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Assistive Technology R&D

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So what's Assistive Technology?

- Assistive Technology (AT) is any product or service designed to enable independence for disabled and older people.
- (King's Fund consultation, 2001)

So what's Assistive Technology?

- Physical needs
 - Mobility, Wheelchairs, Special Seating, Walking Stick
 - Allows Switch, Eye Gaze, Head-tracking
- Sensory Needs
 - Hearing aids, magnifier, Braille, Voice recognition, Text-to-Speech, Navigation systems

So what's Assistive Technology?

- Communication needs
 - Communication aids, symbol-based systems, synthetic speech
- Cognitive Needs
 - Memory Aids, Alarm systems, Pendant Alarms, Falls Detectors, Smoke, Gas & Water (Flood) Detectors
- Special Educational Needs – dyslexia, autism, dyspraxia

So what' s Assistive Technology?

- Emotional & mental health needs
 - Smartphone support for mental health
 - Monitoring of mood and behaviours
 - Encouraging independence

So what' s Assistive Technology?

- It also includes:
 - More sophisticated support of vulnerable groups (e.g. telecare)
 - People living at home with LTC' s (telehealth)
 - Ambient Assisted Living – Home or Away
 - Brain computer interfaces
 - Robotic assistants at home

So what's Assistive Technology?

- It also includes
 - Tap turners



- ‘Magiplug’



- Doesn't always have to be high-tech!

So what's Assistive Technology?

- Some people call it:
- Adaptive technology
- Personalised technology
- Etc etc etc...

A little bit about FAST

- www.fastuk.org
- Founded in 1997 to promote AT
- Online database of Research
- ~1500 Projects
- Also list Events, Jobs
- Policy Newsletter
- R&D Newsletter

A little bit about FAST

- Annual Parliamentary Report for DH
- Since 2001
- Analysis of what is going on in Research
- Showcase good Projects
- Examines current govt policy

A little bit about FAST

- Resources about –
- Workforce development
- Service standards
- Managing Memory
- Ageing & Active Living
- Accessing AT information

Research and Development in Assistive Technology?

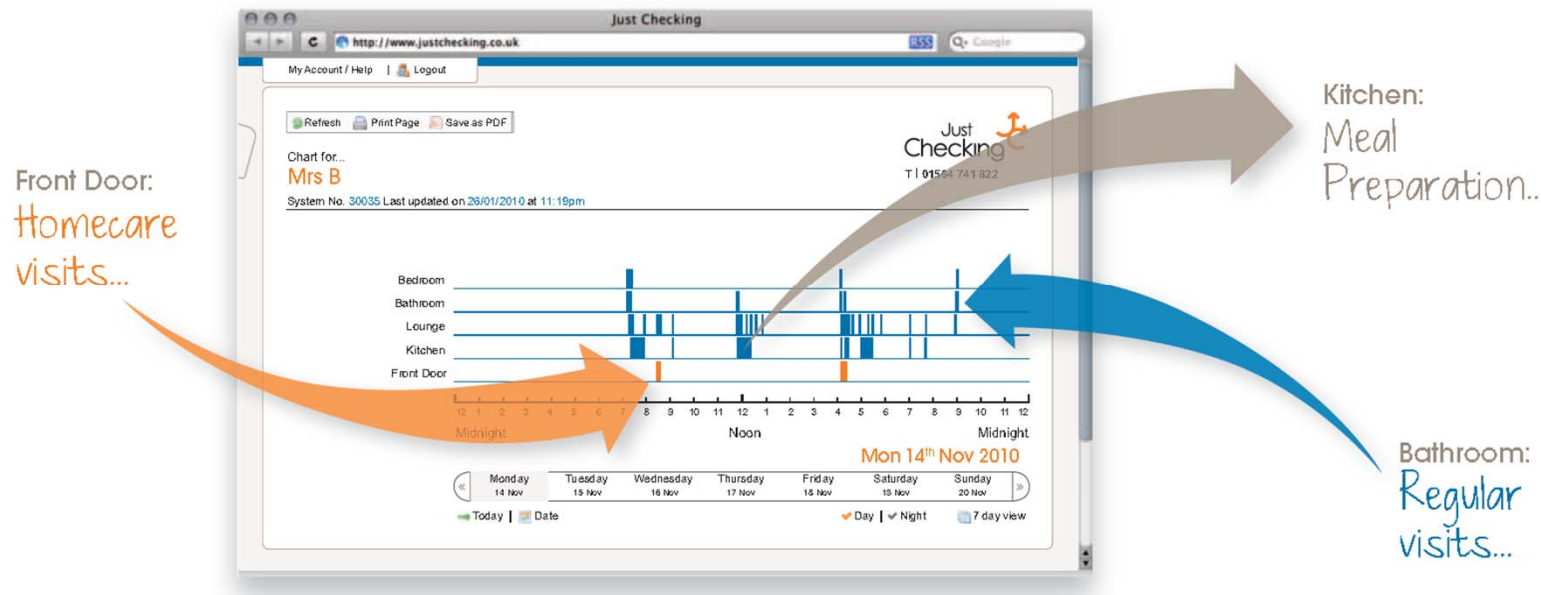
- Covers many of the areas mentioned
- Always changing in focus
- Once a very wide remit of research
- Across physical, sensory and cognitive needs

