# New and emerging technology for adult social care – the example of home sensors with artificial intelligence (AI) technology

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## Plain language summary

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# Plain language summary

## Our aim

Social care is facing pressures due to a lack of funding and staff and COVID-19. One way to ease pressures is by using digital technology.

We looked at a technology that places sensors around people's homes to monitor changes in daily activity, including how this technology was brought into social care and how it works.

## What we did

We reviewed evidence and spoke with experts (including people who draw on care and support) to finalise the study design. We then interviewed people from social care organisations, carers, technology developers and regulators.

## What we found

- Organisations expected the technology to do a lot, including preventing illness, assessing needs, supporting independent living, reassuring people drawing on care (and their carers) and saving money.
- Some social care decision-makers may not have the skills and understanding needed to make decisions about the use of new technology, and lacked a strategic approach to decision-making.
- It was difficult to collect the data needed to use the sensors correctly, which meant the technology did not meet expectations.
- Care staff were trained on how to use the sensors, although many struggled to make sense of the data they collected.
- Social care is often focused on dealing with a crisis, rather than preventing one. This means a culture change is needed to use the sensors properly.

## What it means

Our research confirmed challenges in using new technology in social care. We also found new problems, such as dealing with large amounts of health data, asking care staff to use this information without enough training, and introducing a technology focused on prevention into an environment which is focused on dealing with crises.

Our findings have helped to fill gaps in knowledge and will let us share practical learning with those introducing new technology in social care.

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