



US Experiences in Welfare Technology

Presentation to DaneAge

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Long-Term Living

AARP Statement:

“Americans who have or develop disabilities as they age will live in homes and communities they choose and control decisions about services and technologies that enable them to live as independently as possible. People will look forward to long-term *living*, not long-term *care*.”

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Long-Term Living

- AARP's Public Policy Institute informs and stimulates public debate on the issues we face as we age.
- AARP's Office of International Affairs facilitates international policy discussion to shape the debate on global aging and highlight best practices.

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Focus

- Trends and the Role of Technology in Long Term Care and Caregiving in the United States – Policy
- Technologies Gaining Traction
- Emerging Technologies for Caregivers (Professional and Family)
- Demand for Technology in Home Care
- Financing
- AARP's Role



Technology as a Mediator

The Institute of Medicine Definition of Disability:

“Disability is not an individual attribute but an interaction between the individual and the environment.”

- Technology can help mediate that interaction and change the very nature of disability by promoting more independence and choice for older consumers and their family caregivers.

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The Role of Technology

- The goal of technology should be to promote independence by promoting health and wellness, mobility, social connection, and personal safety.
- The goal of independence should be promoted by technology in all settings of care – individual homes, assisted living, or nursing homes.
- Technology should support the efforts of caregivers – paid and unpaid – by enhancing productivity, reducing injuries and medication errors, and allowing more time for personal interaction.



More Persons with Disabilities Are Living in the Community

Between 1984 and 2004 (National LTC Survey):

- The population age 65+ grew by 28.5%.
- Fewer older people with disabilities were living in nursing homes in 2004 than 20 years earlier (-7%).
- The number of older people living in the community with limitations in 3 or more activities of daily living (ADLs) increased by nearly two-thirds (63.3%).
- Supporting the large number of people with disabilities in the community is a growing policy challenge.

Technology and Increasing Independence

Between 1984 and 2004 (National LTC Survey):

- The percentage of older people with ADL disabilities living in the community who relied only on equipment to meet their needs increased from 17.3% to 31.7%.
- Some evidence that technology has played a substantial role in the 42.5% decline in the rate of older persons reporting instrumental activities of daily living (IADL) disabilities only.
 - IADLs are particularly sensitive to changes in the environment.
 - e.g., 4.5% decline in financial management disability 1984-89 coincided with direct deposit of Social Security checks.
 - May change disability measures as technology accomplishes activities of daily living.



Technologies Gaining Traction

- Health and Wellness
 - Medication Dispensers and Reminders
 - Communications Tools
 - Housekeeping Aids
- Mobility
 - Scooters/Motorized Wheel Chairs
 - Wheelchair lifts/automatic transfer seats
 - Kneeler Systems
 - Gait Belts and Lift Vests
 - Video Game Systems (Nintendo Wii)

Technologies Gaining Traction (continued)

- Social Connection
 - Social Networking (Facebook)
 - Internet (Online Tools)
 - Web Cameras
 - Remote Access to Health Care Professionals
- Safety
 - Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS)
 - Mobility Monitors and Tracking Systems
 - Silver Alerts

Technology and Emerging Models of Residential Care

- Philosophy of care makes a big difference in creating a residential environment that either supports institutional control or greater consumer independence and person-centered care.
- Traditional nursing home model uses technology to reinforce institutional care and minimize staffing.
 - Call systems with buzzers and centralized in nurses station.
 - Electronic health records (EHR) used to reduce care staff.
- Green House model uses technology to reinforce person-centered care.
 - Call systems direct to workers allows for elimination of nurses station and annoying buzzers.
 - EHR used to allow staff to spend more time with residents. Green House workers spent more than 4X as much time in meaningful interaction.

Demand for New Technologies in Home Care

- Technology can address caregiver shortage while maintaining the importance of human contact
 - Mobility technologies such as scooters
 - Remote monitoring and drug dispensing technologies
 - Communications through telephones and computers
- Technology can affect demand and ultimately create new norms for services in the home
 - Personal Response Systems
 - Microwaves
 - Electronic banking

Technologies that Support Caregivers

- Technology can support family caregivers who provide the vast majority of care
 - Bathroom Aids: Elevated Toilets, Walk-in bathtub, Grab bars, bath seats and transfer benches
 - Bedroom Aids: Enuersis Alarms, Mattress pads with temperature controls; Adjustable beds controlled remotely
- Technology can also support professional caregivers
 - Lift technologies to reduce the high rate of injuries
 - Communications and EHR to provide more professional support
 - Emergency call systems can also aid caregivers

Public Financing of Technologies

- Total spending on AT in US was estimated at \$15-20 billion in 2002, over half of which paid for out of pocket by individuals.
- Public coverage for assistive technologies (AT) is primarily through healthcare programs
- Medicare – Federal healthcare program for elderly and disabled
 - Eligibility determined by “medical necessity” – AT for ADLs often seen as a “convenience” rather than “medically necessary” – e.g., Medicare will pay for a cane to support mobility but not for the blind.
 - In 2002, Medicare spent \$2 billion on AT, 60% of which went to mobility devices (mostly motorized wheelchairs and scooters). Most of the rest went to orthotics and prostheses. Only 3.4% went to devices related to ADL needs other than mobility.

