Annakarin Olsson is a registered nurse with experience in care for older persons and persons with dementia, both in Sweden and Norway. She also has engineering training in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and has worked as an engineer for several years. For the past five years, she has combined her doctoral studies with teaching of nursing theory and research methods in the Nursing Programme at the Faculty of Health and Occupational Studies, Department of Health and Caring Sciences, University of Gävle. The main focus of her research is on persons with dementia, their relatives and the use of information and communication technology in their daily life.

The overall aim was to describe how persons with dementia (PwDs) reflect on being outdoors and to investigate the support provided by a passive positioning alarm (PPA) in making daily life safer for PwDs and their spouses. The main findings showed that being outdoors was described by the PwDs as a confirmation of their identity, the ‘Self’. Confirmation of their ability to maintain desired activities, despite the dementia disease, was important to the PwDs. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) in the daily care of PwDs was expressed by the spouses as shifting between their own needs for safety and security and the perceived need for safety and security of the PwD. The PwDs and spouses use of a PPA showed changes over time, where testing and checking the PPA successively led to trust in the alarm and in one’s own ability to use and handle it. These conditions, along with prerequisites for and barriers to a usable PPA, were necessary for the couples to perceive the value of the alarm. Using the PPA consistently increased the independent outdoor activities for two PwDs. For the spouses, one consistently reported decreased worry during intervention phases, one spouse’s worry decreased only in the second intervention phase and one spouse showed little variability in worry across all phases. In summary, the results of the thesis show that use of a PPA in daily life among PwDs living in their own homes can give a sense of freedom, support and strengthen the feeling of independence for both PwDs and their spouses as well as give a feeling of safety and security for them both. Use of the PPA may also increase PwDs’ independent outdoor activities and decrease spouses’ worries.