You may have picked up this book without knowing what “pervasive computing technology is”. Like me, you might think of using the pervasive technology in your life to find out. There, on the Internet, I discovered about mHealth and the use of mobile electronic devices for supporting public health and health care. I realised that I knew about all of this, all along. I just called it something else. I use my handheld electronic Sudoku to relax and my electronic diary to remember things. My hands-free car phone keeps me in touch with the family and fills in the long hours on the motorway, and lets me leave the office earlier. When I get dementia, which is a 50% possibility if I am lucky enough to reach 95 years old, I want to do as much as possible to care for myself, using technology with which I will be familiar. Even now, when I cannot find my reading glasses, why does my microwave rely on me being able to read the instructions for heating up my meal for one? Let the machine do it, please. I have got more important things to do with my life.

Care for people with dementia is, above all, about communication. The person with dementia is usually an older person, with the common sensory and physical impairments that often come with ageing, but with a reduced capacity to deal with them. Historically there has been very little information about dementia and how a person can live well with dementia. Thankfully dementia strategies internationally are making this better, but we still have a generation of health and social care workers who share a nihilistic view about the condition. Because the new information sources for carers are usually accessed after signposting from health and social care professionals, there is a delay in getting vital information and support out into systems. Now we recognise that the diagnosis of dementia is the first step towards being able to access help and support. Those charged with making a diagnosis are being asked to do it earlier and earlier, so the demand is going to rise even faster than the rise in prevalence of the condition.

This is one reason why this book is timely and exciting. Technology offers support for a number of the challenges of dementia. How can I deal with my memory not being so good? How can I stay in touch with the people who love me? What is there for me to do when my old past times start to get too difficult? This book could not be published at a better time. For those who are caring for others, or caring for themselves, it is vital that we use everything which is already at our disposal
to make living with dementia easier. In the future, particularly when there may be a reduction in the resource for public services, our quality of life will depend on it.

Stirling, Scotland

June Andrews
Contents

Part I  Background

1 Supporting People with Dementia Using Pervasive Healthcare Technologies ............................................ 3
   Maurice D. Mulvenna, Chris D. Nugent, Ferial Moelaert,
   David Craig, Rose-Marie Dröes, and Johan E. Bengtsson

2 Prevalence and Clinical Features of Dementia .................. 15
   David Craig, Franka Meiland, Peter Passmore, and
   Rose-Marie Dröes

3 State of the Art in Electronic Assistive Technologies for People with Dementia ........................................... 23
   Ricardo Castellot Lou, Angele Giuliano, and
   Maurice D. Mulvenna

4 Review of ICT-Based Services for Identified Unmet Needs in People with Dementia ........................................ 37
   Steve Lauriks, Annika Reinersmann,
   Henriëtte Geralde van der Roest, Franka Meiland,
   Richard Davies, Ferial Moelaert, Maurice D. Mulvenna,
   Chris D. Nugent, and Rose-Marie Dröes

5 Assistive Technologies and Issues Relating to Privacy, Ethics and Security .................................................. 63
   Suzanne Martin, Johan E. Bengtsson, and Rose-Marie Dröes

Part II  The Role of the User in the Design Process

6 Identifying User Needs and the Participative Design Process ......................................................... 79
   Franka Meiland, Rose-Marie Dröes, Stefan Sävenstedt,
   Birgitta Bergvall-Kåreborn, and Anna-Lena Andersson

7 Managing the Transition from User Studies to Functional Requirements to Technical Specification .................. 101
   Marike Hettinga, Chris D. Nugent, Richard Davies,
   Ferial Moelaert, Halgeir Holthe, and Anna-Lena Andersson
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Dementia-Related and Other Factors to Be Taken into Account When Developing ICT Support for People with Dementia – Lessons from Field Trials</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rose-Marie Dröes, Sanne Bentvelzen, Franka Meiland, and David Craig</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Part III  Pervasive Healthcare Technology</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The Role of Context-Aware Computing in Support of People with Dementia</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matthias Baumgarten and Maurice D. Mulvenna</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Prototyping Cognitive Prosthetics for People with Dementia</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Richard Davies, Chris D. Nugent, and Mark Donnelly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ICT Interface Design for Ageing People and People with Dementia</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jonathan Wallace, Maurice D. Mulvenna, Suzanne Martin, Sharon Stephens, and William Burns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Part IV  Evaluation and Assessment of Cognitive Prosthetics</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Practical Issues when Planning for Field Trials</td>
<td>191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Susanne Andersson and Anna-Lena Andersson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Evaluation of Cognitive Prosthetics</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stefan Sävenstedt, Franka Meiland, Rose-Marie Dröes, and Ferial Moelaert</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Measuring the Impact of Cognitive Prosthetics on the Daily Life of People with Dementia and Their Carers</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Franka Meiland, Rose-Marie Dröes, and Stefan Sävenstedt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Technology and Dementia: The Way Ahead</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jeffrey Kaye</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Index</strong></td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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