

Research into wearables technology set to transform the future of mental healthcare

More than 33 million people in the developed world have been diagnosed with affective health conditions

A pioneering European research consortium is seeking to revolutionise 'personalised' mental healthcare via the development of a new digital self-help platform

Lancaster, UK - September 5th 2017 - An international coalition of scientists are launching the AffecTech project, designed to create an innovative wearable technology platform to combat affective health disorders, notably depression, anxiety and bipolar disorder.

AffecTech gets underway September 2017 and aims to deliver an effective low cost 'self-help' technology platform to help sufferers of affective health conditions.

The four-year, 3.88 million Euro project will contribute cutting-edge research into wearable systems for emotion regulation, and advance understanding of how personalised technology can empower people to better understand their emotions and regulate them in daily life.

Led by Lancaster University's Professor Corina Sas in the UK, AffecTech brings together researchers from institutions across Europe, including Oxford University in the UK, the UK's NHS, Philips Research in the Netherlands; as well as a range of prestigious associate partners including Stanford University, Carnegie Melon University and University of California at Santa Cruz in the USA.

Professor Sas explains: "Affective disorders, such as stress, depression and bipolar conditions, are estimated to be among the highest ranking causes of disease by 2020. The potential social impact of wearable health devices for these disorders is vast because emotional awareness and regulation are invaluable for daily functioning."

"Our project marks a significant shift from current wearable technologies that capture emotional responses that then need interpreting by health professionals, to low-cost self-help technologies for visualising, exploring and regulating emotions that people

may be able to use in their daily lives.”

More than 33 million people in the developed world have been diagnosed with affective health conditions and the annual associated healthcare costs exceed 100 billion Euros.

Whilst current wearable technologies are being shown to help people take action to improve their mental health, there is huge potential to scale-up to more easily administered systems, providing not only longer-term benefits for patients, but delivering large-scale cost-savings for health services.

AffecTech Project

AffecTech is established with support from the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Network funded by European Commission H2020.

AffecTech Consortium: Lancaster University, UK (coordinator); Kungliga Tekniska Hoegskolan, Sweden; Trinity College Dublin, Ireland; University of Oxford, UK; Universita Di Pisa, Italy; Universitat Jaume I De Castellon, Spain; Universita Cattolica Del Sacro Cuore, Italy; Bogazici Universitesi, Turkey; Philips Electronics, Netherlands; The Leeds Teaching Hospitals National Health Service Trust, UK; Plux - Wireless Biosignals, Portugal.

AffecTech Associate Partners: Stanford University, Carnegie Melon University, University of California at Santa Cruz, University of New South Wales, Ericsson, LifeMote, dacadoo AG, Smartex SRL, Biosync Technology, Dovetailed Ltd, SilverCloud Health Ltd, Centro Clínico de Psicología, Istituto Auxologico Italiano, Codasign.