

February's independent living technology news

Here's what's new in the world of independent living technology this month.

Public policy, legislation and campaigns

Industrial strategy to combat chronic illness through artificial intelligence

The government has unveiled plans to use [artificial intelligence and other technological innovations](#) to transform prevention and treatment of chronic illnesses over the next decade. The plans form part of the industrial strategy launched last year.

Britain and Japan join forces to develop new treatments and assistive products for degenerative diseases

Medical researchers in Britain and Japan are to collaborate to [advance research into new treatments and technologies](#) designed to help people with degenerative diseases live longer and healthier lives. The government-sponsored partnership will include a competition for businesses to develop new assisted living products employing artificial intelligence and robotics.

London Mayoralty publishes new smart city plan

The London Mayoralty has launched a roadmap to make London the 'smartest city in the world'. [Smarter London Together](#) will seek to coordinate the capital's boroughs, public services, universities and tech community to exploit the potential of digital technology and data, including developing new approaches to digital inclusion to support Londoners' access to public services.

Mobility Unlimited Challenge announces finalists

The Toyota Mobility Foundation and Nesta have announced the five finalists of the [three-year Mobility Unlimited Challenge](#) that aims to inject \$4 million into technologies that improve the lives of people with lower limb paralysis. Among the shortlisted entries are a leg covering designed to stimulate muscles to improve mobility, and an ultra-lightweight wheelchair that uses artificial intelligence to balance itself and eliminate painful vibrations.

Technological developments and innovations

The Air Chair to offer disabled passengers easier access to air travel

Two students from the United Arab Emirates have designed a new type of wheelchair for air travel that would save disabled passengers from having to transfer from one seat to another on the aircraft. [The Air Chair](#) would enable passengers to be pushed down the aisle of the aircraft and slide over the top of standard aeroplane seats, avoiding the inconvenience, discomfort and indignity associated with having to change chairs once on board.

Pillo launches smart medication dispenser

Health technology manufacturer Pillo have released a [new smart pill dispenser](#) for medication to help older people and those with long-term health conditions manage their intake. The device uses voice commands and artificial intelligence to interact with patients and remind them to take their daily doses, which it can also be used to store, dispense and re-order on preset schedules.

Hyundai develops in-car driving aids for people with hearing impairments

Car maker Hyundai has published a video of its [two new driver-assist systems](#) aimed at people with hearing impairments. The system converts noise to visual and tactile information to inform drivers of emergency vehicle sirens, car horns and other events that hearing-impaired people often find it difficult to react to.

Smart glove enables therapy through gaming

A South Korean company has created an internet of things-connected smart glove designed to help people with wrist and hand injuries heal quicker and easier. [Neofect's RAPAEL](#) is worn as patients play the video games designed to train hand muscles while removing the tedium of undertaking repetitive tasks. Clinicians can monitor data from the glove to track their patients' progress.

These stories were originally published in the dispATches newsletter – a free monthly e-mail about assistive technologies that empower disabled and older people to live more independently. [Click here to sign up for dispATches.](#)