



**Press release**  
**5 March 2008**

Pilot trial extended thanks to good experiences in Mikkeli:

**Med-O-Wheel Smart helps the elderly to live at home for longer and provides savings on care costs**

- Use of Med-O-Wheel Smart will be extended to at least August 2010

The ranks of the elderly are growing constantly, ushering in greater pressures to develop healthcare and services for the elderly. This is also the case in the City of Mikkeli. These pressures are further increased by the recommendations of Stakes, the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health, on the importance of preventative measures and the development of services that help the elderly live at home. The goal set by Stakes is for 90% of those over the age of 75 to live at home.

**Addoz Oy's medicine logistics service model, piloted in the ERNET project of the Mikkeli Hospital District, has proven itself to be an efficient and reliable means of ensuring that the live-at-home elderly, dementia patients and young diabetics, for example, take their medication on time. Med-O-Wheel Smart reminds live-at-home patients to take the prescribed dose at exactly the right time. The device also frees up time for home nursing staff to focus on other caregiving duties, and yields cost savings. The pilot trial carried out in the autumn in Mikkeli will be extended to 31 August 2010.**

Last autumn, urban residents in home care in the Etelä-Savo Hospital District were given the opportunity to use Med-O-Wheel Smart, developed by the Finnish company Addoz Oy as part of its medicine logistics service model. Med-O-Wheel Smart substantially improved the safety and accurate timing of medicine administration. Thanks to the device, it was no longer necessary for a home care nurse or relative to be on hand to see that the patient took his or her medication on time.\*

**Maija Paukkala**, the project manager of the ERNET project, is pleased with the medicine logistics service model. "The four-month trial confirmed that Med-O-Wheel Smart is safe and reliable. The system enables home care staff to devote more time to other caregiving duties," she says. "Med-O-Wheel Smart also has an extra safety feature - if a patient does not take his medication for whatever reason, the device alerts the Etelä-Savo medical call centre or his relatives. Med-O-Wheel Smart helps prevent the necessity for institutional care.

"Most of us want to live at home for as long as possible."

When patients are discharged from hospital care or a service home, they can be provided with a medication dispenser for home use, paid for by the city. Later on, this will become a supplementary service that's paid for by the client. It's intended that 25 new Med-O-Wheel Smart devices will be issued during the spring.



\* Studies indicate that Addoz Oy's Med-O-Wheel Smart increases on-time use of medication in the prescribed doses to 96.1 per cent. Ordinarily, only a third of drugs are taken at the right time, while a third are not taken at all.

### **Audio alarm indicates when it's time to take medication**

It's easy for those who are nursed or live at home to start using Med-O-Wheel Smart. First, a home nurse, pharmacy or relative programs the dose times into the Med-O-Wheel Smart and loads the dispenser with medication. This can be done at two-week intervals, for instance. Each day, Med-O-Wheel Smart sounds an audio alarm when it's time to take medication and dispenses the right amount. This prevents the patient from exceeding his dose or taking the wrong or contraindicated medication.

When he hears the audio alarm, the patient presses the dispensing button, and the device dispenses the prescribed dose of medication. If the patient does not take his medication for whatever reason, the device reminds him to do so with a flashing light and a warning tone. If the patient still does not respond, Med-O-Wheel Smart sends an alarm to the Etelä-Savo medical call centre or his relatives, who can then ensure that the medication is administered.

### **More security for patients and their relatives**

The mother of Mikkeli resident **Riitta Leikas** has Alzheimer's. She wants to live at home for as long as possible. The biochemical brain damage caused by Alzheimer's can be treated with medication - if the drugs are taken regularly and on time.

Until last autumn, her relatives pre-dosed her medication and reminded her to take it. Admission into the City of Mikkeli's Med-O-Wheel Smart project was an important step in her treatment.

"My mother has used Med-O-Wheel Smart for several months. Both she and we, her relatives, have been very happy with this system. It's a safe and reliable way to ensure that the medication is taken on time, even if the patient doesn't necessarily remember on her own," Riitta Leikas says.

The first time Riitta's mother used Med-O-Wheel Smart, it took a little bit of getting used to, but after that she has really taken to the device. "Med-O-Wheel Smart is on my mother's living room table where she can see it. She's happy with it because it ensures that she'll remember to take her medication. She definitely wouldn't want to go back to using an ordinary pillbox," Riitta Leikas adds.

"For us relatives, it's important to know that we'll get an alarm immediately if she doesn't take her medication. Now we don't have to worry about it every day. During the whole time she's used the device, we've only received one alarm. And even then, she was at a Christmas concert that went on longer than expected. Luckily, the situation was resolved with very little bother."



**Sari Kauppinen**, a home care nurse in Mikkeli, is pleased by the support provided by Med-O-Wheel Smart. “Relatives have thanked us for the security Med-O-Wheel Smart provides. It’s a real relief to them. This operating model will make our jobs easier, too. Our experiences in these first few months show that Med-O-Wheel Smart best serves those who retain mobility and memory.”

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