TEC
V●ICE

Navigating The Extended Deadline For The Digital Switchover

Taking the necessary steps to adapt effectively

Introducing TSA's New Governance Framework

Taking A Person Centred Approach To Supporting Older Tenants

May 2024

The voice of Technology Enabled Care

Alyson Scurfield
TSA Chief Executive

I want to begin this issue of TEC Voice by saying a huge thank you to Paul Burstow, who, after eight years as President and Chair of TSA, has announced his decision to step down.

In March, Paul chaired yet another inspiring ITEC with the passion, vision and insight he has brought to so many of our conferences. In the boardroom, his leadership and knowledge has been central to the growth of TSA. Externally, Paul's sector experience and networks have helped to drive our profile and reputation.

As we wish Paul all the best, we also begin a new chapter of governance for TSA. From 1 July, three strategic groups will guide our decision-making and direction as the UK's national industry and advisory body for TEC. Find out about our new governance structure on page 10 and stay tuned as we announce the members who'll be making key decisions.

One of the major issues they'll be considering is the digital switchover. We know the multiple challenges TEC service providers face as they test and upgrade their TEC equipment and we have launched a series of brand new work programmes to support our members every step of the way.

I now sit on the Telecare Action Board (TAB), a national group involving telecoms companies, TEC service providers, the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
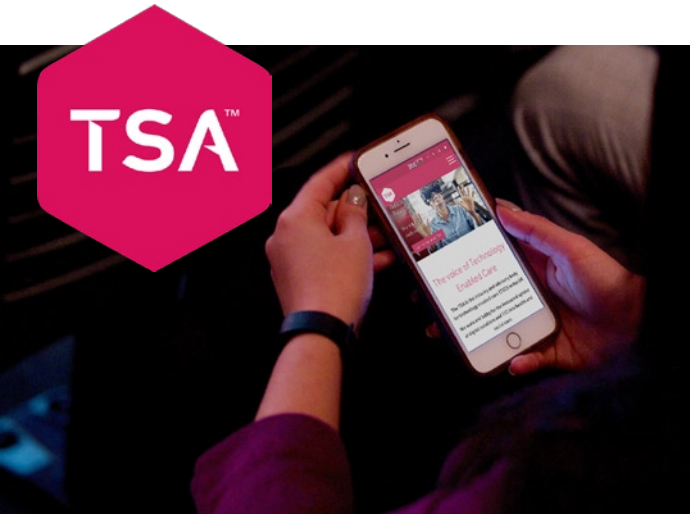
TAB is all about co-ordination between telecoms providers and telecare providers and, with cross-Government departments at the table, A2D is beginning to get the high-level recognition it requires. Turn to page 8 to find out how TSA is driving this work.

We've also set up an exciting programme in Greater Manchester to build a co-ordinated process for identifying, risk-profiling and safely migrating vulnerable people to digital. This is all about ensuring a safe, smooth, speedy process and creating guidance, standards and training that can be rolled out nationally. More information on page 8.

With BT Group (Openreach) extending the digital switchover deadline to 31 January 2027, we explore the implications and necessary steps telecare service providers must take to adapt effectively. Read more on page 6.

Last but not least, it was great to be back in Durham at the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board's housing and health conference, My home, My care, My way earlier this month.

Seeing people who work across health, care and housing, along with individuals with lived experience, all pooling their knowledge and designing new care approaches with TEC at their heart is so inspiring. I look forward to developing even closer partnerships with NHS, social care and housing organisations in coming months.

I hope you enjoy this issue of TEC Voice.

[signature]

tsa-voice.org.uk

@TSAVoice

TSA - The voice of Technology Enabled Care

TSA - The voice of Technology Enabled Care

Celebrating a Legacy of Leadership: Paul Burstow Steps Down from TSA

As we mark a significant and important transition within governance at TSA, it is with gratitude that we celebrate the contributions of Paul Burstow, who has announced his decision to step down from his role as President and Chair of TSA CIC after 8 years of service.

