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The Doctor Can See You Now

London, UK - 14 JUNE, 2007: Management of 3G Doctor, the world's first service to enable 3G video calling with Doctors, quoted within a Red Herring editorial announcing news of \$1 Billion of EU Research funding to study how technology can improve the lives of older citizens.



E.U. to Research Silver Surfers

By Peter Purton
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The European Union has earmarked more than \$1 billion for research into how technology can help improve the lives of its older citizens, money that in part will be shuffled to startups.

"Europe's aging population is a challenge for our job market and its social and health systems," said E.U. commissioner Viviane Reding. "But it is also an economic and social opportunity."

By 2020 a quarter of Europe's population will be over 65, and spending on pensions, healthcare, and long-term care is expected to triple by 2050, the EU says. At the same time, older Europeans are expected to be important consumers, with a combined wealth of €3 trillion (\$4 trillion).

One high-tech entrepreneur was particularly optimistic about the research program. "You have to ask yourself, how much money does it cost to go to a home to see what happened whenever a panic button is pushed?" said David Doherty, CEO of Irish startup 3G Doctor, a service offering patients personal medical consultations over 3G videophones. Technology offers the opportunity for a massive transformation of medical care, particularly of the elderly, said Mr. Doherty.

Blood pressure, heart rate and blood sugar levels could be constantly monitored, automatically, and relayed to medical experts via an individual's mobile phone, said Mr. Doherty. Medical professionals could even predict a medical crisis in this way and intervene appropriately, he said. The result, he pointed out, would not just be a better life for the individual but also reduced costs for society as a whole.

In addition to the research program, the E.U. announced an action plan designed to encourage older people to make better use of information and communications technologies. According to the E.U., only 10 percent of Europe's older people use the Internet. Many are deterred because of vision, hearing, or dexterity problems, it says. The action plan is designed to address technical and regulatory issues, to raise awareness of the issues, to share best practices between member states, and to encourage pilot projects in such areas as smart homes and independent-living applications.

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About 3G Doctor Limited

3G Doctor is a registered Doctor led service that provides UK adults (aged 18+) with affordable, private round the clock 3G Video Call access to their medical information and the advice of highly trained General Medical Council registered Primary Care Doctors. These carers are waiting to answer queries, diagnose medical problems and recommend treatments. The service is an important development in the mobile pervasive future of healthcare and has been created to help meet the evolving need for remote access to the regulated advice of qualified and registered Doctors.

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