Research and Development in Assistive Technology?

- Change because of Demographics
- Keeping people supported, but at home
- Particularly that of the ageing population
- And LTC' s – Stroke, Diabetes, COPD, Sensory
- Still good work being done but some narrowing of focus

Research and Development in Assistive Technology?

- Just Checking



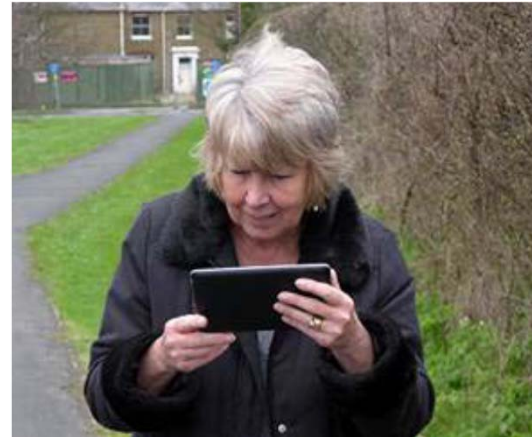
Research and Development in Assistive Technology?

- Mylife Project



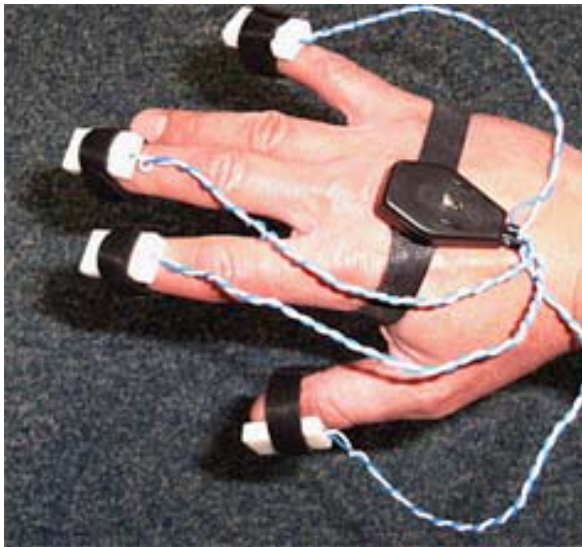
Research and Development in Assistive Technology?

- Freedom to Roam Project



Research and Development in Assistive Technology?

- Wii Star Project – Stroke Rehabilitation



Research and Development in Assistive Technology?

- SRS Project – Robots!



Funding

- Primarily obtained through the state
- DH directly
- NHS
- RCUK
- mainly EPSRC
- EU – Horizon 2020
- Local government
- TSB – Technology Strategy Board

Measuring success?

- 1500 projects on FAST website
- About 30 tangible products/services
- Is that bad?
- Purpose of R&D to make products?
- Or to stretch boundaries?
- Blue skies R&D?
- Or should we be 'innovative' and focus on products?
- Be more commercial?

Measuring success?

- Funding has become more difficult to get
- More pressures to achieve what?
- What happens after prototype?

Dissemination

- The need to let others know
- Routes to publicity
- Not just journals!
- Not just academic conferences!
- Social media – Twitter, Facebook, Blogs

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Thank you!

Any Questions?

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