Rt Hon Prof.
Paul Burstow

During his time with TSA Paul has contributed to the growth of the organisation and its increased reach and reputation. TSA has become a strategic convenor and leader in the health and care sector, advocating for the role that technology can play in delivering better outcomes for people.

Commenting, Paul said, "I am proud of the strategic work that I have done with Alyson Scurfield and the Board, developing TSA as a strong and independent voice for technology enabled care and establishing TEC Quality as a unique UKAS accredited quality standards body. In addition, TSA governance is strong and diverse with board members appointed on merit."

"I wish Alyson and the Board every success and will continue to advocate for the contribution that TEC can make to transforming care."

Paul decided to step down after another highly successful TSA Conference so he can direct more of his time into his other roles.

Alyson Scurfield, TSA Chief Executive Officer, said, "Paul has been a great champion for the sector. He leaves the TSA in a strong place and we wish him well for the future."

Paul's vision and leadership have been pivotal in shaping the strategic direction of TSA. His commitment to excellence and innovation has strengthened TSA's role within the technology enabled care sector, bringing about substantial advancements in the quality and efficiency of services delivered across the UK.

We are pleased to announce that Professor Roy Sandbach OBE, a distinguished member of TSA's board, will take up the role of Interim Chair of TSA. Roy brings a wealth of experience and a proven track record of strategic leadership to his role, and is known for his deep commitment to innovation and his extensive expertise in the health and technology sectors,

His leadership is anticipated to enrich our governance framework, ensuring that TSA continues to lead and adapt in an ever-evolving landscape of technology-enabled care. His forward-thinking approach will be instrumental in steering our initiatives towards achieving impactful and sustainable outcomes for the sector.

Looking to the future, TSA is poised to embark on an exciting new chapter. With the refreshing of our governance structure from 1 July 2024 (see page 10), we are enhancing our focus on strategic foresight and innovative responses to sector challenges.

As we bid farewell to Paul, TSA extends heartfelt thanks for his remarkable leadership and dedication. His legacy will undoubtedly influence the organisation for years to come. We wish Paul all the best in his future endeavours and look forward to his continued advocacy for technology's role in transforming care.

'My Home, My Care, My Way'

We are delighted to reflect on the recent 'My Home, My Care, My Way' event held at Ramside Hall Hotel, Golf & Spa. This inspiring gathering was a collaborative effort by TSA, the Northern Housing Consortium, ADASS, and the North East and North Cumbria NHS, showcasing the vital connections between housing, health, and care.

The event commenced with an invigorating keynote by Sir David Pearson, Chair of TEC Quality, who emphasised the paramount importance of better housing for community well-being. Following this, Alyson Scurfield, Chief Executive of TSA, delivered a compelling message on the significance of building robust foundations for Technology Enabled Care (TEC) services and Urgent Community Response (UCR). Notably, she shared a remarkable statistic: 85% of participants in a collaborative programme run by Warrington Borough Council remained at home as a result of integration between TEC and UCRs.

The day was filled with many more hugely inspiring speakers and intriguing content, sparking dynamic discussions and innovative ideas. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Ramside Hall, our dedicated organisers, and all enthusiastic attendees. We are proud of the shared vision of people living in their own homes on their own terms.

Medequip Connect launch their new TEC Service Hub

We were pleased to be at the launch of the The Medequip Connect (**Medequip**) Technology Enabled Care Shop & TEC Service Hub, which is now officially open.

Located at Unit 1, Lower Square, Civic Offices, St Nicholas Way, this hub represents a significant advancement in support for independent living.

With a range of innovative products and a dedicated team, Medequip Connect are helping to transform the landscape of care technology and are proud to be working in partnership with **London Borough of Sutton**, **Access Technology Enabled Care** and **Sutton Housing Partnership**.

Navigating the Extended Timeline for Digital Switchover

The digital transformation of phone networks from analogue to digital systems is a significant endeavour that impacts many sectors, including, as we all know very well, Technology Enabled Care (TEC). Recently, Openreach announced a revision in the deadline for this transformation, extending it from the initial target of 31 December 2025 to 31 January 2027. This article outlines the implications of this extension and the necessary steps telecare service providers must take to adapt effectively.

