

# Intelligent Technologies for Bridging the Grey Digital Divide

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Information Science  
**REFERENCE**

**INFORMATION SCIENCE REFERENCE**

Hershey • New York

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Published in the United States of America by  
Information Science Reference (an imprint of IGI Global)  
701 E. Chocolate Avenue  
Hershey PA 17033  
Tel: 717-533-8845  
Fax: 717-533-8661  
E-mail: [cust@igi-global.com](mailto:cust@igi-global.com)  
Web site: <http://www.igi-global.com>

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#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Intelligent technologies for bridging the grey digital divide / Jeffrey Soar, Rick Swindell, and Philip Tsang, editors.  
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index. Summary: "The main focus of the book is to provide insights into current innovation, issues to be resolved and approaches for widespread adoption to enable seniors and their families to enjoy the promised benefits of technology"--Provided by publisher. ISBN 978-1-61520-825-8 (hardcover) -- ISBN 978-1-61520-826-5 (ebook) 1. Technological innovations--Social aspects. 2. Internet and older people. 3. Computers and older people. I. Soar, Jeffrey. II. Swindell, Rick. III. Tsang, Philip. HM846.I58 2010  
303.48'340846--dc22

#### British Cataloguing in Publication Data

A Cataloguing in Publication record for this book is available from the British Library.

All work contributed to this book is new, previously-unpublished material. The views expressed in this book are those of the authors, but not necessarily of the publisher.

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<i>Neil W. Bergmann, University of Queensland, Australia</i>	

Ubiquitous computing technology (ICT) shows great potential in supporting the infirm elderly, and others managing complex health issues, to live independently in their own home. While these technologies have great promise, their adoption level is low in Australia. It is suggested that two concurrent strategies are needed to improve the penetration of ICT-based assistive technology in the community. Firstly, significant trials are needed to verify that such systems can provide improved health outcomes and reduce health system costs for suitably targeted patients. Secondly, research in security and privacy, open standards, human-computer interfaces and new models of care driving software specifications is needed, so that these health system benefits can be achieved at a reasonable cost, and with adequate consideration of the needs of clients and carers.

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This chapter explores ageing, chronic disease, technology and social change. Healthcare has been transformed through medical technology but there is much still to be done to enable seamless exchanges between all carers, which is expected to improve safety, quality and efficiency. There is massive potential for technology to transform the experience of ageing including assisting with the management of chronic disease, coordinated care and guided self-care for consumers. Innovative technologies are increasingly available to assist in maintaining health and independent living. This includes telecare,

telehealth, assistive technologies, robots and smart homes. A challenge is in providing access to and support in the use of technologies where there are clear benefits to consumers, carers, providers and funders of healthcare. The chapter also reports on the Queensland Smart Home Initiative which is one of several organisations internationally that share a mission of assisting people to be supported through these technologies.

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*Sandra Sproll, University Stuttgart, Germany*

*Robert Savage, Simon Fraser University, Canada*

*Elena Avatangelou, Exodus, SA, Greece*

This chapter describes some of the results of the EU-funded SOPRANO project to develop an Ambient Assisted Living system to promote active ageing and ageing-in-place. The chapter outlines SOPRANO's experience and application research approach to ensure that end-users are involved in all stages of the research and development. A number of key areas for application development were identified and developed as a set of use cases (or descriptive models), for example for medication reminding, and to support exercise. These use cases were further refined through visualization and iterative prototyping techniques with end-users to ensure usability, usefulness and acceptability for users. The SOPRANO prototype system is described together with future plans for deployment in demonstration sites and field trials.

### Chapter 4

Falls Prevention in the Home: Challenges for New Technologies ..... 46

*Rose A. Kenny, Trinity College, Ireland*

*Clíodhna Ni Scanail, Intel, Ireland*

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Approximately 1 in 3 people over the age of 65 fall each year; therefore it is of little surprise that falling is often accepted as a natural part of the aging process. Many falls are simply managed using alarm pendants to notify others when a falls event occurs. However, falls technology extends beyond simple notification; technology can be used to screen for falls risk, or to prevent a fall from occurring. In this chapter, we review the latest best practices for the identification of falls risk. We review the technology, if any, developed to support these practices, and discuss the challenges of using technology for in-home falls prevention, risk assessment and falls detection. Recommendations and suggestions for future research directions are discussed.

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*Claire Huijnen, Smart Homes, The Netherlands*

This chapter presents the research, results and lessons learned from a project to evaluate currently available assisted living technologies for elderly people with mild to severe memory impairments who want to age in place. During the project a number of households were equipped with assistive technology to enable the end users to better cope with the barriers and problems associated with their forgetfulness. End users were involved in different phases, starting with a problem and needs analysis and ending with an evaluation of the technology installed in their homes. It seemed that technology did have a positive impact on their lives as well as on the lives of the informal caregivers who often live with those who suffer from amnesia. This project gives insight into how we are coming closer to optimizing the positive effects which assistive technology holds for the elderly with memory impairments. Key insights are presented.

