

JSPS Report: Professor Dame Louise Robinson -Visiting professorship to Keio University, Tokyo, Japan

My personal research programme is focused on improving the health of older people, and the quality of health care they receive, especially those living with dementia. I lead 1 of only 3 Alzheimer's Society National Centres of Excellence in Dementia Care and also the first UK Global Health Dementia Care Group funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR). In addition, I am academic lead for the unique National Innovation Centre for Ageing (NICA), based at Newcastle University, where researchers, industry and the public and patients will come together to co-develop, and help bring to market, 'innovative products' to facilitate healthy and productive ageing. Early in my academic career, I recognised the potential of technologies to facilitate autonomy and independence for older people with dementia, and potentially reduce family carer anxiety and burden; this work provided me with the inspiration to create NICA, a £40 million centre due to open in early 2020.

The objectives of my visiting professorship were closely linked to my current roles and responsibilities and research interests. These were to:

- 1. Strengthen my research collaborations into the health and wellbeing of the very old, both with Japanese teams and more globally*
- 2. Experience dementia care and innovative service provision within Japan in order to compare and contrast with UK practice and*
- 3. Explore successful examples of co creation between academia, the public and industry in developing products and services to facilitate healthy ageing and independent living.*

Objective 1 - The TULIPS Consortium Conference 2019

The global TULIPS consortium brings together four international, longitudinal population cohort studies which explore health and wellbeing in the very old i.e. those 85 years and older. The conference brought together over 30 people from the four participating countries, with the majority attending in person and others joining in via Zoom or Skype. Early data analysis on potentially new areas for future work were also presented and potential topics for exploration and discussion at the TULIPS 2020 consortium meeting were identified.

Objective 2 – Dementia care and service provision

Examples included: Kamakura Living Lab and Sakura Community Centre which brings together the public, academic researchers, business and local government to develop solutions and products for real-life problems. This co-creation approach has now been transferred to develop over 30 living labs in Japan, which are collaborating with others, mainly in Europe and USA. One current project is being led jointly by Sweden and Japan and is addressing social isolation in people with cognitive impairment and dementia through a Community Centre project where participants are encouraged to work in the community rather than just take part in day centre activities

Objective 3 - SilverEco and Ageing Well event, Tokyo 2019

The annual SilverEco event brings together researchers with chief executives and managers from business, industry and Small Medium Enterprises (SME) to explore and better understand the social, economic and technical aspects of ageing through innovation, entrepreneurship and service provision. I was able to attend half of the 5 day conference including the SilverEco awards ceremony as two of my projects were shortlisted. I had the opportunity to meet with a wide range of businesses involved in developing technologies and products to facilitate healthy ageing and also similar like-minded academic researchers.