Continued Urgency in Migration Efforts

Despite the extension of the digital switchover deadline, we emphasise the importance of maintaining momentum in migration efforts. This new timeline should not be perceived as a pause but as a strategic extension to ensure that the migration process is comprehensive and minimally disruptive. The extension provides a realistic framework for completing the migration tasks, reflecting the complexities involved in such a vast national transition.

Risk Management Amid Extended Deadlines

As the transformation of Openreach's phone networks continues, the reliability of analogue TEC systems over digital phone lines is decreasing. This ongoing change underscores the urgency of transitioning to reliable digital solutions sooner rather than later. The risks associated with delayed migration, such as increased failed call rates in analogue systems, could have dire consequences, particularly for vulnerable populations relying on TEC services.

Additional Transitional Products

BT have launched their Pre-Digital Phone Line (PDPL) to support certain customers during the migration period. Whilst the PDPL will mitigate against some of the challenges posed by the migration (Engineer Visits, Routers, Battery Backups not required), the challenge

of the reliability of analogue Telecare protocols over the core IP network still remains. BT cannot control the end to end journey of analogue Telecare calls over the entire UK telecommunications network so much more testing of connectivity from PDPL lines to other networks is planned and results will be shared over the summer of 2024, in advance of product launch in October 2024. The lifespan for the PDPL is until 2030 at the latest and this product is intended as a temporary 'Product of Last Resort' for problematic analogue to digital cases rather than a mainstream solution.

Varied Deadlines Across Providers

It's important to note that different telecommunication providers may have varying timelines. For example, we believe that Virgin Media O2 will still aim to complete its migration by the end of December 2025. It is therefore crucial that migration efforts continue at pace.

TSA's Supportive Role

To aid stakeholders in this transition, we offer a variety of resources and guidance:
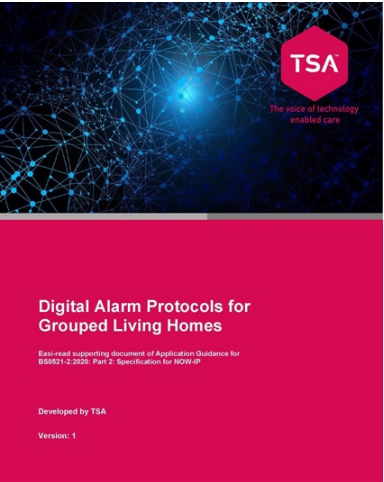
- **A2D Migration Tools:**
  As the independent advisory body for the technology enabled care (TEC) sector we've created comprehensive information and guidance on our website www.tsa-voice.org.uk/campaigns/digital-shift/ We also run a digital helpdesk for anyone, from a local authority telecare monitoring service to a member of the public, to contact if they have an analogue to digital query, including support around telecoms outages. We also hold regular surgeries where care organisations can get free advice about the switchover issues they are facing. Get in touch with TSA here: allip@tsa-voice.org.uk

- **Testing and Collaboration:**
  Continual testing of analogue equipment on digital networks is vital. TSA encourages telecare service providers to engage with telecoms providers for testing and to share their findings to promote collective learning and preparedness.

Digital Alarm Protocols for Grouped Living Homes

Commissioner/Buyer Guidance: Transitioning your Social Alarms Systems from Analogue to Digital — The End of Analogue Purchasing

THE IMPACT OF ANALOGUE TO DIGITAL MIGRATION ON TECHNOLOGY ENABLED CARE

Ensuring Safety and Quality

The extension of the migration deadline does not imply a relaxation in standards. On the contrary, it is a critical period to ensure that all TEC service providers adhere strictly to their migration plans and are certified through TEC Quality's Quality Standards Framework (QSF). This certification is crucial to ensure that quality and safety measures are rigorously maintained during the transition.

Conclusion

As the deadline for the digital switchover extends, the TSA urges all stakeholders in the TEC sector not to become complacent but to use this time to enhance their preparations and ensure a smooth transition. By doing so, they can safeguard the functionality and reliability of TEC services, ultimately protecting those who depend on them most.