## Chapter 6

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*Eduardo Carrasco, VICOMTech, Spain*  
*Martin Klima, Czech Technical University Prague, Czech Republic*  
*Alexander Pfalzgraf, SemVox GmbH, Germany*

“Pluggable user interfaces” is a software concept that facilitates adaptation and substitution of user interfaces and their components due to separation of the user interface from backend devices and services. Technically, the concept derives from abstract user interfaces, mainly in the context of device and service control. Abstract user interfaces have been claimed to support benefits such as ease of implementation, support for User Centered Design, seamless user interfaces, and ease of use. This paper reports on experiences in employing pluggable user interfaces in the European project i2home, based on the Universal Remote Console framework, and the Universal Control Hub architecture. In summary, our anecdotal evidence supports the claims on the benefits, but also identifies significant costs. The experience reports also include some hints as to how to mitigate the costs.

## Chapter 7

- A Robotic Arm for Electric Scooters ..... 94  
*Samuel N. Cubero, The Petroleum Institute, UAE*

This chapter describes the mechanical design, manufacture and performance of a three-degree-of-freedom manipulator arm and gripper that can be attached to a mobile vehicle or electric scooter. This

device can be remotely or automatically controlled to pick up and retrieve heavy objects, such as books or grocery products, from high shelves or difficult-to-reach locations. Such tasks are often considered to be arduous or even impossible for the frail elderly and people with disabilities. A brief overview of existing “state of the art” robotic and machine vision technologies, and how these can be used to perform many everyday domestic or household chores, is also provided.

## Section 2 Innovations Supporting Engagement with Daily Life

### Chapter 8

Thinking Outside the Box: Novel Uses of Technology to Promote Well-being  
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*Nancy A. Pachana, The University of Queensland, Australia*  
*Emma E. Poulsen, The University of Queensland, Australia*

This chapter aims to examine the adoption of technology by older adults within a framework of current gerontological theories and research. Cognitive, physical, mental and interpersonal development and change later in life will also be described. Two main psychological frameworks for understanding successful ageing are briefly outlined and within these frameworks, the role of technology in enhancing the lives of older adults, regardless of the level at which they incorporate it into their lives, will be discussed. The chapter concludes with suggestions for removing barriers and enhancing uptake of technology for older adults, helping to bridge the grey digital divide.

### Chapter 9

U3A Online and Successful Aging: A Smart Way to Help Bridge the Grey Digital Divide..... 122

*Richard Swindell, Griffith University, Australia*  
*Peter Grimbeek, Griffith University, Australia*  
*Jan Heffernan, Queensland University of Technology, Australia*

The purpose of this chapter is 3-fold: 1) to outline the elements of the successful aging model; 2) to explain the worldwide, self-help University of the Third Age (U3A) program and 3) to discuss findings from two related studies of older adults who were members of the first virtual U3A called U3A Online. Considerable anecdotal evidence shows that U3A Online is particularly valuable for people in different countries who are isolated from their mainstream communities by circumstances such as illness, disability or care giving. An email focus group with nine participants from three countries was conducted over a two year period, using the successful aging model as a guideline to examine the characteristics of older people who are attracted to online learning. Results supported a conclusion that electronic communication can reduce feelings of isolation and provide stimulating and enjoyable pastimes with the potential to assist older people in aging successfully.

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Promoting Active Ageing through Technology Training in Korea ..... 141

*Donghee Han, Research Institute Science for the Better Living of the Elderly, Korea*  
*Kathryn L. Braun, University of Hawai`i, USA*

The rapid ageing of South Korea's population requires expanded opportunities for older Koreans to continue to participate in society. Digital literacy is a critical element of Active Ageing. By promoting increased digital literacy, Korea's Research Institute of Science for the Better Living of the Elderly (RISBLE) aims to increase Korean elders' access to information and their opportunities for communication and participation. RISBLE's programs - Cyber Family, Internet Navigator, and the 1080 Family Online Game Festival - help elders master new technology, strengthen intergenerational relations, gain leadership roles, and contribute as community teachers. This chapter reviews the Korean situation of ageing, outlines our commitment to Active Ageing with Digital Ageing, and presents information on three RISBLE programs. These "best practices" are shared in hopes that other communities can learn from RISBLE's work to reduce the ageing digital divide and promote digital life for older persons.

