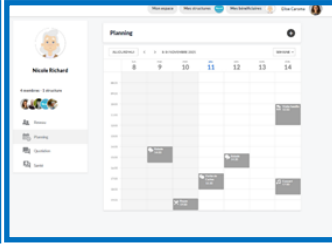


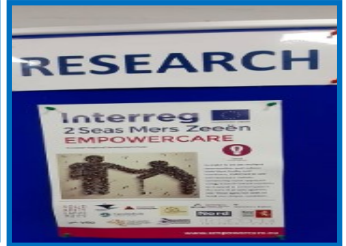
**Top stories in this newsletter...**



**Family Help introduces the Hybrid Family Care Project.**



**Le Département du Nord has tested the first version of the new digital tool application**



**CCCU begins collection of mid-point evaluation data**

**Update on EMPOWERCARE**

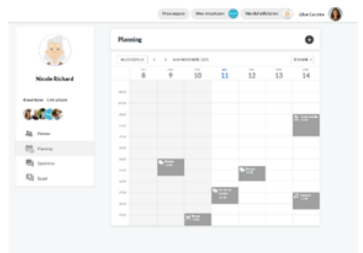
Since our last newsletter the EMPOWERCARE partnership have:

- ◆ Held our first annual event virtually on 8th November 2021. The event included updates on partners pilot schemes and workshops on the empowerment strategy, competency framework and technology blueprint. It was a great opportunity to share the project and get input from colleagues, partners and other stakeholders.
- ◆ Drafted the Empowerment Strategy and Competency Framework, to be finalised and shared in the next few months.
- ◆ Project partners have completed their baseline evaluation surveys and are ready to move onto the next phase, holding focus groups with the workforce and end users. The workshops will gather feedback and ask questions about the value and future of tech support for older people.
- ◆ VITO and University of Brighton have created a Technology Blueprint tool, the tool will help an organisation implement technology enabled care for older people. It is currently being reviewed by partners and will be tested with the workforce before finalising.

**Update Department du Nord - Making the most of digital tools**

The intervention of Département du Nord is progressing thanks to the energy of all the members of the project team. Le Nord professionals, partners, carers, researchers and technology providers are all involved in this action-research process to help people age well. The Workforce meet regularly in small groups to discuss their professional practices and transformation in the context of the EMPOWERCARE project.

The method has been laid out in an action plan and the intervention phase on the pilot site is well underway. The elderly are supported by the project team who listen, stimulate and support them in the realisation of their needs, with an approach that promotes empowerment. Once the needs of the elderly are known the social network and community are mobilised. The effects of this intervention will have a real impact on the individuals health care.



The use of the digital tool aims to promote empowerment through the expression of aspirations, and synergy between the members of the network and the community. The first version of this application was built by Wello, after discussions with the various stakeholders and the identification of the needs of older people within the framework of the action research. The Workforce have received the appropriate training and the technology will be tested by the elderly people, and supported by carers and professionals. Drawing upon the outcomes of this technology testing, the application will be improved and appropriate support will be put in place.

Project manager Laurence, presented the EMPOWERCARE project on a local radio station in Dunkirk, entitled "What if we listened to our elders to build better together? ". Laurence talked about the intervention of Le Nord on its pilot site. You can find the podcast of the programme (in French!), [here](#).

## Update from Kent County Council

**Kent County Council have continued to deliver their EMPOWERCARE pilot scheme, in Kent they offer:**

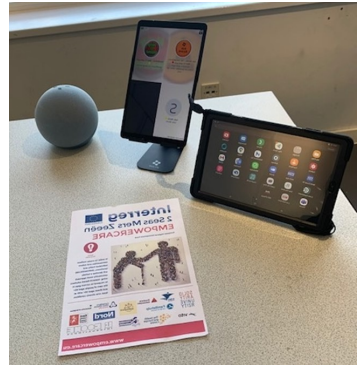
- Digital Ambassador volunteer scheme – offering digital skills training.
- Tech loan scheme – 3 month trial loans of Samsung Tablets, KARA Carephone and Alexa's.
- 2x Technology for Independent Living Facilitator's (TILF's) in post to support the Adult Social Care workforce.

So far 16 Digital Ambassador volunteers have supported over 70 people with digital skills, in 1-2-1s and group sessions held in community centres.

They have also loaned 15/20 Tablets and launched the Alexa in January already loaning 3/10 to older people in the community.