For more information, email: allip@tsa-voice.org.uk

TEC digital transition: Building better cross-industry collaboration

With the telecoms industry switching off the analogue Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) to deliver all calls over the digital broadband network in future, it's important that TEC providers work with telecoms providers to support customers throughout this digital migration.

Late last year, the Government launched a Telecoms Charter, which saw phone providers come together and commit to better protect vulnerable customers and those using telecare during the migration.

Since then, TSA's CEO Alyson Scurfield has been working closely with telecoms providers and officials across Government to develop enhanced protections and processes so vulnerable people can be safely migrated to digital landlines.

We know this is a major concern for our sector. TSA's recent annual survey of risks and opportunities ranked digital migration and digital unreliability as the biggest challenges faced by the sector.

Our goal is to ensure that TEC service providers can safely navigate the digital migration, at scale and at pace, and we are working to support you to do this in a number of ways.

Telecare Action Board

Alyson, along with TSA's head of membership services, Charlotte Dugdale, and TSA's business strategy and transformation associate, Tim Mulrey, all sit on a newly formed national group – the Telecare Action Board (TAB).

Jointly established by telecoms providers such as Virgin Media O2, BT, TalkTalk and Vodafone UK, along with Government, TAB includes representatives from TEC service providers, Ofcom, Openreach, the Local Government Association (LGA) and others.

TAB promotes co-ordination amongst key players in the digital switchover, and Alyson, Charlotte and Tim are making sure the views of the TEC sector are heard loud and clear – particularly the logistical and financial risks you face.

A smarter way forward – Greater Manchester programme with Virgin Media O2

TSA, in partnership with Virgin Media O2, will be undertaking a new programme in Greater Manchester. This will see us work together to develop a blueprint for the safe, smooth and speedy migration of telecare customers that can be rolled out nationally, with supporting guidance, training and standards – all to be made available later this year.

This programme will be focused on:

- **Working together to identify those most at risk:**
  including those who live alone, who don't have any other means of communication and who have comorbidities or reduced mobility. This information can then be used by TEC service providers, local authorities and housing associations to prioritise people for alternative services, devices and battery-backed mobile connections. TSA will then create guidance, mapping out a straightforward, scalable risk-profiling process that avoids creating a new assessment bottleneck. We'll also work with TEC Quality on elements to be mandated in the Quality Standards Framework.
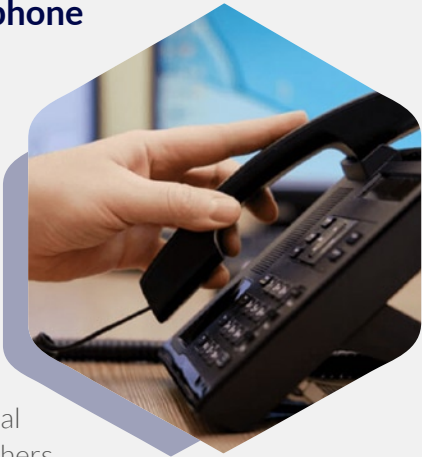
- **Improving communications between telecoms and telecare providers:**
  we'll be developing data sharing agreements between providers so they can work together to ensure customers' telecare devices are fully functioning after migration.

- **Building the resilience of digital TEC:**
  we'll define the sub-systems that underpin TEC services and then identify requirements for resilience standards around these sub-systems. This will help TEC providers to comply with standards for the 'Resilience of TEC Services and Alarm Receiving Centres (ARC)'.

TSA will be communicating findings from the Greater Manchester programme to TEC service providers and commissioners across the UK. We'll be targeting the chain of professionals involved in communications and TEC delivery processes to ensure the right training is in place.

As we start this piece of work, we urge any TEC service provider operating in Greater Manchester to come forward so they can help make this activity a success.

Monitoring and review

TSA is capturing baseline digital migration data around this work, along with ongoing trends. Risks will be monitored, and mitigating actions put in place. Surveys of TEC service providers and people drawing on telecare will inform the development of this work.

