Digital Wellness Services for Young Elderly: 
New Frontiers for Mobile Technology

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Panel Outline
The panel on Digital Wellness Services for the Young Elderly will address the needs for the young elderly to develop a sustained use of wellness routines in order to reduce the risk of suffering from functional impairment with advancing age. The young elderly is the age group 60-75 years, which is expected to be 97 million within the EU by 2020. Recent studies have shown that functional impairment in the young elderly age group will carry an increased risk for extensive functional impairment in the following, the senior 75+, age group at high and increasing cost for public health and social care. In Finland, with a population of 5.3 million, the cost for public health and social care for the ageing was 3.8 B€ in 2014.
Digital wellness services can be produced and delivered over mobile smartphones with back-end cloud service support. This will make the services ubiquitous, affordable and flexibly adaptive to a multitude of user needs – the services can be extensively tailored to very different user needs for young elderly from different countries, in different cultures, with different socio-economical background, with different technology skills, etc. Recent studies have shown that the mobile platform for the wellness services should be omnivore, i.e. it should connect to and support a wide variety of digital devices and services, for which there should be information and knowledge support from the cloud services. A first omnivore platform with 100+ interfaces has been developed and tested with young elderly in Finland.

The wellness services need to be adopted and used continuously by the young elderly for wellness routines to be formed and sustained. This requires the development of new forms for user centred design of digital services – a co-creation of digital wellness services with the young elderly. The services can be sustained only if there is an ecosystem of service developers, digital platform and cloud services developers and operators, information and knowledge developers and providers, wellness consultants and trainers, system integrators with public health and social care systems, etc. In other words, the ecosystems for digital wellness services offer embryos for a wellness service industry; there is demand from a potential market of 97 million consumers in the EU countries (and about 1 billion consumers globally) for wellness solutions that are win-win-win: (i) wellness services will improve the quality of life for the young elderly [“it is nicer to get older if you are in good shape”]; (ii) sustainable wellness routines will reduce the risk for functional impairment with increasing age, which will have a significant impact on the development of the cost for public health and social care; (iii) the growth of digital wellness services will offer revenue streams for hundreds (first, then thousands) of SMEs that form the digital wellness ecosystems.

The panel will explore several challenges and opportunities for digital wellness services: the development of mobile technology, the design of digital wellness services, the distribution and adoption of wellness services among the young elderly, the forming of wellness routines through sustainable wellness services, the impact of wellness routines on the risk for functional impairment, the forming of ecosystems for digital wellness services – and probably a number of emerging, new issues.

The Panel will be open to all Conference participants who are welcome to follow and comment on the introductions by the panellists and to contribute findings, experience, ideas and proposals to the theme of the Panel [which is an ongoing research program].