Public Financing of Technologies (continued)

- Medicaid coverage
 - Medicaid is a federal/state program limited to those who have very low incomes and assets.
 - Medicaid coverage of AT is highly variable by state, though 80% cover some types of AT. No state plan covers cognitive AT, transportation AT or home modifications.
- Veterans Administration (VA)
 - has more extensive coverage of AT.
 - limited to military veterans.
- Limited funding through other federal, state, and nonprofit programs.

Civil Rights Laws and Assistive Technology

- Many government regulations have had a big impact on the accessibility of public spaces, communications, and transportation. These come primarily from civil rights laws rather than public benefits.
- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 – Requires accommodations in the workplace, public buildings, and transportation systems.
- Telecommunications Act of 1996 – Requires equipment that is accessible and usable by persons with disabilities.
- Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 – Establishes standards for accessible housing and public buildings.
- Air Carrier Access Act of 1986 – Prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in air transportation.

Private Financing

- Private insurance paid for only 7.2% of total private long-term care costs in the US in 2005.
- Typically, private long-term care insurance will pay up to an agreed upon limit per day. They will often pay for some assistive technologies within those limits.

Private Financing (continued)

- Private insurance will also sometimes pay for assistive technologies under “alternative plans of care,” where care managers hired by the insurance company can make determinations to cover additional services and technologies if they find that it would prevent the higher costs of institutional care.
- Among LTC insurance beneficiaries, most use assistive technologies:
 - Home care beneficiaries: 86%
 - Nursing home residents: 88%
 - Assisted living residents: 77%

AARP.org – Online Tools for Family Caregivers

- **[AARP Caregiving Tool Kit](#)**
Caregivers can access our extensive toolkit filled with interactive features, such as expert videos, calculators, and worksheets. It's a convenient stop for the information you need to care for your loved one or to volunteer to help out a friend.
- **[Get Organized!](#)**
Download our information form, which helps you identify where your most important papers are kept. This can save you added stress during an emergency.
- **[Employers Supporting Caregivers](#)**
What can employers do to help caregivers? Check out our tips, and forward them to your company's benefits coordinators.
- **[Long-Distance Caregiving](#)**
As a long-distance caregiver, you can take some steps to make the job more manageable.
- **[CAPS Locator](#)**
Find a Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS), an expert who helps caregivers remodel their homes to accommodate loved ones with special needs.
- **[Per-State Average Caregiving Costs](#)**
What is the average cost of nursing homes, assisted-living facilities, adult day-care centers, or home health-aide services in your state? Use our [long-term care cost calculator](#) to approximate your options.

CAREGIVING

Voices



When Caregivers Are Abused

By Gail Sheehy

Gail talks to a former caregiver, who was abused by her dying husband, and gives advice on what to do if you're in the same position.

- When Everything Changes ... Again
- Call for Help
- Gail Answers Your Questions
- Ask Gail a Question



Housing Options: Which Type Is Best for You, Loved Ones?

By Elinor Ginzler

Can't decide which type of housing would suit you or a loved one? We describe the new housing choices for older adults and outline steps you can take to ensure a smooth

Posh Treatment in Assisted Living

By Melanie Haiken



Finding new residents in a cash-strapped society is getting tough—so housing centers are offering nice new perks and discounts.

Living With Alzheimer's

A new, four-part series on HBO, THE ALZHEIMER'S PROJECT, documents families coping with the disease and focuses on groundbreaking scientific



Most Popular in Caregiving

1. Turning 'Home Sweet Home' Into 'Home Safe Home'
2. State-by-State Guide to Nursing Home Performance Data
3. State-by-State Long-term Health Care Costs
4. Topics Covered: Finding VA Benefits, Helping Caregiver Friends, Locating Home Services, and More
5. Turnings in the Labyrinth of Caregiving

AARP MEMBERSHIP

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"We can focus on each other and not on our pain!"

Relief from foot, leg and back pain.



AARP and Assistive Technologies -- Policy

- Durable Medical Equipment
 - “AARP supports the reforms implemented to reduce fraud and abuse associated with durable medical equipment (DME)...” *(2009-2010 AARP Policy Book)*
 - “HHS should implement and enforce strict regulations on accrediting and setting minimum quality standards for suppliers to deter unnecessary utilization of devices while ensuring beneficiaries access to safe, high-quality, medically necessary devices.”
 - The HHS should monitor and publicly report on whether Medicare beneficiaries are receiving appropriate quality of service and value, as indicated by safety, cleanliness and cost.

For More Information

- Find the AARP Public Policy Institute studies online:
 - http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/2006_04_assist.pdf
 - http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/il/inb115_assist.pdf
- Other Websites of Interest:
 - AARP (<http://www.aarp.org>)
 - American Telemedicine Association (<http://www.atmeda.org>)
 - AJN Family Caregiver Supplement (<http://www.nursingcenter.com//pdf.asp?AID=815838>)
 - Center for Aging Services Technologies (<http://www.agingtech.org>)
 - Family Caregiver Alliance (<http://www.caregiver.org>)
 - Massachusetts Institute of Technology Age Lab (<http://web.mit.edu/agelab>)
 - National Alliance for Caregiving (<http://www.caregiving.org>)

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