Support for TEC service providers

We want members to know that we will support and guide you every step of the way. Whether you need advice on testing equipment, working with telecoms providers, identifying vulnerable customers, or training your TEC engineers and call handlers, please get in touch.

- There's comprehensive digital migration information and guidance on our website:
  www.tsa-voice.org.uk/campaigns/digital-shift/

- Download our **Guidance** and **Checklist** for any TEC Commissioners and Buyers transitioning social alarms systems from analogue to digital.

- We hold surgeries where care organisations can get free advice about switchover issues.

- We run a digital helpdesk for anyone, from a local authority telecare monitoring service to a member of the public, to contact if they have an analogue to digital query, including support around telecoms outages.
  E: allip@tsa-voice.org.uk T: 01625 520 320

- If you require 1-1 support to discuss your digital migration plans, please contact the TSA membership team on: membership@tsa-voice.org.uk

Introducing TSA's New Governance Framework

TSA is excited to announce a significant enhancement to our governance structure, set to take effect from 1 July 2024. This strategic evolution marks a new chapter in our commitment to fostering innovation and strategic foresight within the technology-enabled care sector.

> **We are at a real inflexion point for health and care across society. If we look forward 10-15 years, how we look after ourselves will have fundamentally changed - and technology will be at the heart of enabling that change.**
>
> **Simon Arnold**
> Member of the TSA Board and Chair of the Strategic Futures Advisory Committee

The new governance framework includes the introduction of several key initiatives designed to propel TSA towards achieving even greater impact. These include the Strategic Futures Advisory Committee (SFAC), the Sector Risk and Innovation Group (SRIG), and the dynamic Innovation and Challenge Panel. Each of these entities has been established to drive proactive, innovative solutions that will benefit not only TSA but the wider sector as well.

Simon Arnold, Member of the TSA Board and Chair of the Strategic Futures Advisory Committee, expressed his enthusiasm about the new structure – "We are at a real inflexion point for health and care across society. If we look forward 10-15 years, how we look after ourselves will have fundamentally changed - and technology will be at the heart of enabling that change.

"These changes, which we have made for the TSA, will give us the chance to scan the horizon, broaden our thinking, influence policy-makers, prepare for the future and design solutions today, which set the foundation for tomorrow."

This evolution of our governance framework reflects TSA's ongoing dedication to excellence and strategic leadership in technology-enabled care. We are committed to continuing our role as a strong and independent voice within the sector, driving forward the advancements that will transform the landscape of technology enabled care.

As we continue to refine our governance framework and implement these crucial enhancements, TSA is preparing to announce the esteemed members of the Strategic Futures Advisory Committee, the Sector Risk and Innovation Group, and the Innovation and Challenge Panel. The appointment details will be revealed shortly, offering a glimpse into the future direction of our organisation.

We invite our stakeholders and the wider community to stay tuned for these exciting developments, as we remain committed to transparency and engagement throughout this transformative process.

NIHR | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Research Programme for Social Care

Did you know that the NIHR funds technology-enabled care research?

The National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) is a funder in the social care space and technology-enabled care is in scope in some calls.

The NIHR's ambition is to increase the availability and use of evidence in social care for the benefit of service users and carers and aims to do this by:

- Increasing the volume of, and access to, NIHR funding for social care research

- Providing better support for primary and secondary social care research

- Continuing to develop involvement of public, people who require social care, carers and practitioners

- Continuing to build capacity (and community) along the full career path for academic and practitioner researchers

- Bridge the gap between practice and academia: supporting research culture in practice (including awareness and take-up of evidence)

The dedicated Research Programme for Social Care (**https://www.nihr.ac.uk/explore-nihr/funding-programmes/research-programme-for-social-care.htm**) will issue a highlight notice in June to welcome research proposals in the area of technology enabled care. The call will be open to existing and new digital technologies, AI and devices and include all social care settings, adults and children support. Methods may be exploratory and/ or more experiential studies, qualitative or quantitative. The research must evaluate its benefits across the range of stakeholders involved and consider sustainability beyond the end of the activity. There is no funding limit and proposals can be for a maximum duration of 3 years.

