



Highlight:

ERC project on Euronews ahead of World Parkinson's Day

2 April 2012

On Thursday 5 April, Euronews will broadcast a programme highlighting a project financed by the European Research Council (ERC) (see the broadcasting schedule below). Ahead of World Parkinson's Day on 11 April 2012 the *Futuris* programme will provide TV viewers with some of the latest information about the leading scientific and technological research projects in the field in Europe, and report on some promising therapies. The programme will present the project of Cathy Craig, an ERC Starting grantee 2007, who aims to understand how the information we pick up through our senses influences the way we time our movements. This groundbreaking research offers real benefits for people affected by Parkinson's disease.

Euronews met Cathy Craig and her team of researchers at Queen's University in Belfast (UK) at the beginning of 2012. With her TEMPUS_G project Cathy Craig studies, amongst many other things, how sensory guides can improve balance and walking in people with Parkinson's disease.

The team has also looked at novel ways of improving gait in people with Parkinson's by developing ecologically-based sounds, such as walking along a gravel path, to help the brain guide and improve their movements. In addition to this, they have tried to harness the power of new gaming technology that uses movement as the game controller (e.g. the Nintendo Wii balance platform) to create, together with engineers, their own bespoke audio-visual games that train balance. Already tested with older adults, the latest results have shown significant improvements in both functional balance and balance confidence. These improvements in balance could help reduce the number of falls experienced by both people with Parkinson's and older adults, currently a significant burden on all healthcare systems.

"As we age, our balance ability declines. Unfortunately for people with Parkinson's disease their balance and general motor ability can decline very rapidly" said Cathy Craig. "What we're trying to do is essentially see how we can exploit this new technology to develop games that are more suited to older adults (and people with Parkinson's) so that they can use it to first and foremost have fun and also to train their balance."

No cure for Parkinson's disease is yet in sight, but such rehabilitation therapies represent a real hope to improve the general balance, the overall mobility and the quality of life of patients.

The *Futuris* programme on Parkinson's, which includes the Tempus_G project, will be on air from Tuesday 5 April to Wednesday 11 April with the following broadcasting schedule:

Days	Schedule (*)			
Thursday 5/04	02:45	18:45	--	--
Friday 6/04	01:45	09:45	13:45	--
Saturday 7/04	06:45	12:15	17:45	22:45
Sunday 8/04	10:45	14:45	20:45	--
Monday 9/04	09:15	18:45	--	--
Tuesday 10/04	01:45	13:15	18:15	--
Wedn 11/04	01:45	10:15	16:45	--



(*) All times are CET. The scheduled broadcasting can change or can be delayed in case of LIVE events.

The report will be accessible from Wednesday 4 April morning on www.euronews.net/futuris. The following week, it will also be possible to watch it on YouTube and other smaller regional streaming online websites.

Project's details:

ERC Grantee: Cathy Craig

Host Institution: Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK

ERC Project: Temporal Enhancement of Motor Performance Using Sensory Guides (TEMPUS_G)

ERC Call: Starting Grant 2007

ERC Funding: € 860,924 for five years

For more information on this project:

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/parl>

[Cathy Craig's demonstration](#) during the ERC's fifth anniversary (start from 01:16:44)

[ERC factsheet \(December 2011 – see p. 4\)](#)

[BBC report \(August 2011\)](#)

For more information on the ERC:

[ERC website](#)