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Intelligent Transportation Systems for Older Drivers: A Systems Approach to Improving Safety and Extending Driving Longevity ..... 159

*Christopher G. Hatherly, The Australian National University, Australia*

This chapter covers current and future technologies relevant to older drivers. It begins with a review of salient characteristics of older drivers, before discussing current and future technologies at each level of the adopted framework: the road user, the road, and the vehicle. While most Intelligent Transportation Systems currently exist at the level of the vehicle (technologies such as satellite navigation, collision avoidance, and hazard alerting systems), research and development at the infrastructure level also holds promise of significant improvements in automotive safety through the exchange and coordination of digital information between vehicles and the roads upon which they are driven. At the individual level, there are also increasingly sophisticated technologies being developed that aim to accurately identify potentially unsafe drivers, and to maintain and even enhance cognitive capacities that are critically important to safe driving.

### **Chapter 12**

Low Usage of Intelligent Technologies by the Aged: New Initiatives to Bridge the Digital Divide..... 189

*John Heng, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore*

*Subhasis Banerji, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore*

Contrary to expectations, assistive technology (AT) usage by the elderly has not increased in proportion to availability and ease of access. This is despite a belief that technology can contribute significantly towards improving their quality-of-life. Our Rehabilitation Mechatronics research group is developing a "unified neuro-physio platform", taking a cue from Eastern philosophies which emphasize that the "internal environment" of the users strongly affects how they interact with the "external environment". This chapter highlights the need to bridge these two environments meaningfully through "sensitive" technologies which address the mindsets and learning mechanisms of users. The technology platform we propose helps the elderly to understand and enhance their internal environment in order to interact at various levels with AT in their external environment. It provides a fresh approach to understanding and minimizing the persistent "digital divide" between the elderly and high technology.

### **Chapter 13**

**Building a Mutual Assistance Community for Elderly People**..... 208

*Hong Sun, University of Antwerp, Belgium & Interdisciplinary Institute for Broadband Technology (IBBT), Belgium*

*Vincenzo De Florio, University of Antwerp, Belgium & Interdisciplinary Institute for Broadband Technology (IBBT), Belgium*

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*Chris Blondia, University of Antwerp, Belgium & Interdisciplinary Institute for Broadband Technology (IBBT), Belgium*

Efficient and cost-effective solutions are needed to meet the demands for services required by an ever increasing number of users. We discuss the characteristics of Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) as a new approach that promises to address the needs of elderly people. We propose combining social aspects with technology to build a community of mutual care which, among other things, can serve as a platform to effectively organize the social resources, promote social connection, and introduce inter-generational activities. Our research analyzes the characteristics of a mutual assistance community to help elderly people age well. The needed technologies are investigated, challenges of building such a community are reviewed, and the design of some prototypic solutions and preliminary research on organizing services inside the community are discussed.

### **Chapter 14**

**Preventative Healthcare: A Proposed Holistic Assistive Technology Model Based on**

**Industry Practice** ..... 221

*James Barrientos, LifeTec Queensland, Australia*

*Michele Barry, LifeTec Queensland, Australia*

Australia's ageing population has escalated the demand for current health services and the trend could compound to unsustainable levels under the current health system. This chapter proposes a preventative healthcare model based on assistive technology to strengthen wellbeing at the individual and community level. The proposed model could minimise premature and inappropriate admission of Australians to care facilities while enhancing their independence and self care. It could also present a cost effective approach for policy makers by helping to alleviate the escalating costs of the health system. Importantly, this program offers an effective and sustainable alternative for delivering future health services.

### **Section 3**

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**Attitudes toward Intelligent Technologies: Elderly People and Caregivers in Nursing Homes**..... 232

*Lorenza Tiberio, Institute for Cognitive Sciences and Technologies (ISTC-CNR), Italy*

*Massimiliano Scopelliti, Libera Università Maria Ss. Assunta (Lumsa), Italy*

*Maria Vittoria Giuliani, Institute for Cognitive Sciences and Technologies (ISTC-CNR), Italy*

Nursing homes provide long-term care services and can help preserve the quality of life of elderly people subject to physical and cognitive impairments. In this chapter, we explore the role of intelligent technologies as a supplement to human care-giving and the potential to improve quality of life for both older adults and their caregivers in nursing homes. A study was conducted on elderly people's and caregivers' attitudes toward the use of intelligent technologies in nursing homes, with the aim of understanding in which domains of everyday activities the application of intelligent technologies can be more suitable. Results showed that attitude toward the application of intelligent technologies in nursing homes is positive, although multifaceted. Elderly people and caregivers considered intelligent technologies as relevant devices for the improvement of quality of life in different domains. Nonetheless, differences related to the role that technologies played in nursing homes clearly emerged.

