NICCoLLA's project or how to improve healthcare through technology and knowledge

With the modern improvements in healthcare, quality of life and technology advancements, life expectancy kept growing. But there is no progress without effects and new problems showed up. From the NICCoLLA project, some of these actual problems were shown and prepared for students from different countries and fields of study, so new and innovative solutions can be developed through ongoing of their collaboration.

The NICCoLLA project requires different areas of knowledge to create a product that enhances people's lives. In the beginning, we had problems with our group because we had only students from one field of study, engineering. But soon this problem was solved with the arriving of a colleague from the social care area who gave us the experience that we need for this kind of project.

Once our team was finally completed, we started figuring out how to work as a group which was interesting since we had people with different fields of knowledge and we had to figure out how to compliment each other.

For our team, the challenge we were trying to solve was "Support medication taken by elderly persons and remind of medical appointments". In this challenge, a customer-oriented solution had to be developed for elderly people for helping them with their medication. Furthermore, that possible solution had also implied concerns about giving information, feedback and taking care of the user status through a user-friendly solution.

As a team, we had to face several challenges to create an appropriate solution. One of these problems was the ethics involved in collecting and showing data around. Another big problem we had was about keeping our users' privacy on a good level since we don't know much about laws in this area. We had to ask some professors about this, and with the information and little tips, they gave us we could figure out a way to resolve this.

In the development of the solution for this challenge, we learned about technology applied in health and social care, the actual legal paradigm for these kinds of products and the ethics we should consider for the development and usage of them.

In addition to that new knowledge, we also had the social component in the ongoing project. We have met people from other countries with whom we have spoken, laughed and, most important of all, we had the opportunity to enjoy the experience of an Erasmus project differently, even with the current limitations since we are not working in a face-to-face way. It has been an incredible experience that allowed us to discover new technologies, areas and of course, friends.