

Epilepsy self-monitoring app joins the NHS Innovation Accelerator programme

November 14 2016, by Andrew Gould



EpSMon, the epilepsy self-monitoring app developed by a South West partnership including Plymouth University, is to join the NHS Innovation Accelerator programme. Credit: University of Plymouth

An app designed and developed in the South West and which is

benefiting the lives of thousands of people with epilepsy, EpSMon, is one of eight innovations to join the NHS Innovation Accelerator programme in its second year.

The NHS Innovation Accelerator (NIA) supports some of the best national and international healthcare innovators with evidence-based innovations to help improve health outcomes and give patients access to the latest products, services and technology at lower cost.

EpSMon is an [epilepsy](#) self-management tool which enables patients to monitor their well-being and know when to seek medical support, a behaviour change which could lead to a reduction in the number of deaths of people with epilepsy. It has been developed by a partnership including charity SUDEP Action, Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust and Plymouth University.

EpSMon is based on evidence from the SUDEP and Seizure Safety Checklist, a facility that enables clinicians to monitor changes in risk factors in their patients. The study from which this evidence was derived was funded by Kt's Fund, a charity set up in memory of Katie Hallet, a young nurse who died suddenly aged 20 from epilepsy.

The app, which was launched last year and which is available free of charge across mobile technology platforms, has won a tranche of industry awards. App developer and clinical psychologist Dr Craig Newman from Plymouth University is shortlisted for the prestigious Health Service Journal Rising Star award.

Epilepsy costs the UK £1.5 billion per year and is one of the top ten causes of death for those under the age of 70 and the third main cause of maternal deaths in the UK. This preventative tool could have a significant impact on the personal and financial costs of epilepsy through reductions in deaths and decrease in A&E appointments.

Dr Craig Newman, Research Fellow at Plymouth University Peninsula Schools of Medicine and Dentistry and who developed the app, said:

"This is great recognition for a self-monitoring tool which is already making a difference to people's lives. This is a true partnership project combining research, clinical expertise and condition knowledge."

Jane Hanna OBE, Chief Executive at SUDEP Action commented:

"This recognition by the NHS really helps to highlight EpSMon's significance and potential as a safety tool for people with epilepsy. Hopefully this will encourage even more users to download this free app."

Dr Rohit Shankar, Consultant Neuro-Psychiatrist at Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and medical lead for the SUDEP and Seizure Safety Checklist and EpSMon said:

"This is a proud milestone in the growing history of achievements of EpSMon. All the partners recognise this is the start of a very important journey. Not only can this journey transform the way people with epilepsy are cared for but could become a prototype for management of other chronic conditions."

The announcement was made in London by NHS England Medical Director Sir Bruce Keogh and Professor Robert Wachter, international expert on digital health.

Sir Bruce Keogh said:

"With rising demand and escalating costs, innovation is not an option but a necessity if we are to build a sustainable NHS. The innovations selected for this programme have the potential to deliver better value for

the taxpayer whilst making patient interactions with the NHS safer and more personal."

Professor Robert Wachter added:

"The work you are doing is extraordinarily important. I think it's the only way that the NHS will be able to achieve the goals of the Five Year Forward View and even beyond that to develop a health care system for the people of England and the UK that delivers the best, highest quality, safest, most satisfying, accessible care for the lowest possible cost."

Provided by University of Plymouth

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