



*«The dedication of my colleagues in the project to our core users has been inspirational and educational. I have learned so much from many.»*

**Mike Burnard, InnoRenew CoE**

The Pharaon project attempts to do something very challenging: create a technological platform to link various devices, services, and solutions and allow for later growth and future sustainability. It is a deep and complex challenge, and the effort required is enormous. The technical hurdles are worth facing given the eventual outcome: more older adults will be able to access supportive technologies that offer quality of life improvements.

There is more that makes Pharaon special: the project's deep focus on user needs. The foundation for this focus stemmed from an effort to understand the emotional needs of the people we were serving and centred them in shaping our technology selection and platform design. This user-centric approach is one of the core values of the project and is woven in throughout the varied work the partners carry out.

The project's approach to ethics and data management are excellent examples of how the user remains central across all project activities. The project established an ethical approach<sup>1</sup> to research that elevates the dignity of our subjects – especially older adults – above just something to protect as a matter of process to an objective of all our development activities. This is further amplified by the data management approach in Pharaon. The project reframes data management – often seen as a burden – to an added value of the platform. In Pharaon, safe-guarding the data supplied by users is considered a value proposition of the solution, regardless of the data source.

<sup>1</sup> <https://tmj.unisa.it/journal/vol23/iss4/23/>

In the Slovenian pilot, we focus on two main aspects. First, understanding and improving resident health and wellbeing through improved indoor comfort and monitoring health and activity indicators. Second, we will simplify and increase communication between residents and their family, friends, and others outside the pilot site. Understanding the needs and concerns of users will help us deploy solutions that are more accepted, more widely used, and that will improve the quality of life for our participants.

The dedication of my colleagues in the project to our core users has been inspirational and educational. I have learned so much from many, and I'm sure I'm not the only partner who will take away a more careful and focused approach to including user perspectives the future.

As we develop our solutions further, I know I will find great pride in how Pharaon improves the quality of life of older adults and, their families, and caretakers. I take great comfort in knowing those achievements are due to the care and respect paid to users throughout the project.