Editorial

Welcome to ISG's 7th World Conference on Gerontechnology

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A.J. Sixsmith, G.M. Gutman, Welcome to ISG's 7th World Conference on Geron-technology. Gerontechnology 2010; 9(2):63; doi:10.4017/gt.2010.09.02.001.00 Under the theme 'Technologies for Health, Quality of Life, and Aging-in-Place' 300+ presen-tations mainly concerned with enhancing quality of life and wellbeing, preserving autonomy, and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of health services.

Keywords: technologies for health, quality of life, aging-in-place

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the International Society for Gerontechnology's 7th World Conference taking place in Vancouver, Canada, May 27-30, 2010. The theme of the conference is 'Technologies for Health, Quality of Life, and Aging-in-Place'. This theme brings together two crucial concepts within gerontechnology. First, older people, given the right help and support, would prefer to continue living in their familiar homes and neighbor-hoods for as long as possible. The use of technology, ranging from simple assistive devices to complex information and communication systems, has considerable potential for enhanc-ing the lives of many older people and helping them to age-in-place. Secondly, much of the research and development within the field of aging and technology has focused on issues of safety and security. While these remain important, equal consideration needs to be given to how technology can positively enhance the everyday lives of older people by supporting independent living, social participation and improving health and well-being. These consid-erations need to be contextualized within the realities of global population aging.

The conference aims to bring together people from around the world, to present the results of their research and assess the implications for the development of practical solutions to the needs of older people, family carers and care professionals. In par-ticular, the aim is to ex-plore how technology can: (i) Enhance quality of life and well-being, (ii) Preserve autonomy and feelings of security, and (iii) Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of health services.

A key concern is to move away from technology-push and problem-focused approaches to an approach that is driven by gerontological theories and concepts. However, there are a number of challenges that need to be addressed: What are the important directions for research and development? How can we ensure that older people benefit from these technologies? How can we ensure that some people are not excluded from accessing these technologies? How can we improve the design and development process to ensure that new technologies are 'user-driven'? How should we explore, visualize and map out new areas of technology in order to exploit its potential?

This issue of *Gerontechnology* provides abstracts for the scientific program (n=300+), many of which address these questions and more. It will serve as a permanent record of the indi-viduals and groups who presented at the conference, their ideas, and the state-of the-art of the field of gerontechnology in 2010.