### **Chapter 16**

Supporting Family-Based Care for Aged Patients with Chronic Illness..... 254

*Lemai Nguyen, Deakin University, Australia*

Family carers play an important role in care for aged patients with chronic illness, particularly in home and community settings. The information needs of these family carers and their patients are poorly understood and current health information systems do not adequately support their needs. This chapter describes current models in understanding patient and family carer information needs and analyses technology solutions in a new field of consumer health informatics. The analysis shows that current technology solutions in consumer health informatics fail to effectively support aged people in their own management of chronic illness and as well fail to support their family carers. The chapter also identifies key research issues in developing technologies that support aged patients and family carers in chronic illness management.

### **Chapter 17**

Telenursing in Aged-Care: Systematic Evidence of Practice..... 270

*Sisira Edirippulige, University of Queensland, Australia*

*Rohana Basil Marasinghe, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka*

Global ageing, combined with other challenges, has compelled health systems to explore new methods for providing health care. Telenursing, providing nursing care at a distance using new technologies, is identified as one alternative. The lack of evidence for the effectiveness of telenursing in aged care is a drawback for its wider use. The aim of this chapter is to review the evidence of randomised controlled trials (RCT) in geriatric telenursing practices. We performed a systematic literature review using the Ovid Medline and Pubmed databases on telenursing. A total of 62 articles were retrieved and 18 studies were selected for comprehensive analysis. The review found that the RCTs were conducted in different areas of geriatric telenursing and various information and communication technologies (ICT) were used in the interventions. Although robust evidence based on RCTs in aged care telenursing is yet to emerge, the majority of current studies suggest that telenursing is an effective tool.



## Chapter 18

Health Insurance Systems as Models for Managing the Increasing Elderly Populations of Japan and Korea ..... 283

*Seungwon Jeong, Nihon Fukushi University, Japan*

*Yusuke Inoue, Nihon Fukushi University, Japan*

This chapter looks into the systems and institutions for the elderly population covered by long-term care insurance in Japan and the Republic of Korea. It discusses the historical changes in policies in these two nations. The Health Care and Welfare Complex elements that make up a single business model for the Health Care and Social Services of the aged in Japan and Korea are also discussed. Serious competition between medical facilities for patients occurred following considerable changes in the management environment for medical facilities adjustments brought about by population and social structure change. Medical facilities in Japan and Korea showed a rapid increase in comprehensive medical and welfare management. Consequently, there were provisions in both health care and social services through affiliation, chain affiliation and multiplication, before and after the enforcement of long-term care insurance.

## Chapter 19

Assistive Technologies as Aids to Family Caregivers in Taiwan ..... 296

*Szu-Yao (Zoe) Wang, Australian Catholic University, Australia*

More aged care services are needed in Taiwan. Research has demonstrated that nursing home placement of older adults in need of advanced care is the most cost effective option for family caregivers. However, filial piety, which entails looking after older parents at home, is one of the core tenets of Chinese society. Placing older parents into nursing homes can lead to family conflict and can continue to evoke deep emotional responses in some former family caregivers. This chapter draws on findings from two case studies to illustrate the dilemmas facing Taiwanese families who must cope with changing social conditions and customary filial expectations. The use of assistive technologies as solutions to these dilemmas is outlined. These technologies are argued to be a cost effective way to assist adult caregivers, their charges, and staff in nursing homes. Their use may apply to other Asian countries with similar cultural beliefs and values. increasingly available to assist in maintaining health and independent living. This includes telecare, telehealth, assistive technologies, robots and smart homes. A challenge is in providing access to and support in the use of technologies where there are clear benefits to consumers, carers, providers and funders of healthcare. The chapter also reports on the Queensland Smart Home Initiative which is one of several organisations internationally that share a mission of assisting people to be supported through these technologies.

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## Foreword

It is almost an axiom to say that the world population is ageing. 'Everybody' knows this. By the year 2050 it is projected that more than one in every six persons throughout the world will be at least sixty five years old (UN, 2002) and people in this cohort will exceed the number of children in the world. By 2050 around 22% will be over 65 years old and the fastest growing group, the over 85s, will account for 2 in 10 of the world population. Disability affects a large number of older people – and their carers. Dementia is considered to be one of the major contributors to disease burden. Other conditions that often result in social isolation, reduce quality of life and have a significant impact on health care costs include: arthritis, hearing loss, depression and incontinence.

Figures suggest at least 32-42% of people over 70 fall each year and falls are a factor in 40% of injury related deaths.

There are many causes and types of disability but I want to focus on these here to provide some human faces to the rather dry statistics.

Elly is aged 94; she lives alone in the home she shared with her husband of 70 years. She is determined to live out her days and die in this house where she raised six of her eight children and has so many memories – good and bad – but special to her. Elly's children, like many these days, have moved to various parts of the country and Jim, the eldest lives in the UK. Most of the family members generally try to get home for Christmas. Her daughter Emma, who lives in Tokyo, calls Elly on the phone every Sunday.

