

# Dementia & Technology

## For People Living with Dementia in Scotland



### Introduction

**Technology is an everyday part of our lives! We also know that technology can be invaluable in helping people living with dementia to live a safe and healthy life.**

Technology can help manage risks, improve quality of life and support people to stay in their own home for as long as possible.

We all like to feel we are keeping well, doing as much as we can for ourselves and that we are as independent as we can be ... even in the smallest of ways. We all want to feel respected and that our strengths, gifts and talents are appreciated. Technology can support you to succeed in the things that matter to you and help you to be active, physically and socially.

A diagnosis of dementia does not mean you can't learn new skills. In fact, many people have found that a diagnosis of dementia has given them a reason to interact in new ways with technology and the internet. This can open up a world of possibilities that you might not even know was there.

This has been written for people living with dementia, their families, friends, carers and professionals and will give you some ideas and things to think about.

### Everyday Living

Living life as usual and maintaining our health, daily routines, patterns and rhythms all help us stay anchored in our lives. Technology can help you to maintain those routines, give you reminders to take medication, help you keep appointments, and make sure you don't miss that coffee with friends!

#### Why not think about...

- An electronic diary on your phone, tablet or computer.
- A medication pill dispenser.
- Speaking clocks and watches.
- Mobile apps: Any modern smartphone will be able to access applications that help you to eat healthily, track your footsteps, exercise and be aware of local events.



## Staying connected with Friends & Family

Staying in contact with family and friends can be a very important part of our lives. You don't have to feel alone... even if you live on your own.

There are technologies that can help you stay in touch with family and friends all over the world, engage in conversation, see photos, share interests and memories and talk to others in a variety of ways.

#### Why not think about...

- Skype, Facetime or other webcam/video conferencing media.
- Facebook, Twitter and other social media.
- Apps that help you create your own "circle of support" like Jointly, CareZapp and others.
- Apps that connect you via topics, hobbies and interests.
- Go online to see what activities and groups are going on near you using "Living It Up" for example.

## Feeling safe & secure in your home

Technology can keep you safe and well and reduce your risk of fire and accidents in the home.

Technology can also help you to keep doing things for yourself, like making a cup of tea, cooking a meal, controlling your door so that you can let in the people you know. This can give you, your family, friends and carers freedom and the confidence that you are as safe and secure as possible.

#### Why not think about...

- Technology enabled care such as community alarms, telecare and home health monitoring.
- Home environmental controls like Hive, My Lively, Nest and others.
- Falls and flood detectors.
- Lighting and movement sensors.
- Fire, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.
- Key safes and door alarms.
- Cooker controls.



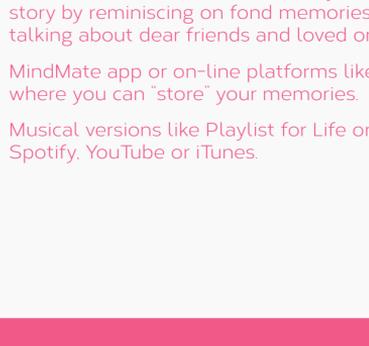
### Getting out & about

Technology can support you to go out and about and do the everyday things we all enjoy such as shopping, visiting places that matter to us and being with family and friends.

Walking and staying physically active is good for our health and wellbeing and technology can help you to get to where you want to go, reducing the worry associated with getting lost, or feeling lost and help us stay safe.

#### Why not think about...

- Fitness devices: Many of these exist and promote an active lifestyle.
- GPS and location technology: It allows you to be aware of where you are and can signal loved ones should you get lost. It gives everyone the reassurance that, should anything happen, the wearer of the technology can be found.
- Standalone equipment can be used or you can download apps on your phone. These give you the freedom to go where you want and keep you independent. You can get help, if and when you need it, and your family and carers always know you are safe.



## Having a Meaningful Life

We are all unique individuals with our own lifestyles and stories.

Technology can help you create and share information about your life story, your likes and dislikes and what makes you "you".

#### Why not think about...

- Life Story Books: A great variety of these are available. Become the narrator of your own story by reminiscing on fond memories or talking about dear friends and loved ones.
- MindMate app or on-line platforms like Storii where you can "store" your memories.
- Musical versions like Playlist for Life or use Spotify, YouTube or iTunes.

## Important things to think about

### Respecting your rights

Everyone's values, beliefs and circumstances are unique to them. There are few absolute "rights" and "wrongs" when considering the use of technology. It is important to think carefully about all the "pros" and "cons" and the quality of life you want.

We are all experts in our own lives. We all want to be treated with respect, have our values and rights honoured and have our views and opinions heard.

**Why not think about including the use of technology to support you in your future plans?**  
**For example, when having a conversation about your Power of Attorney or your post diagnostic support?**



### Want to find good information about technology for people living with dementia?

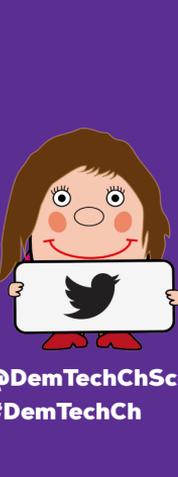
Dementia Circle is a good place to go for more information:

[www.dementiacircle.co.uk](http://www.dementiacircle.co.uk)

On this site you can find out about technology products and systems that can make life easier for you... and much more



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