

## Welcome to the first edition of our new newsletter

*This is the first newsletter of DISCOVER. We will produce the DISCOVER newsletter four times a year to keep you informed about the progress of this important new support for carers. In this newsletter:*

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### What we have done so far

DISCOVER has come a long way since it was launched in Birmingham last year (2012). Our partners are working hard on finding the best ICT solutions to support people in their caring roles. We are developing on-line carers' resources to connect carers to the most appropriate services to match their particular needs, to provide instant access to online supports through the carers' discussion forum and through our dedicated carers' learning zone. Over the past six months we have been exploring and testing how best to deliver these supports on mobile devices such as iPhones and iPads as well as through internet services, digital televisions and many more besides. Our goal is to facilitate carers to experience the smart service that DISCOVER provides, with every carers need for information as unique and individualised as they are. We will begin testing of the DISCOVER service in a number of European countries. We will keep you up-to-date on how this is going through in the summer edition of our newsletter and with video clips from each of the countries and we hope you will contribute to developments. You can follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and chat to people, make friends, share ideas, ask questions, retweet, etc.

Join the national carers' conversation today and share your photos, videos, thoughts, tips and recommendations. Let's work together to make the best use of modern communication technologies to support carers and those they care for.

[Get in touch with us today](#)

[Share your ideas](#)

[Ask your questions in the DISCOVER Forum](#)

### Meet the partners

**Digital Birmingham**, a department of Birmingham City Council is responsible for coordinating and managing the DISCOVER project. All members of staff have extensive

experience of managing and delivering projects, collaborating with regional, national and international partners across the public, private and voluntary sector as required and most are qualified project or programme managers. Digital Birmingham will work together with sections in social care and training along with other organisations and partners to implement the DISCOVER services.

You can read more about Digital Birmingham from: <http://www.digitalbirmingham.co.uk>

**The Open University**, DISCOVER's research partner, is a world leader in flexible learning and has developed the unique supported open learning model to help learners fit studies around their other commitments. It is a model that is backed up with a wide tutor network of lecturers, online forums, tutorials, online conferencing, social networks and study groups. With this proven model of education, together with the OU's expertise and strong skills in research design, field work, data gathering and analysis, the OU is well-placed to engage skilfully with carers, ensuring their voices are reflected in the design at key stages of development.

The **Faculty of Health at Birmingham City University** is the largest provider of qualified health care professionals to health and social care providers in the West Midlands and enjoys high rates of employability following course completion.

Click [here](#) to read more about the Faculty of Health at BCU

**The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki** is the largest University in Greece; its Medical School is one of the largest in the South East Europe. On the project, Aristotle University will both pilot the DISCOVER service as well as offer their expertise to support the development of our virtual learning environment. Click on this link to see some of the technologies we are using in our 'virtual learning [environment](#)'.

Click [here](#) if you want to read more about the Aristotle University

**CASALA - Centre for Affective Solutions for Ambient Living Awareness.** CASALA collaborates and engages with industry, carers and older people to help deliver timely support and quality care in the home and the community through making the best use modern technologies. As a key partner on the DISCOVER project, CASALA will market the project's training content to care providers, care organisations, carer support organisations, local authorities and training providers to foster the use of smarter solutions for learning and for the delivery of social support. This will ensure that the DISCOVER is tailored to carers' needs and that stakeholder engagement and user involvement are at the centre of what we offer. We will develop a European Project Advisory Board and Local Steering Groups to mobilise stakeholders far beyond the delivery of the initial stages of the project.

You can read more about CASALA from: [www.casala.ie](http://www.casala.ie)

**Cetemmsa**, a technology centre in Mataró in Spain, has over 19 years experience in carrying out applied research on [Smart Materials](#) and [Smart Devices](#). As a partner on the DISCOVER project, Cetemmsa supports ICT technical integration as well as the design of the DISCOVER web site.

You can read more about Cetemmsa from: [www.cetemmsa.com](http://www.cetemmsa.com)

**INTRAS** is a non-profit organization dedicated to the social-health care of vulnerable people as well as developing high quality research on brain sciences. INTRAS has eight centres in three provinces of the Region of Castilla, León in Spain, with over 100 psychiatrists, psychologists and professionals in social, health and economic fields. On the DISCOVER project, INTRAS is one of the partners responsible for testing the DISCOVER services with local carers.

You can read more about INTRAS from: [www.intras.es](http://www.intras.es)

**Astra-Com** is a small company based in the Netherlands with over 25 year experience in the field of independent living and assistive technologies. On the DISCOVER project, Astra-Com will act as the participants of the test bed endeavour and support engagement with carers.

You can read more about Astra-Com from: [www.astra-com.nl](http://www.astra-com.nl)

## The technologies we are using

DISCOVER provides a virtual learning environment with interactive support that offers opportunities for the delivery of health and well-being education to match the individual needs of carers. At its most basic it can be used to connect carers to educational e-resources, such as text articles and book lists, tailored to support the individual learning needs of carers whether this involves supporting carers who wish to embark on a period of formal study or just to help carers to make informed choices about the needs of a vulnerable person. Then there is the option to engage in more lively, hands-on learning, designed to foster greater understanding through:

- ❖ our on-line carers discussion board to stimulate chat and foster a sense of community among carers to share ideas and learn from each other
- ❖ by developing collaborations between carer, care organisations, policymakers and the general public
- ❖ by helping carers get the best from the internet
- ❖ by providing facilities to uploading documents and working collaboratively with carers and services providers to encourage shared learning
- ❖ through on-line quizzes to gauge knowledge and level of understanding

The e-format used by DISCOVER allows carers to access support at a time and place of their choosing. Our online signposting to services also provide carers with the opportunity to learn about information sources at their own pace and when they need it most.

## Come along and meet us

We're well under way in our project now so, more than ever, we need your input and ideas on DISCOVER. Are we on the right track? Check our website and follow us on Twitter to read the results of our first pilots or tell us your thoughts and ideas on the best use of technologies to support carers.

We warmly welcome you to visit our website and our LinkedIn group, and dedicated discussion forum. These are the easiest ways to comment or discuss the ranges of issues for carers. Alternatively, send us your questions directly at: [birmingham@discover4carers.eu](mailto:birmingham@discover4carers.eu)

You can also read at which conferences DISCOVER will release results of the pilots and the difference our services is making to the lives of carers and those they care for. We hope to meet you there or sooner through our LinkedIn discussion forum!

We are looking forward to discussing care and caring matter with you.

The following events will be attended by DISCOVER members for information purposes, so make sure you make use of our presence to get informed!

### Key dates for your diary

- ❖ EU Summit on active and healthy ageing 2013  
<http://www.ahaconference2013.ie>
- ❖ [CARERS WEEK 10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> June 2013](#)