

Smart Bracelets Monitor Elderly Who Live Alone



Wearable devices are not only for tech-savvy young adults. A new smart bracelet can remotely monitor the health of elderly adults in real-time, and can alert health professionals in case of an emergency such as a fall or heart attack. The bracelet was designed by Francisco Lopez-Lira Fennel, the founder of Cualli Software, which hopes to market the device in Europe and the US.

Many older adults live alone, and Lopez-Lira Fennel wanted to provide a practical tool which would offer assurance to them and their families 24 hours a day in case of a health emergency. According to the National Statistics Institute, in Spain approximately 10 percent of households consist of adults over the age of 64 living alone. That figure may be even higher in other countries.

The smart bracelet monitors vital signs through the use of three sensors which measure movement, pulse and temperature. A cellular chip provides a connection to a 3G data network, so that emergency calls can be made to a doctor or call centre. Relatives or caregivers who do not live with the elderly person can download an app to their smartphones or tablets (Android and iOS systems) which connects them to the vital sign data. Measurements are uploaded to the cloud every 30 seconds, automatically.

The device cannot be classified as a smart watch since it does not have a touch screen or the ability to interact with social networks, says Lopez-Lira Fennel. However, its simplicity makes it easier to use for elderly individuals: there is only one button to press. Small speakers and a microphone enable communication if an emergency call must be made. Meanwhile, call centres and caretakers are able to monitor their vital signs through a complementary app.

Remote monitoring of elderly patients will become increasingly important as the population ages and care facilities struggle with capacity issues. The bracelet should relieve some of the burden on nurses and physicians when they are able to monitor patients at a distance. And, since the technology provides a three-month history of vital signs, health complications are more likely to be prevented.

The bracelet's design earned Lopez-Lira Fennel a spot on the list of 12 finalists out of 500 applicants in the fourth annual Pasion>IE competition for entrepreneurs; he is one of four finalists in the "Health of the Future" category. The competition is hosted by Accenture and IE Business School. Originally from Mexico, Lopez-Lira Fennel is a member of the Spanish chapter of the Mexican Talent Network.

Source: AlphaGalileo

Image Credit: Pixabay

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