Before Jack died, he was very reluctant to leave the house unless he knew there would be a convenient toilet and people to assist him to access venues. He was incontinent of urine but too embarrassed to discuss this with anyone. His incontinence restricted his social activity. In addition he had fairly debilitating arthritis. Public transport was not an option and he could no longer drive so he depended on local service clubs for any social outings.

When Emma had her first child Elly travelled to Japan alone to spend a couple of weeks with her. When she returned home she found Jack dead, on the bathroom floor – he had fallen and died alone. This was desperately upsetting for Elly; not only did she feel guilty for leaving him alone but she also developed a dreadful fear of falling and went from being a very social community member to socially isolated. When her family and local doctor tried to suggest perhaps it was time to think about moving into a hostel, Elly just became more determined to stay put. Gradually her mood changed and she appeared to her local doctor to be developing depression. She was also having some difficulty hearing Emma on the phone and so many times did not bother to talk to her when she rang.

It was too difficult now for her to do many of her usual household chores but her determination to be independent meant she refused most community services. She ate less as getting to the shops was too much of an effort. Her younger sister Kate, who recently was widowed, moved in with Elly. Sadly,

within a few months, it became obvious to neighbours that Kate had dementia and was becoming more of a burden to Elly than a help. Kate would forget to take her medications, wander off to do the shopping and forget either to buy the food and/or to come home. Elly hated to worry the neighbours so she would sit for hours just wondering if Kate was okay. She worried if she tried to find her she might fall – she worried maybe Kate had fallen. The neighbours tried to check in on them and called the police when Kate was missing. They usually found her quite quickly, until on one occasion it took several days before she was found drowned in a lake six kilometres from the house.

Tim, the son living in the UK, knew if he could interact more with his mum and she could see the grandchildren that would help but he could not afford to come home. Emma arrived from Tokyo and found Elly was sleeping on the couch and washing in the sink because she could not get up the stairs to the bedrooms and shower. The garden, once her pride and joy, was a mess. Mum could not get down the stairs and consequently she was also suffering Vitamin D deficiency from lack of exposure to sunlight and poor nutrition.

You can see what we have here is a complex and degenerating situation – not uncommonly experienced by older people. Assistive technology could have improved the quality of life for all concerned and probably prevented Kate's drowning.

Alongside the ageing of the population we have a shrinking labour-force. The movement of women into the employment market is increasing the need for paid support for older people both at home and in nursing homes. Internationally, governments and other health care providers are exploring ways in which to cope with fewer doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. A potential contributor is of course workforce redesign taking account of the growing acceptance and uses of assistive technology.

This book demonstrates how Smart Houses and intelligent devices can improve social participation, reduce fear of falling, facilitate access within and external to houses and negotiation of stairs, and generally allow older people to remain 'in touch' with loved ones and their communities.

There are of course ethical issues that must be considered, for example, are tracking devices an abuse of privacy? I would argue that assistive technology should be embraced provided it meets the principles of person-centred care. Does the technology improve quality of life for the older person and is it acceptable to them, individualized and safe – or is it simply making life easier for staff and family? If the former I would support it.

This book opens up many possibilities for using assistive technology to ensure older people continue to enjoy independence, dignity of risk and harm minimization. I recommend it to practitioners, policy makers, researchers and students.

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## Preface

Welcome to this book of research into ageing and technology. This book covers a broad range of related topics by leading and emerging researchers in the new field of technology innovation for ageing. Chapter authors are from Canada, Germany, UK, Greece, Czech Republic, Korea, Singapore, the USA, Ireland, Spain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Sri Lanka, Japan, Taiwan and Australia. The topic is an important one, that is, how to enrich the experience of ageing and relieve some of the pressures and stresses associated with an ageing population through intelligent technology and the intelligent use of technology.

There is a movement towards an agenda of active ageing, so the support for older people goes beyond traditional models of "care" to models that promote social participation and active independent lives. Technology is a potentially powerful medium for facilitating this.

The aim of compiling this book was to provide high-quality academic, industry and practice articles in research on intelligent technologies for seniors. The main focus is to provide insights from current research and innovations, to discuss issues to be resolved and approaches for widespread adoption to enable seniors, their families and carers, and wider society to benefit from the many advantages that technology can contribute towards ageing societies.

### BACKGROUND

Information and communications technology and the widespread adoption of the Internet have transformed industries, and enabled new services and delivery at the convenience of the consumer. There is a plethora of new sophisticated technologies with the potential to transform ageing and aged care, enable independent living and provide access to care at the convenience of the consumer. There are also exciting projects in many countries involving telecare, telehealth and other technologies that might assist seniors. Demonstrator smart homes can be found in many countries. Governments are beginning to develop strategies and policies to reduce barriers to the adoption of technologies for ageing and promote their adoption. Some of the large-rollouts of intelligent home care technologies are providing confirmation of the anticipated benefits. Researchers have a responsibility to contribute to and disseminate results of the findings of quality research so as to guide policy development, resource allocation and evidence-based decision making.

