

SILVER introduces mobile assistant robot for the elderly

SILVER project searches for new, innovative ways to acquire public sector health services by utilizing a Pre-Commercial Procurement (PCP) process. The goal is to find new technologies to assist the elderly enabling them to continue living independently at home. With mobile assistant robot LEA the elderly can enjoy homelife even if they have physical or cognitive disabilities.

By the summer of 2015, two of the three contractors successfully completed Phase 2 of the Pre-Commercial Procurement process and were invited to bid into Phase 3. Only Robot Care Systems passed the minimum threshold in this phase and was awarded a contract. Robot Care Systems has developed a mobile assistant robot named LEA (Lean elderly assistant).

Robot Care Systems will now prepare for the real-life testing of their solution in the SILVER municipalities. These tests will take place during the spring and summer of 2016 in all partnering countries: Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden and United Kingdom.

LEA is a care robot disguised as a stroller that provides a number of fully autonomous functions. LEA helps the elderly when getting out of bed or chair, when walking or holding a cup. LEA has a measuring function and reminds the elderly of the daily routine such as medication or food and drink. Thus, the elderly can longer function independently and caregivers have more time for social and specific care tasks.

LEA will be commercially available in 2016 and Robot Care Systems has high expectations regarding the market potential of their solution.

– So far, only very simple robotic devices have reached the market and that is mainly due to a very high price. In LEA we have achieved affordable price level by making very smart design that combines custom made electronics and mechanics with affordable sensors. In addition, we have equipped her with very intelligent software that can run on low-power computers, summarises Maja Rudinac, CEO of the Robot Care Systems.

There has been wide interest towards LEA and it has already succeeded in several innovation competitions. For example, Robot Care System won the Herman Wijffels Innovation Award in the Netherlands. The jury stated the following: “LEA is a care robot with a functional form and state-of-the-art technologies and capabilities. It does



not replace human contact, but ensures that older people can remain independent longer. The development is truly based on the needs of future users.”

SILVER consortium is very pleased with the current state of the project and procuring partners are eager to start the tests with LEA in their municipalities.

– Test phase will enable us to see the assistance LEA can provide around mobility and helping people living with Dementia. We are looking to test this in a care setting, day care provision as well peoples homes and looking forward to sharing results with a wider audience as Robot Care Systems get this exciting technology closer to market as well as looking to exploit possible scaling up solutions in the future, says Andy Bleaden, Stockport Council's Project Manager.

SILVER has the ambitious goal of establishing, and executing, the first multiple member state Pre-Commercial Procurement within the European Union. It aims to demonstrate the effectiveness of a Pre-Commercial Procurement approach when addressing societal and governmental needs. It also advocates wide implementation of the developed process in Europe. With the current status of the project, it seems that these objectives will be met.

More information

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SILVER (Supporting Independent LiVing for the Elderly through Robotics) is a development project to establish and to execute a Pre-Commercial Procurement (PCP) process suitable for the conditions in the EU countries. It is funded by the European Commission under the Seventh Framework Programme for research and technological development (FP7).

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