

DispATches - February 2018

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February 2018: Telecare smart watch aims to eliminate stigma, Lenovo Smart Display rivals the Amazon Echo, Select Committee explores the role of assistive technology in employment.

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Public policy, legislation and campaigns

Select Committee explores the role of assistive technology in employment

The House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee is to follow up its recent report on the disability employment gap with a [new inquiry into the role assistive technology](#) can play in helping disabled people secure and stay in work. The committee will be examining how the government can support the development of assistive technology and ask whether Access to Work is the most effective means of providing access to it.

Knowsley Council draws on behavioural science to boost assistive technology use

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council is [launching a pilot project](#) that will aim to harness behavioural science to increase the number of people using assistive technology at home. The £25,000 initiative will be spearheaded by social workers and focus on helping people overcome their negative perceptions of technological aids.

Study evaluates the user-friendliness of electronic fitness equipment for visually impaired people

The Thomas Pocklington Trust and Rica have published findings from their investigation into the development and provision of [electronic fitness equipment](#) for visually impaired people. The study looked at equipment such as treadmills, cross trainers, exercise bikes and rowing machines.

The Mobility Unlimited Challenge supports smart mobility devices for people with lower limb paralysis

Nesta has partnered with the Toyota Motability Foundation to [search for the most innovative assistive mobility devices](#) that support the independence of people with lower limb paralysis. The Mobility Unlimited Challenge will seek out devices that use smart technology to enhance the capabilities of the product.

Technological developments and innovations

Telecare smart watch aims to eliminate stigma

Home security and automation provider ADT has teamed up with Reemo Health and Samsung to [develop a personal response system](#) that works on Samsung smart watches. The system aims to remove the stigma around the clinical look and feel of most telecare and telehealth devices while providing easy access to assistance in the event of an emergency.

Electronic glove helps stimulate hand function

A Korean assistive technology company Neofect has developed a glove that can restore function for people with hand paralysis. The [NeoMano](#) consists of a glove connected to a rubber pad, which, when pressed by an elbow or arm, can activate the motion of the glove.

Remote assistance service for visually impaired people powered by smart glasses

A US based start-up has set up a service that connects blind and visually impaired people with a network of remote agents via wearable smart glasses and augmented reality dashboards to offer support with daily tasks and activities. [Aira](#) uses Google Glass technology to allow service users and agents interact as the latter receives tracking information and real-time footage from the device's camera.

Lenovo Smart Display rivals the Amazon Echo

Google and Lenovo have unveiled their answer to Amazon's growing suite of smart home devices. The [Lenovo Smart Display](#) is a tablet device that is designed to be operated by speaking to it and can help with a range of activities including controlling other smart appliances such as lights and thermostats, playing music and making phone calls.

Funding news

Champneys Foundation purchases equipment for individuals and organisations

[Champneys Health Resorts Charitable Foundation](#) provides grants to individuals and organisations across the UK. In the past, the charity has helped purchase specialist equipment such as wheelchairs, play and sensory room equipment, computers and car seats.

Comment from Clive, author of dispATches

The best way to harness assistive technology to close the disability employment gap is to promote it across all areas of life

Last December the House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee launched a new inquiry into the role assistive technology can play in helping disabled people succeed in the world of work. The inquiry



Training & events

Workshop on robotics and assistive technologies

Wednesday 31st March



Queen Mary University of London

A programme of speakers will address how robotics and assistive technologies can improve mobility for disabled people.

The Ideal Home Show 2018

Saturday 17th March –
Monday 2nd April



Olympia, London

A major lifestyle event showcasing the latest trends in home furnishings, interiors, renovations, gardens and accessories

Kidz to Adultz Middle

Thursday 15th March



Ricoh Arena, Coventry

One of the UK's largest exhibitions dedicated to disabled children and young people and their families, carers and the professionals who support them.