**Five North West tech firms secure a place at Digital | Health Days 2014 with winning ideas**

●     The first NW Digital Health Challenge sees five firms pitch winning ideas providing innovative tech ideas to solve health and social care problems

●     The Challenge builds on the region’s excellence in marrying digital innovation, health and social care

●     The winning teams will be in Stockholm for Digital | Health Days 2014 next week

An app designed to help remind people with dementia about their daily routines and keep them in their own homes; a memory jigsaw supporting the same people to connect with their family and friends; a sensor system to detect and prevent falls; a platform encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle; an app helping people track Personal Budgets. The winning ideas submitted by North West tech firms at the region’s first NW Digital Health Challenge provide innovative ideas to tackle some of society's biggest health and social care problems.

The Challenge, developed by LJMU’s Open Labs and So-Mo, saw 12 firms from around the region pitch ideas. The winning pitches will see their developers head to Stockholm for Digital | Health Days 2014 next week, with support provided by the UK’s SCience and Innovation Network. There they will be able to meet with their peers and hone their ideas as well as participating in a “catwalk” session allowing them to showcase their ideas and field questions from the audience.

The winning ideas are;

**Memory Enabling Technology by Citrus Suite** - Picture Frame Network or PFN is a system to aid the memory of daily routines and to promote independence for people living with dementia.  Up to six android tablets are set up in the user’s home, connected by Wi-Fi and positioned in key areas using text, audio and video messages to help with daily activities and customisable prompts to stimulate memory. When not being used the tablets can act as picture frames.

**Peace of Mind, Red Ninja** - An innovative, ambient, sensor system to detect and prevent falls. Using a passive sensor peace of mind works proactively and is suitable for vulnerable groups who are at higher risks of falls including people with learning disabilities, dementia and any kind of neurological condition or prior brain injury.

**Memory Jigsaw, Mashbo** - A memory enabling personalised application helping people to piece together old memories by following visual cues. This can be a recreational form of distraction therapy.

**Reward your world, RYW Community Systems** - A behaviour change platform built on an incentivations engine recording activities and measuring positive social, health and well-being. It encourages people to increase physical activity and well-being initiatives. Users can record activity and integrate behaviour into an activity database with goals and rewards providing motivations.

**SupportSpace, Future Coders** - An application designed to meet the needs of people with personal budgets and the government bodies funding them. It provides a marketplace for those who provide care and also a means of delivering an audit trail showing the budget has been spent correctly.

Increasingly digital technology solutions are being investigated to support the work of health practitioners. With tighter budgets but increasing need the goal is to find products that help people gain a greater independence, utilise technology to help them stay in their own homes for longer while effectively using the services they need.

The North West already leads the way in pairing creative and digital expertise with the health and social care sector with firms like Red Ninja and Citrus Suite leading the way. Liverpool in particular hosts an e-health community pilot project, investigating partnerships and prototyping technological solutions. Open Labs, funded by LJMU and ERDF, works as a broker marrying firms and health and social care providers helping the experience and expertise of both sides explore ideas and solutions.

Jason Taylor from Open Labs said, “We expected to hear from some of e-health’s leading digital minds and we weren’t disappointed. Liverpool in particular is breaking away from other UK cities when it comes to the investigation of innovative possibilities in health and social care. We have some of the best minds there are working on ways to keep people with dementia independent for longer, to help vulnerable groups become empowered and to help health providers offer their patients the highest quality of life they can. Digital Health 2014 will give these minds the opportunity to explore and refine their ideas further. It helps to bring the future a little closer”.

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Open Labs is funded by LJMU and the European Regional Development Fund. Its aim is to help businesses become more successful through innovation. <http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/openlabs/>

The partners for the North West Digital Health Challenge are; Liverpool Health Partner, Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group,  Mi (More Independent), North West Coast Academic Health Sector Network, Riverside Housing Association, Electronics, Sensors, Photonics Knowledge Transfer Network, Liverpool Vision, Net Boss Technologies Inc, UK SCience & Innovation Network, Innovate Dementia,

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Read more about the next step of the Digital Maze here <http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/APS/OpenLabs/128177.htm>