IN THE YEAR 2060, the EC estimates people aged 65 or older will make up 30 per cent of Europe’s population. 65 is also the age at which major health issues, such as cancer and cardiovascular disease, start to become a bigger health concern in people’s lives.

If history is any indicator, this ageing population will be scheduling doctors’ appointments, dentistry work and surgeries for health issues across the board at an increasing rate. Many healthcare systems will not be able to cope with the added strain unless there is a fundamental change in their foundation. The EC believes that telehealth, which embeds telecommunication technologies into the health services and information sector, is the answer to this problem, and has consequently created an eHealth Action Plan win response.

To implement its eHealth Action Plan, the EC is transforming innovative ideas from scientists and researchers, like the ones featured in this issue, into practice. Their dedication and intelligence is inventing systems that can handle the vast data telehealth captures, which can then be translated back into their research to further improve healthcare.

This issue begins with a conversation with Dr Erio Ziglio, Head of the World Health Organization European Office for Investment for Health and Development. In this interview, he describes how policy making, scientific collaboration and eHealth technologies can be used to overcome social inequalities in health. Later in the issue, European Science Foundation’s Chief Executive Martin Hynes describes the potential of a new online database to help meet research funding and policy challenges. Finally, our exchange with Alzheimer Europe touches on the blooming trend to utilise hi-tech advancements to treat neurological disease patients with dignity.

We are working hard to build a dynamic community, bringing together a diverse range of researchers, funders, policy makers and commercial partners, to showcase the very best from across the research spectrum. Please don’t hesitate to get in touch to suggest further improvements, to enquire about a subscription, or to put forward your latest research development for consideration in our next publication.

Enjoy the issue.

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