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Martin Jeffries, Chief Marketing Officer, Tunstall Healthcare Group, was recently part of an expert panel at the Digital Health & Wellness Summit as part of the 4YFN Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2019 held in Barcelona on the 26th February. MWC Barcelona is the largest mobile event in the world, bringing together the latest innovations and leading-edge technology from more than 2,400 leading companies.

Mr Jeffries introduced Tunstall's new models of technology enabled health and care delivery which are being deployed around the world to improve the wellbeing of older people, and people with long term conditions or disabilities.

He highlighted the future opportunities offered by IP connectivity to support independent living and the power of data for prevention: "It gives us the possibility to monitor daily activities of our loved ones and ensure that they are fine". He added: "It allows us to obtain data, that if we analyse and learn from them, will allow us to anticipate and predict possible adverse events, risks or problems before they occur in the day to day lives of the users."

In addition to benefits for users, family members and carers, the use of telecare and digital health technology brings more efficient management and less use of social care and health sector resources. Mr Jeffries quoted the example of the Barcelona Teleassistance service: "In Barcelona, in seven years, the referral of elderly people to residential care has been reduced considerably. In fact, in 2018, older people using the telecare service in the city remained in their own homes 2.77 years longer than in 2011. In addition, admissions to hospitals and medical centres have been reduced, realising additional efficiencies."

Mr Jeffries then explored the evolution of telecare services from reactive, responding to emergencies in people's homes, towards data-based prediction of adverse events: "Monitoring and tracking through IP technology allow us to analyse the data exhaustively and thus anticipate what may happen, before it happens. A service that was reactive can become proactive, then customised to the needs of each person, ultimately becoming a predictive service".

Mr Jeffries also shared the results of the Quest for Quality in Care Homes, an initiative in Calderdale (England) which combined technology with a multi-disciplinary team in residential care homes in the region: "The use of Tunstall technology in care homes led to a 33% reduction in emergency hospital admissions and made savings equating to approximately 7,000 bed days over two years."

Belddyn Rees, vice-president of ECHAlliance, moderated the panel and other contributors included Stephen Ranjan (Roche Diabetes Care), Darren Ransley (Infocare) and Francisco Lupiáñez-Villanueva (Open Evidence).