The technologies promise to alleviate some of the challenges of ageing. These include adverse events such as falls, risks involved in wandering by people with cognitive decline, workforce participation by seniors, maintaining physical activity, maintaining social contacts and involvement, addressing the shortages of professional and family carers, and providing reminders of activities of daily living and medications.

That there is a great need for these technologies is demonstrated by the high rates of adverse events. There are as yet few people living in smart home environments and the adoption of intelligent technology for ageing is slow compared to the adoption of technologies in many other sectors. There are many issues to be resolved before the adoption of intelligent technologies for ageing becomes mainstream and there is much to learn from current research and project experience. Issues include design, acceptance by seniors, design agreement and standards by manufacturers, equipment funding, service funding, business models, maintenance, monitoring, education and training, awareness raising, standards, prioritisation of resources more towards home and community care, confirmation of the benefits and national strategy and policy.

## **AGEING**

The context for this book is the global surge in the percentages of older people in the populations of almost all countries and the imperative to find creative ways to manage growing demand for services, to manage costs and better support people – consumers, families and carers. Older age confronts all of us in different ways throughout life from the experience of ageing grandparents, the move of our own parents into later stages of life and ultimately our own transition into society's senior citizens. Few people would not want the ageing experience to be better for themselves and subsequent generations than it might have been for our grandparents and parents.

Many will be aware of the way technology has transformed our lives in almost every field. It may come as a surprise to people drawn into arrangements to support elderly parents to find out how little technology is used by the current generation of seniors and many of the aged care providers. Technology has the potential to assist in maintaining active, productive and independent lives, support the care workforce, provide access to health and medical services, facilitate social connectivity and assist in countless other ways such as those explained in this book. For this to happen, researchers may have to look at ageing and at people from a fresh perspective.

Exciting innovations in intelligent assistive technologies, smart home environments and information systems to support care in home and community settings have been undertaken internationally. Some of these are presented in this book. Much of these approaches are yet to be mainstreamed, that is to be made available to a broader community beyond projects, pilots or limited roll-outs. To achieve this there is still much to be done in research. Issues that need further development include awareness raising, promotion, improving availability and support, developing systems for responding appropriately to the signals from the technology, funding arrangements and new models for providing care that optimise the potential benefits.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE BOOK**

Researchers and practitioners were invited to submit chapter proposals clearly explaining the mission and concerns of their proposed chapters. From these a number were selected on the basis of likely interest to readers, innovation, quality, balance and the research standing of the authors. Authors of accepted proposals were provided with organizational guidelines to assist in the development of full chapters. All submitted chapters were reviewed by at least two reviewers on a blind review basis.

This book of research brings together a range of complementary ideas. It is aimed at contributing to the further development and adoption of assistive technology through quality research. We were delighted with the diversity of chapter proposals submitted for publication and regret that not all could be included.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

The book is divided into three thematic sections. Section 1: Innovations supporting ageing in place opens with a chapter on the potential of Ubiquitous Computing for Independent Living from Neil Bergmann. Bergmann suggests that two concurrent strategies are needed to improve the penetration of ICT-based assistive technology in the community. Firstly, significant trials are needed to verify that such systems can provide improved health outcomes and reduce health system costs for suitably targeted patients. Secondly, research in security and privacy, open standards, human-computer interfaces and new models of care driving software specifications is needed, so that these health system benefits can be achieved at a reasonable cost, and with adequate consideration of the needs of clients and carers.

Jeffrey Soar in the chapter, "Ageing, Chronic Disease, Technology and Smart Homes: An Australian Perspective," explores issues of ageing, chronic disease, technology and social change. He suggests a challenge is in providing access to and support for the use of technologies where there are clear benefits to consumers, carers, providers and funders of healthcare. The chapter also reports on the Queensland Smart Home Initiative which is one of several organisations internationally that share a mission of assisting people to be supported through these technologies.

A leading European project on Ambient Assisted Living systems for older people, The SOPRANO Project, is reported on by Andrew Sixsmith and co-authors. The chapter, "A user-driven approach to developing Ambient Assisted Living systems for older people: The SOPRANO Project," outlines SOPRANO's experience and application research approach to ensure that end-users are involved in all stages of the research and development. The chapter reports that in the SOPRANO project a number of key areas for application development were identified and developed as a set of use cases (or descriptive models), for example for medication reminding, and to support exercise. These use cases were further refined through visualization and iterative prototyping techniques with end-users to ensure usability, usefulness and acceptability for users. The SOPRANO prototype system is described together with future plans for deployment in demonstration sites and field trials.

