

Innovative mobile wireless applications in addressing the needs of people with disabilities

Date: Thursday 7th April 2005

Time: 18.00 for 18.30

Venue: Westminster University, Cavendish Campus, 115, New Cavendish Street, London W1W 6UW

Speaker:

Helena Mitchell, Ph.D.

Director

Office of Technology Policy & Programs (OTP)
and the Wireless RERC

Georgia Centers for Advanced Telecommunications Technology
USA

A free evening lecture, provided by the British Computer Society's Disability and Wireless Technology Groups.

Synopsis

In the United States, the community of people with disabilities and those with a connection to people with disabilities represents the largest minority population, almost 20%. According to the U.S. Census, an estimated 49.7 million men, women and children have a disability that impacts their everyday activities (Census 2003). Wireless technologies and mobile devices could be a key to helping persons with disabilities overcome the unique and diverse challenges they face.

In 2001 a major grant from the U.S. Department of Education led to the creation of the Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on Mobile Wireless Technologies for Persons with Disabilities (Wireless RERC). The Wireless RERC works to ensure equitable access to mobile wireless technologies by people with disabilities. Its activities are guided and evaluated by Constituent Advisory Groups made up of consumers, rehabilitation professionals and wireless industry representatives.

This presentation provided a brief overview of the activities of the Wireless RERC, their policy and research activities, results from their user surveys and the development of prototype technologies that can improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities were also presented.

Brian R Layzell MBCS CIP; MIHM; MRSH
Chairman
Disability Group
British Computer Society

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