

Promoting Social Connectedness through New and Innovative Communication Platforms

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WP 4.1: CONNECT TECH

PURPOSE

To reduce social isolation among Canadian seniors, and to improve their quality of life, through the use of technologies, in collaboration with families, friends and caregivers

OBJECTIVES

- To create new technologies for seniors to help them stay connected with families and friends, including communication software, Intelligent personal assistants, and wearable peripherals
- To collect evidence on whether such technologies can effectively reduce social isolation and consequently improve cognitive functions and health



Can We Create a Happier and Healthier Future for the Elderly with Innovative Communication and Assistive Technologies?

MAIN ACTIVITIES

- Develop **InTouch** communications platform for seniors:
 - Asynchronous and broadcast messaging
 - Intelligent personal assistant
 - Wearables for activity tracking and fall risk assessment
 - Extending communication seamlessly to smartwatches
- Carry out field trials to test performance and efficacy of InTouch in reducing isolation and improving seniors' well-being
- Commercialize InTouch in partnership with **famli.net**
- Develop and test a socially assistive robot to promote social connectedness

NEXT STEPS

- Expand field trials to individuals with dementia
- Continue development of **InTouch** and polish features based on feedback from field trials
- Collect evidence on the effectiveness of **InTouch** in reducing social isolation and improving health
- Continue commercialization with **famli.net**
- Continue developing robot functionalities to engage users in socially stimulating activities/games

KEY TAKEAWAY

Social isolation kills. We are here to prevent it.