COCIR) TELEMEDICINE TOOLKIT May 2011, available [here](#)

If you have any comments or suggestions for features in future issues please [contact us](#).
All issues of the eNewsletter are available to download on our [website](#).

Issue 1, August 2012



Innovatively investing
in Europe's Northern
Periphery for a sustainable
and prosperous future



www.transnational-telemedicine.eu