Event Roundup:
Celebrating Innovation in the North of Tyne Region
A Recap of IoCT Highlights

Recognising Achievements and Promoting Inclusivity

The Celebration of Innovation in the North of Tyne, hosted by the National Innovation Centre for Ageing's Internet of Caring Things (IoCT) programme, brought together entrepreneurs, judges, and supporters to showcase advancements in the healthy ageing and longevity markets.

Opening Keynote: Ammar Mirza's Inspiring Journey

Ammar Mirza CBE set the stage with an inspiring keynote, recounting his personal journey with innovation and its crucial role in fostering inclusivity. He emphasised that innovation doesn't always have to be groundbreaking and highlighted the power of even small changes. Mirza introduced his Inclusive Innovation Framework, emphasising Data Analytics, Design Thinking, and Service Design supported by Communication, Collaboration, and Celebration.

Panel Insights: Judges' Perspectives on Innovation

Following the keynote, a panel session featuring judges Ammar Mirza CBE, Michael Dickens, Tracy Clarkson, and Antony Nicholson explored the state of innovation in the North East. The consensus was clear — the region's strength lies in its people, passion, and historical leadership in UK innovation, even if the landscape has evolved from industrial to more grassroots efforts.

Pitching: IoCT-Supported Companies Shine

Ten companies supported by the IoCT programme had the opportunity to pitch their innovations. The diversity of sectors represented showcased the programme's broad impact on the healthy ageing and longevity markets. Winners included Fiona Surrey from Flying High Digital Academy (Healthy Longevity Award), Neil Herron from Grid Smarter Cities (Healthy Planet Award), and Louise Thompson from Myfolks, securing the Voice's Choice award.

Innovative Solutions: Cross-Sector Longevity Market Impact

The pitching companies reflected the cross-sector diversity of the Longevity market. Flying High Digital Academy focuses on digital adoption by teaching user-centric technology use. Grid Smarter Cities addresses logistical challenges in caregiving through digital parking permissions. Myfolks aims to provide proactive care through its compassionate concierge service.

Networking and Collaborations

Beyond the pitches, the event facilitated valuable connections. Judges provided insights, and attendees, including providers and suppliers, offered advice and promised introductions. The atmosphere encouraged mutual support and potential partnerships, emphasising the collaborative spirit in the North of Tyne's innovation ecosystem.

Concluding Thoughts: A Year-End Celebration

The event concluded as a fitting celebration of the IoCT programme, delivered in partnership with CPI, Voice, and the North of Tyne Combined Authority. The winners, the pitches, and the collaborative spirit highlighted the region's commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and pushing the boundaries of what's possible.

As 2023 comes to a close, the IoCT programme looks forward to building on the successes of the past year. The event served as a testament to the vibrancy and resilience of the innovation landscape in the North of Tyne Region, setting the stage for even greater achievements in the coming year.