

R.M. SAVAGE, M. CAMPO. *A conceptual paper: Demographics, diffusion theory, and ambient assisted living. Consumer market potential in the Canadian setting. Gerontechnology 2010; 9(2):328; doi:10.4017/gt.2010.09.02.181.00* **Purpose** An Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) system refers to a potentially synergistic integration of telehealth, stand-alone assistive devices, and smart home technologies¹. Such a system has great potential to relieve some of burden among those Canadians who care for older family members. **Method** The data emerged from a case study design, and was collected to develop an understanding of how an AAL system may evolve in the Canadian consumer market. **Results & Discussion** We are in the midst of a demographic transition in Canada, and AAL is seen as offering an excellent system that may relieve burden among informal caregivers and enhance efficiencies for formal home care workers. Using Rogers' Diffusion of Innovations Theory², it is envisioned that such a system could spread first to early adopters, in luxury markets, and once sufficient economies of scale are realized, to the broader marketplace. Governments should immediately set about to provide an environment where research and development may thrive and assist Canada in becoming a leader in terms of innovation, rather than maintaining our current status of attempting to catch up with emerging technologies such as AAL once they are developed in other nations³. An AAL system holds the promise of providing synergies beyond what any of these individual components may hope to accomplish alone. Such development will greatly relieve the burden among those 2.7 million Canadians caring for older adults and will allow seniors to remain in their homes and age-in-place.

References

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2. Rogers, EM. Diffusion of Innovations, 3rd edition. New York: Free Press; 1983
3. Conference Board of Canada. How Canada performs: Innovation; 2008; www.conferenceboard.ca/HCP/Details/Innovation.aspx; retrieved January 2010

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