One in three people over the age of 65 experience falls each year, consequently falls prevention is a major issue and is discussed in the book in the chapter "Falls prevention in the home: Challenges for new technologies" by Rose A Kenny, Cliodhna Ni Scanail and Michael McGrath. They review the latest best practices for the identification of falls risk including the technology available and the challenges of using technology for in-home falls prevention, risk assessment and falls detection. Recommendations and suggestions for future research directions are discussed.

Claire Huijnen presents the research, results and lessons learned from a project to evaluate currently available assisted living technologies for older people with mild to severe memory impairments who want to age in place, in her chapter "The use of assistive technology to support the wellbeing and independence of people with memory impairments." She found that technology did have a positive impact on their lives as well as on the lives of the informal caregivers who often live with those who suffer from amnesia. This chapter gives insight into how we are coming closer to optimizing the positive effects which assistive technology holds for older people with memory impairments.



"Pluggable user interfaces" is a software concept that facilitates adaptation and substitution of user interfaces and their components due to separation of the user interface from backend devices and services. In their chapter, "Meeting the Needs of Diverse User Groups: Benefits and Costs of Pluggable User Interfaces in Designing for Older People and People with Cognitive Impairments."

Gottfried Zimmerman and co-authors report on experiences in employing pluggable user interfaces in the European project i2home. Their anecdotal evidence supports the claims on the benefits, the costs and some hints as to how to mitigate the costs.

Samuel Cubero describes the mechanical design, manufacture and performance of a three-degree-of-freedom manipulator arm and gripper that can be attached to a mobile vehicle or electric scooter in the chapter "A robotic arm for electric scooters." This reports on a device that can be remotely or automatically controlled to pick up and retrieve heavy objects, such as books or grocery products, from high shelves or difficult-to-reach locations. Such tasks are often considered to be arduous or even impossible for the frail elderly and people with disabilities. A brief overview of existing "state of the art" robotic and machine vision technologies, and how these can be used to perform many everyday domestic or household chores, is also provided.

Section 2: contains chapters on the theme of Innovations supporting engagement with daily life. In the first chapter in this section Nancy Pachana and Emma Poulsen aim to examine the adoption of technology by older adults within a framework of current gerontological theories and research in their chapter "Thinking Outside the Box: Novel Uses of Technology to Promote Well-being in Older Populations." Cognitive, physical, mental and interpersonal development and change later in life are described. Two main psychological frameworks for understanding successful ageing are briefly outlined and within these frameworks, the role of technology in enhancing the lives of older adults, regardless of the level at which they incorporate it into their lives, are discussed. The chapter concludes with suggestions for removing barriers and enhancing uptake of technology for older adults, helping to bridge the grey digital divide.

Richard Swindell, Peter Grimbeek and Jan Heffernan in their chapter, "U3A Online and successful aging: A smart way to help bridge the grey digital divide," set three aims: 1) to outline the elements of the successful aging model; 2) to explain the worldwide, self-help University of the Third Age (U3A) program and 3) to discuss findings from two related studies of older adults who were members of the first virtual U3A called U3A Online. Their focus group research examined the characteristics of older people who are attracted to online learning. Results supported a conclusion that electronic communication can reduce feelings of isolation and provide stimulating and enjoyable pastimes with the potential to assist older people in aging successfully.

Donghee Han and Kathryn L. Braun examined "Promoting Active Ageing through Technology Training in Korea." Their chapter reviews the Korean situation of ageing, outlines commitment to Active Ageing with Digital Ageing, and presents information on three "best practices" for expanding digital literacy and involvement of older adults. Internet Navigators are older adults trained to train other older adults in the use of computers, the Internet, and various software programs. Cyber-Family links older adults and youth as online pen-pals. The annual 1080 Online Game Festival brings three-generation families together for a day of internet play, which has led the Korean IT industry to expand computer and software options for older adults.

Being able to continue to drive a car is of great concern to older people in many societies and Christopher G. Hatherly in his chapter "Intelligent Transportation Systems for Older Drivers: A Systems Approach to Improving Safety and Extending Driving Longevity" covers current and future technologies relevant to

older drivers. It begins with a review of salient characteristics of older drivers, before discussing current and future technologies at the levels of the vehicle, the infrastructure and the individual.

Assistive technology (AT) usage by older people has not increased in proportion to availability and ease of access. This is the finding of John Heng and Subhasis Banerji in their chapter "Low Usage of Intelligent Technologies by the Aged: New Initiatives to Bridge the Digital Divide." This is despite a belief that technology can contribute significantly towards improving their quality-of-life. Their Rehabilitation Mechatronics research group is developing a "unified neuro-physio platform", taking a cue from Eastern philosophies which emphasize that the "internal environment" of the users strongly affects how they interact with the "external environment". They propose a technology platform to help older people to understand and enhance the internal environment in order to interact at various levels with AT in their external environment.