Our Tech Facilitators have been working hard to support the workforce in thinking digital for approaches to care. So far they have promoted and delivered training on assistive technology to over 400 of the Adult Social Care Workforce and received advice/information requests about technology from 154 workforce members.

KCC will continue to deliver support over the next 6 months, and plan to hold some technology demo events for the workforce in June.



## Update from The Province of Antwerp



**Supporting the workforce : new and innovative training and support package**

Loneliness, chronic illness and other vulnerabilities often result in social isolation. Healthcare and welfare professionals can make a big difference in these situations. But how can they empower and support vulnerable people to discover their own strengths and talents?

The Province of Antwerp, in collaboration with UCLL University of Applied Sciences, have developed within the EMPOWERCARE project, a training programme which seeks to encourage neighbourhood-oriented empowerment and thus empower these vulnerable individuals.

The training includes an individual online inspiration module and two collective workshops in participating neighbourhoods. It deals with issues such as: 'What is empowerment?' 'How can they do their work as professional in a way that empowers others?' and 'What is the potential role of the neighbourhood in this?'

This project is innovative as the training targets care and welfare professionals with different professions and within a variety of external organizations, but who are all active in the same neighbourhood.

There has been a lot of interest in the training with more than 40 neighbourhoods and interested parties applying to take part. Therefore, the province of Antwerp and UCLL have increased the number of planned pilots sites from two to six in Flanders.

The pilot training will run from March to May, and will be thoroughly evaluated with a possibility of follow-up training projects.

## Update From VITO

### Developing a Blueprint to guide the implementation of the 8 Caring Technology Principles in elderly care.

In recent months VITO have been working on developing an EMPOWERCARE Caring Technology Blueprint. This blueprint is a guideline for the implementation of Caring Technology in elderly care, based on the 8 Caring Technology Principles.

To ascertain what this guideline should look like, VITO have been collecting input via in-depth interviews with EMPOWERCARE partners during workshops at the Annual Event and with partners from Digital Zeeland during November 2021.

The input gathered from care organisations, (local) governments, technology developers, and research organisations contributes to an understanding of the current needs and expectations, and informs the design of the Caring Technology Blueprint. In the coming months, the Technology Blueprint will be developed in the form of a hands-on online tool to guide the practical implementation of Caring Technology in elderly care. The basic design of the tool will be tested by EMPOWERCARE partners.



VITO have started a new project called “Zorglens” (“Care Lens”) in collaboration with care organisation Familiehulp and the living and care lab (LiCalab) funded by the King Bau-douin Foundation. The project will allow an expansion of the networking and implementation of the eight guiding principles, as well as raising European awareness on the topic.

## Update from Solidarity University—SWVO

### Growing interest in Digital at Home and Digital Active

Digitaal Thuis was initially presented to people via carers, as it was believed that home care workers were best equipped to assess whether an elderly client would benefit from technological aids. This restriction has been lifted and elderly people have been asked via the media and other informal contacts to participate. This has resulted in increased numbers of elderly people involved in the pilot, where they will experiment with digital aids at home. EMPOWERCARE will monitor and learn from their experiences.

In the digital adult day care programme offered by Digitaal Actief (Digitally Active), Care professionals have offered adult digital day care to their own clients starting in September 2021 and is still ongoing. Joint activities will also now be offered, and other groups are beginning to use the digital platform. One example is a group that cannot meet in their village’s community hall due to Covid-19 restrictions. SWVO is curious to see whether and how the platform will help this group.

Students will help create content for the digital platform, which should result in a greater variety of activities.

A T health meeting will be held in the village of Sint-Maartensdijk where SWVO is actively involved in the project Tuus in Smerdiek.

Inhabitants will meet up to learn more about various tech options which can make their lives at home safer and more comfortable.



This still is from a YouTube video on EMPOWER-CARE. You can find it [here](#)

## Update from CCCU

### Sharing all things EMPOWERCARE with the University community and beyond

The Canterbury Christ Church (CCCU) evaluation team have been busy over the autumn/winter period sharing news about the EMPOWERCARE project at three University Open Days. The events were held across both the Canterbury and Medway campuses and were aimed at recruiting prospective students. Footfall was high at around 750 people over the three days, with a mixture of prospective students, their parents, grandparents and carers in attendance. The team are also in the middle of developing learning and teaching materials for a workshop they will be running in June 2022 for around 200 undergraduate Faculty of Medicine, Health and Social Care students. The students are registered in a wide range of different Faculty programmes including Adult, Child and Mental Health Nursing, Midwifery, Occupational Therapy, Radiography and Social Work.