If you are interested in hearing more, register for the launch webinar (announced shortly) which has a Q&A session. The webinar will also include the Research Support Service (RSS) Specialist Centre for Social Care. The RSS provides support to researchers of all levels of experience, to design and deliver innovative social care research.

Taking a person-centred approach to supporting older tenants

By Roy Sandbach

First shared in **Inside Housing** on 9 May 2024

Roy Sandbach, chair of Technology for our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation (TAPPI), shares learnings from TAPPI projects across the country

Why are older people always lumped together as "over 65s"? My mother is 95, I'm 70, and certainly we are ageing, but do we have the same day to day living needs? Or the same worries? Or the same aspirations? Obviously not. But we both want to live better for longer at home. Simple.

Roy Sandbach with residents at a Bield Housing and Care co-production meeting

Last year, I listened to Alice, an 88-year-old housing tenant in Scotland, telling me about her life. She explained that she might be slower than she used to be but she's still an individual and still knows what she wants. Companies providing care technology, Alice insisted, really need to ask older people what they want before they put (sometimes useless!) gadgets in place.

Alice's advice came through the TAPPI project (Technology for our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation). This inquiry, led by the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN) and the TEC Services Association (TSA) and funded by Dunhill Medical Trust, delivered a set of principles for technology use in housing. They are derived from deep, insightful conversations with older people and professionals who work with them. We've been testing these principles with six housing providers across the UK.

For the past two years, Bield Housing & Care, Haringey Council, Platform Housing Group, Pobl Group, Southend Care and Wiltshire Council have worked in partnership with their older tenants, testing technologies, and supporting individuals to choose and use devices.

It hasn't been an easy ride. I've seen the challenges around engaging older tenants, many wary of technology or lacking in confidence. It takes time, and trust.

But I've also seen benefits, often transformative. Staff at Southend Care told me about Rita, an older tenant with learning disabilities who, more confident with new wearable technology, took the bus to spend a day at the seafront, the furthest she'd travelled independently for five years.

I want to spread learnings from TAPPI so other housing providers can help older residents to live the lives they want to live.

Gary Baillie with residents at a Bield Housing and Care co-production meeting

1. Get the basics right

Ensuring homes have a reliable, affordable internet connection feels obvious, but many residents we worked with in sheltered, supported or extra care housing didn't have broadband.

Bield Housing & Care surveyed tenants across three sites and found 48% were unconnected to broadband, not by choice, but due to digital inequalities and a lack of understanding. In TAPPI, Bield prioritised digital literacy initiatives to address this digital divide early.

3. Make it seamless

Many residents were frustrated that specialist devices (like sensors and fall detectors) didn't work together or join up with the familiar consumer technology they already used. In South Wales, Pobl Group took an up-front approach, challenging their suppliers to ensure any care technology they provided was interoperable.

A resident at Harling Court, Platform Housing Group, testing equipment

Darshan Savani with a resident of Haringey Council
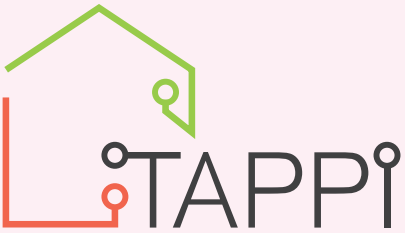
2. Co-produce early

All six housing providers found that taking time to involve tenants early in decisions about technology meant they were more likely to use it. Those that involved tenants after technology had been procured saw lower engagement.

A group of residents of Haringey Council try out their new equipment

4. Ensure it's affordable

The initial cost of devices can be an obstacle, along with ongoing expenses around broadband and maintenance. All six TAPPI housing providers put policies in place to overcome these problems. For example, Platform Housing Group trained retirement housing officers to identify residents who might benefit from tried and tested tech. This was then loaned out and if it proved beneficial, residents were signposted to funding or supported to buy it themselves.