Hong Sun and co-authors discuss the characteristics of Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) to address the needs of older people in the chapter "Building a Mutual Assistance Community for Older Elderly pPeople." They propose combining social aspects with technology to build a community of mutual care which, among other things, can serve as a platform to effectively organize the social resources, promote social connection, and introduce intergenerational activities. Technical issues of building their community through service orientation and web services are discussed. Their research also analyzes the characteristics of a mutual assistance community to help older people age well.

The last chapter in Section 2 is an industry perspective: "Preventative Healthcare: A Proposed Holistic Assistive Technology Model based on Industry Practice" from James Barrientos and Michele Barry. This chapter proposes a preventative healthcare model based on assistive technology to strengthen wellbeing at the individual and community level. The proposed model could minimise premature and inappropriate admission of Australians to care facilities while enhancing their independence and self care. It could also present a cost effective approach for policy makers by helping to alleviate the escalating costs of the health system. Importantly, this program offers an effective and sustainable alternative for delivering future health services.

The last of the three sections of the book contains chapters on the theme of Innovations supporting the frail elderly and aged care providers. Lorenza Tiberio and co-authors begin this section with a chapter on "Attitudes toward intelligent technologies: Older people and caregivers in nursing homes." They explore the role of intelligent technologies as a supplement to human care-giving and the potential to improve quality of life for both older adults and their caregivers in nursing homes. The chapter reports on a study on older people's and caregivers' attitudes toward the use of intelligent technologies in nursing homes, with the aim of understanding in which domains of everyday activities the application of intelligent technologies can be more suitable. Their results showed that attitudes of older people and care-givers toward the application of intelligent technologies in nursing homes is positive, although multifaceted.

José Luis Jorge Marrasé describes the approach followed to create a new communications platform that can support a citizen centric home care service in the chapter Citizen centric care: A Telecom perspective based on Integrated Video Assistance for Elders (IVAE). This strategy is based on offering application enablers to care providers to simplify the use of the capacity of telecom networks. The chapter also discusses the required supporting changes in the care provider systems and procedures to deliver the outcomes needed in healthcare.

Lemai Nguyen in the chapter "Supporting Family-based Care for Aged Patients with Chronic Illness" describes current models in understanding patient and family carer information needs and analyses technology solutions in a new field of consumer health informatics. Her analysis shows that current technology



solutions in consumer health informatics fail to effectively support aged people in their own management of chronic illness and as well fail to support family carers. She also identifies key research issues in developing technologies to support aged patients and family carers in chronic illness management.

Sisira Edirippulige and Rohana Basil Marasinghe undertook a systematic review of randomised controlled trials (RCT) in geriatric telenursing practices telenursing in aged care that is reported in "Telenursing in aged-care: Systematic evidence of practice." They found that robust evidence based on RCTs in aged care telenursing is yet to emerge however the majority of current studies suggest that telenursing is an effective tool.

Seungwon Jeong and Yusuke Inoue in Health insurance systems as models for managing the increasing elderly populations of Japan and Korea report on research into the systems and institutions for older people covered by long-term care insurance in Japan and the Republic of Korea. They discuss the historical changes in policies in these two nations. They found changes occurred in competition between medical facilities for patients and changes in the management and organisational environment of medical facilities.

The book ends with an interesting chapter "Assistive Technologies as aids to family caregivers in Taiwan" by Szu-Yao (Zoe) Wang. She discusses filial piety, the obligation to care for older parents at home, as one of the core tenets of Chinese societies across Asia. Placing older parents into nursing homes can lead to family conflict and can continue to evoke deep emotional responses in some former family caregivers. This chapter draws on findings from two case studies to illustrate the dilemmas facing Taiwanese families who must cope with changing social conditions and customary filial expectations, and potential solution for these dilemmas by using assistive technologies.

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## Acknowledgment

Particular thanks are due to Dr Rick Swindell; without his involvement this book would not have been completed in time and would not be of such high quality. Rick worked with several authors to guide them in polishing their chapters and assisted speakers of other languages with some of the challenges of writing in English. He undertook most of the day-to-day liaison with the publishers and with each of the authors to keep us all on track with deadlines and quality standards.

Particular thanks are also due to Jan Heffernan who worked tirelessly on helping us to enhance the overall quality of the book.

Philip would like to give special thanks to his wife Dr Sandy Tse for her support during the project activities in the past 12 months. As his writing and editing project comes to completion, Philip promises to catch up on his share of babysitting Jenny who recently turned 18 months old. Jenny is a joy and a gift to us. This project has also benefited from the research grants (06/21) (R189-2)(ST-08/09-2) from The Open University of Hong Kong and (HK-R1209) from the Johnson & Johnson. For these, Philip wants to thank both the OUHK & Johnson and Johnson research committees.

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