Students will be joining the workshop as part of their Virtual Practice Learning week. The aim of the workshop will be to share project news as well as information about aspects of the evaluation. Students will have an opportunity to explore the evaluation results to date and contribute their reflections and insights.

The next few months will see the collection of mid-point data for the evaluation and so it will be an eventful phase for both the evaluation and delivery site teams. A particularly exciting part of this will be the Photovoice data as these will be used to set up exhibitions of photographs taken by service users to which community stakeholders will be invited to reflect on experiences and perceptions of the EMPOWERCARE partner interventions.



The CCCU team have submitted an abstract to the International Conference on Integrated Care (ICIC2022) that is taking place in Denmark in May 2022. If accepted their paper will present the evaluation strategy for EMPOWERCARE, showing how the design will deliver a theory-driven rich explanation of what works about EMPOWERCARE, for whom it works, and in what circumstances.

## Update from the University of Brighton

### Vibrant discussions at First Festive EMPOWERCARE seminar

Several seminars have been organised with stakeholders such as the Leach Court Healthy Living Lab residents; A supported housing scheme offering a safe, enjoyable and well-maintained living environment to senior residents living in the Brighton area (UK). Providing support to residents to live and age well and remain independent.

A successful first meeting took place before Christmas where the University of Brighton partners met with 12 residents to discuss the EMPOWERCARE project. During vibrant discussions, residents shared their needs, understanding, expectations and experiences surrounding



digital health technology. It was an opportunity to hear about some of the challenges senior citizen experience when engaging with technology and it was an opportunity to share the EMPOWERCARE project and learn about the types of technology that might address some of their concerns.

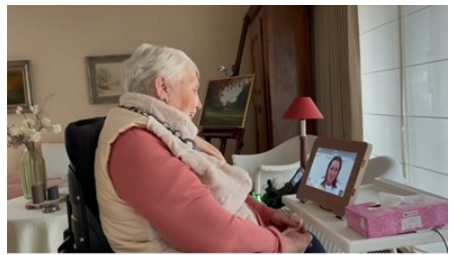
## Update from Family Help

### The Hybrid Family care Project

After the success of the introduction of tablets as an innovative communication tool, Family Help is starting a follow-up project for its family care customers, in line with the EMPOWERCARE approach. Through the 'hybrid family care' project, Family Help will also support them remotely, increase their social contacts, reduce their loneliness and help them in developing their digital capacities.

In 2021, Family Help started a tablet project as a technical trial in EMPOWERCARE to contribute to the technological Blueprint.. “10 customers received a Compaan tablet with which they could make video calls with family, friends and our carers,” says Céline Mys, product manager care policy at Family Help. “This project was an example of services within a hybrid model, in which physical care on site with (preventive) care at a distance are combined. The pandemic made it clear that people who live alone have a higher risk of loneliness. By making tablets available to them, they can easily and regularly connect with family, friends and caregivers.”

This year Family Help is taking a new step with the 'hybrid family care' project. “Family Help will supplement family care at home with digital care conversations, prevention and 24/7 permanence,” explains Céline Mys. “For example, Family Help are investigating how remote care can help achieve the customer's healthcare goals. An important aspect is the balance between regular care at home and online help.”



A conversation lasts about 15 to 30 minutes and is conducted by a family carer. “During the first project in 2021, it was identified that especially lonely customers were extra enthusiastic. They have been able to vent more often via digital means.” During the remote care via video Family Help also works on prevention, and specifically ask about aspects such as sleep, nutrition and exercise. Input via a message, a video or an exercise is also provided along with guaranteed 24/7 availability. In addition to the planned conversations, they can also call friends or family if they need a chat.

## Update from Holy Heart

### Toolbox—Encouraging independence

The Holy Hart pilot is starting to take shape. Five toolboxes are up and running and staff have received training. The project involves an intensive observation period with a multidisciplinary approach, offering integrated care and support utilising the toolbox. The multidisciplinary care and support plan provides a respite for informal carers; offers assistance when returning to the home environment or more suitable form of residential care.

Some of the activities already in progress include training; working group with professionals, users and volunteers; raising awareness of tools and technology and support groups.