TAPPI

5. Keep it safe

Many older residents had fears about online safety, particularly scams. Wiltshire Council tackled this by offering residents training sessions showing digital safeguards and protections with the aim of building their confidence and trust in technology.

6. Support, support, support

One vital project insight was the need for accessible, ongoing training so older tenants could grow their digital skills, at their own pace. This had a significant impact on engagement levels.

In North London, Haringey Council asked one of their tenants to become a TAPPI champion. She already used technology and began sharing her knowledge with fellow tenants, showing them how to use devices and answering their queries.

Near Edinburgh, Bield Housing & Care created an interactive 'digital hub' where residents explored technology using a hands-on approach. They're also looking to create a tenant technology guide, with basic hints and tips.

Marilyn and Mike, residents of Pobl Group

Darshan Savani with a resident of Haringey Council

All this is great operational work, but I also want to see wider, structural change.

Greater dialogue between housing providers, technology suppliers and local integrated care systems is vital, and creation of a vibrant consumer-facing marketplace for useful "independent living" technology would benefit older people and their families hugely.
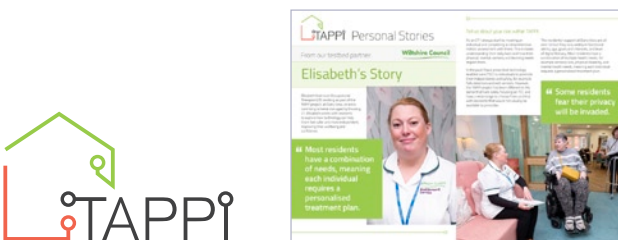
Beyond this, care technology should be integrated into training curricula for all housing staff and housing providers.

Last, but not least, whichever government takes office later this year, an Independent Living Strategy for older people, with housing and technology at heart, must be top of the agenda.

> Professor Roy Sandbach is Chair of TAPPI (Technology for our Ageing Population: Panel for Innovation). He is the former director of Newcastle University's National Innovation Centre for Ageing.

And remember, visit our TAPPI microsite, where you'll find the latest blogs, news, events and co-production resources:
www.housinglin.org.uk/TAPPI

Sony UK Technology Centre and 2iC-Care Redefine Supply Chain Resilience

The technology enabled care industry has faced supply chain disruptions due to semiconductor shortages and the pandemic. These create logistical nightmares for care providers, but service users also suffer. Take Mary, a vulnerable 82-year-old living at home; if the TEC she needs cannot be procured, Mary becomes disconnected, putting her safety at risk. To protect people like Mary, local authority TEC teams must prioritise supply chain resilience.

Alarm response and preventative TEC solution provider, 2iC-Care, is leading the charge to mitigate supply chain challenges by signing a manufacturing agreement with Sony UK Technology Centre.

"We are delighted to begin this journey as the manufacturing partner for 2iC-Care. Their mission to provide solutions for the wellbeing of our society strongly aligns with our own goal to build a sustainable future for all, so we are very excited to be working together," said Rob Wilson, Managing Director of Sony UK Technology Centre.

TEC teams can further strengthen their supply chain resilience by embracing interoperable technology which provides care peripheral flexibility. When supply chain constraints arise, flexibility enables providers to pivot. As the industry navigates uncertainties, prioritising adaptability is key to safeguarding care for vulnerable individuals, ensuring no one, including Mary, is left behind.

SAVE THE DATE 17 & 18 March 2025

As we look back on ITEC 2024, we're overwhelmed with gratitude for each and every participant who made this event not just a conference, but a milestone in the journey of technology-enabled care.

Now the dust has settled, we are already looking ahead to **#ITEC2025**!

Scheduled for **17-18 March 2025**, ITEC 2025 promises to be another step on our collective journey towards revolutionising care through technology.

STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAILS AT:
itecconf.org.uk

TSA

TM

The voice of technology
enabled care

The industry and advisory body for technology enabled care

TEC
Quality

Quality · Safety · Innovation

Embedding quality, safety and innovation in technology enabled care