**David Kelly, Director, West Lothian Community Health & Care Partnership**

Many thanks for your invitation to input to this policy document. As you are aware, the area of your study is of keen interest to me both personally and within the context of my role as Director of the West Lothian Community Health & Care Partnership.

From my reading of the documents sent, you have adopted an holistic approach which seems to cover all the key areas. I have however, detailed some brief comments below based on my practical experiences which I hope are of some assistance/interest to you;

- There is an urgent need for an open platform to be developed for telecare technology to ensure that the introduction and implementation of technologies is not vendor led. Although many providers state that their technology is compatible with others, there always appears to be issues in terms of linking systems together, eg refusal of liability if a technical problem appears.

- The role of the built environment should not be underestimated. We are unlikely to be able to new build developments of 'Smart Homes' over the short to medium term, and will therefore be heavily dependent on retrofitting technology, or refurbishing existing accommodation. The technology should be unobtrusive in design and connectectivity. It should be remembered that the success of utilising the technology effectively will be dependent on service users accepting it within their homes, and obtaining their consent to do so.

- The potential uptake of the technology is heavily influenced by its acceptability to care staff also. The cultural changes for staff working within the healthcare and social care services are substantial, and this needs to be managed firmly with a clear vision of where you are trying to get to. Appropriate training, reassurance and staff support mechanisms require to be in place.

- integration of the technology with shared information and single shared assessment systems is key. How can the data be safely shared and transferred.

- Our experience of working with the technology suggests that it can play an extremely important role in our ability to address the needs of an ageing population, eg impacting on delayed hospital discharge figures. It has also been very successful in assisting us to support a broad range of other age groups and needs. We are continuing to roll this out as part of our mainstream profile of services, in partnership with a range of other support providers. As the profile of the technology service users and staff change over time, eg assume they become a more IT literate group, it will be interesting to identify if different concerns/issues emerge, and if so, what are these likely to be?