

Innovation in support services: FBK and Anffas Trentino are joining forces to bring technology into support services

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New technologies and artificial intelligence at the heart, of the framework agreement to improve interaction and increase choice opportunities for guests of Anffas Trentino Centers

Fondazione Bruno Kessler (FBK) and Anffas Trentino Onlus have signed a collaboration agreement combining technology and care experience to enhance services and improve the quality of life of guests in centers run by the Trentino Association of Families of People with Mental and/or Relational Disabilities. The three-year framework agreement was signed today at FBK's main offices on Via S. Croce in Trento by FBK secretary general **Andrea Simoni**, FBK's Center for Digital Health and Wellbeing director **Stefano Forti**, and newly appointed Anffas Trentino **Claudia Morelli**.

The press conference was also attended by the Councillor for Economic development, labor, university, and research **Achille Spinelli**, Anffas Trentino Scientific advisor **Tiziano Gomiero and Anna Giovanazzi**, coordinator for the Anffas Trentino therapeutic Hub Who have stretched the importance of this initiative, which is part of the activities of the competence Center for digital health **TrentinoSalute4.0**.

The partnership, started last year with a pilot study, becomes today an agreement that embraces all those projects for technology innovation that during this time will be dealt with by the activities of the two entities.

Operation activities will start right away and will focus on three mains: "Data Analytics", "VR-4-Anffas" and "Digital Skills":

- use artificial intelligence potential to improve the quality of customized services offered to ANFFAS center guests, based on the assessment of qualitative parameters, According to their needs (Data Analytics activities);
- Develop virtual reality technology solutions (with 3-D visors) that will help improve well-being (e.g. mental health) of guests thanks to customized immersive systems, Which will allow to

interact in controlled virtual environments (“VR-4-Anffas” activities);

- thanks to FBK researchers’ competencies, offer, consultancy, update, and training programs to Anffas operators on the use of innovative digital technologies (“Digital Skills” activities).

During the meeting, videos taken in recent months at the **Nuova Casa Serena** assisted living facility in Cognola di Trento during the preliminary pilot study **involving some thirty people with neurodevelopmental disorders and severe disabilities** in recent months, were shown.

“FBK has always aimed to consolidate its role as a research and innovation center in the service of people and the community, in line with its mission for an Artificial Intelligence that puts people at the center,” **Andrea Simoni**, FBK’s secretary general stressed at the opening. *“Models, such as the one tested with the partnership of Anffas Trentino, are an example of how the Foundation innovates together with local players and then replicates successful experiences in Trentino in other regional systems and other organizations. Where technology and AI meet health and social services, extraordinary opportunities arise to improve people’s lives and the work of health workers. This agreement is an example of how innovation can be applied for the common good”.*

“Collaborating with a technology partner, such as FBK offers us the opportunity to explore new frontiers in support and make our services even more effective And customized” – said **claudia Morelli** from Anffas Trentino.

“Combining FBK’s advanced technological expertise with Anffas Trentino’s experience in health care and education and social inclusion through artificial intelligence and virtual reality will make it possible to offer personalized services and improve the well-being of guests.” – **Stefano Forti** said.

Scientific advisor for Anffas Trentino **Tiziano Gomiero**, described the scope of research linked to new technologies in the fundamental orientation of support actions targeted to the needs of people with mental disabilities receiving care from the association. *“With FBK we started a scientific collaboration a few months ago that involves the application of artificial intelligence and machine learning methods to various types of data (health, behavioral, response to treatment/services) of people taken into care, with the aim of improving the opportunities offered in the quality of life domains of the people themselves and their families. This can be further improved and personalized through optimization of the response to needs and the provision of services more tailored to the needs and preferences of the person and his or her family,”* – **Gomiero”**

*“Devices pertaining to new technologies are often used to facilitate and promote psychosocial rehabilitation. In particular, the use of immersive virtual reality has allowed exposure to more immersive contexts and experiences, due to its ability to promote a sense of presence and immersiveness, as well as allow for multisensory stimulation similar to what occurs from experience in real-world settings.” – commented **Stefano Forti**.*

The functionality of using virtual reality and the possible purposes to benefit patients were described by **Anna Giovanazzi**, coordinator of the Therapeutic Hub of Anffas Trentino.

*“The ongoing experiments with ANFFAS with this type of customizable technology allow the most apathetic residents to be stimulated and entertained by stimulating and interactive virtual scenarios and conversely calm the most agitated and anxious residents. There were about 30 people who tested virtual reality” – **Anna Giovanazzi** detailed. “Of these, about ten agreed, vocalized and smiled during the trial, and three others showed motor and verbal activation. The effects of this early study convinced us to continue on this track“*

Lastly, at the closing of the meeting, Councillor **Achille Spinelli** mentioned that *“The collaboration between Fondazione Bruno Kessler and Anffas Trentino Onlus represents an important step forward in the promotion of technology innovation in the field of health and social services and our healthcare system. This agreement will not only enhance the services offered to the guests of Anffas centers in the Province, but will also contribute to the economic and social development of the Trentino community.”*

Scientific coordinators for FBK: Giuseppe Jurman and Oscar Mayora.

Scientific coordinators for Anffas: Tiziano Gomiero, Marco Bonfante.

Project in collaboration with

In his conclusions, Councillor Achille Spinelli finally mentioned how *“The collaboration between Fondazione Bruno Kessler and Anffas Trentino Onlus represents an important step forward in the promotion of technological innovation in the field of social assistance and our healthcare. This agreement will not only enhance the services offered to the guests of Anffas centers in the Province, but will also contribute to the economic and social development of the Trentino community.”*

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Project in collaboration with [TrentinoSalute4.0](#), the competence center for the development of digital health formed by the Autonomous Province of Trento, Azienda provinciale per i Servizi Sanitari and Fondazione Bruno Kessler.

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