

SYMPOSIUM

General Symposium

K. BLACK (Convener). Social & cyber-connectedness in age-friendly communities. Gerontechnology 2018;17(Suppl):16s; <https://doi.org/10.4017/gt.2018.17.s.016.00> **Participants** K. BLACK (USA), S. GOLANT (USA), M. STYNCHULA (USA). **Issue** The majority of older Americans live independently in the community and consistently report plans to age-in place and preferably, within the homes in which they reside. However for multiple reasons, the home setting can inadvertently lead to increased social and physical isolation – a growing problem faced by seniors throughout the United States and abroad. **Content** This presentation will review the growing age-friendly community movement which addresses societal features impacting the experience of aging in and outside of the home. Aspects of built, social and service environment will frame the points of connectedness between older adults and the broader environments in which they reside. The role of technology that facilitates aging-in-place will be reviewed, with specific focus on caregivers' social and physical wellbeing. Technologies will further be framed from the perspective of consumer issues, including concepts of demand, supply, availability, and appropriateness for the aging marketplace. **Structure** K. Black will provide the initial overview of the session by framing the age-friendly movement and points of intersect for technology. M. Stynchula will discuss ReunionCare and other innovative ideas and products that assist social connectivity at home; S.Golant will frame the home-based technology intersect from a business model that addresses older adults as consumers of technology at home. **Conclusion** Participants will: understand age-friendly communities and the eight domains of livability; appreciate the range of home-based technology available to seniors as well as the impact of social and physical wellbeing; and recognize the factors influencing the consumption of technology by older persons.

Keywords: aging-in-place, older consumers, age-friendly communities, caregiving

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K. BLACK. *Framing connectedness in age-friendly communities*. *Gerontechnology* 2018;17(Suppl):17s; <https://doi.org/10.4017/gt.2018.17.s.017.00> **Purpose** This paper of this paper is two-fold: first to overview the Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities and discuss the eight domains of livability including: transportation, housing, outdoor spaces, social participation, civic participation and employment, respect and social inclusion, communication and information, and community supports and health services; and second, to identify aspects of connectivity in the context of aging and community by generational age distinctions. **Method** Surveys and focus groups were conducted to assess the importance of the community features as well as issues and aspirations of nearly 1,200 community residents ages 50 and older residing in Sarasota County (Florida's first global age-friendly community). Data was analysed by age groups including Boomers (persons born between 1946 and 1964) and older adults (born prior to 1945). Chi-square tests were conducted to test for significant differences. **Results & Discussion** Findings identified the importance of core community features to both age groups as well as distinctions according to age. Results indicate significant differences in all domains with the greatest distinctions by age group found in preferences for housing, transportation and employment. Implications for the promotion of connectivity to support active, healthy and engaged aging is discussed.

Keywords: aging in place, environmental gerontology, intergenerational

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M. STYNCHULA. *Caregiver accelerator. Gerontechnology 2018;17(Suppl):18s;* <https://doi.org/10.4017/gt.2018.17.s.018.00> **Purpose** According to AARP research more than 90 percent of seniors wish to age in the community. The looming shortage of care workers needed to support this desire is driving aging sector innovation. The explosion of data from smartphone apps, tablets and computer programs, electronic health records, telehealth for remote health monitoring, personal emergency devices, health trackers, and many other sources are bridging the gap between diminishing financial and human resources and increasing care needs in ways unimaginable just a decade ago. Today the proliferation of new companies is emerging to create, aggregate and interpret all this data so that seniors can remain independent in their preferred community. AARP predicts this aging/caregiving marketplace to be a \$72 billion opportunity by 2020. New hardware, software and services are emerging to address care coordination, medication management, social well-being, home safety, activities of daily living and transition of care. The rapid expansion of voice first technologies is flooding the aging marketplace. While many hurdles remain to enable all seniors to benefit from the social connections that technology is creating, the field is showing promise in augmenting caregiver services. Voice first technology like the Amazon Echo and Google Home are now facing competition from market entries built specifically to give seniors hands free ability to remain connected to family and to manipulate their home environment. **Method** This presentation will highlight the innovations emerging from the Caregiver Accelerator program where 35 emerging companies have incubated new models to make home the center of successful aging. One example is REUNIONCare, Inc. REUNIONCare technology platform connects seniors, caregivers, family member and friends access to community based organizations. REUNIONCare targets healthcare payers and providers committed to comprehensive chronic care management, behavior and mental health services proactive planning. **Results & Discussion** REUNIONCare builds a care plan that is culturally sensitive, individualized, strength based, family centered plan using multiple data sources and communication channels. REUNIONCare Circle of Care consumer app enables caregivers, family and trusted friends to become an active care team member.

Keywords: aging in place, technology, telehealth, caregiving

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S.M. GOLANT. A theoretical model to explain whether older adults will be adopters of smart technologies. Gerontechnology 2018;17(Suppl):19s; <https://doi.org/10.4017/gt.2018.17.s.019.00> **Purpose** This paper outlines a theoretical model to explain whether older adults will be consumers of smart technology products, including telehealth, telecare, information and communication technologies, robotics, and gerontechnologies. Throughout the world, businesses are attempting to convince older persons that these products can help them age more successfully, that is, to have more healthy, independent, comfortable, and active lives. Many researchers have criticized existing explanatory adoption models (e.g., UTAUT AND UTAUT2), pointing to their limited psychological foundations and their unrealistic and oversimplified assumptions about how older people decide to accept new technologically oriented products. **Method** To broaden this theoretical focus, the proposed model draws on constructs and relationships from a wide array of marketing, communication, and social psychological theories that include stress-appraisal coping theory, the Health Belief Model, diffusion theory, information-seeking models, personality differences, life span coping process dynamics, and social cognitive theories, particularly persuasion and social influence models. **Results & Discussion** The model, consisting of 21 propositions, proposes that older people engage in both primary and secondary appraisal processes when deliberating on whether to adopt smart technology solutions. Primary appraisals encompass the self-assessments by old persons of their unmet needs. Older people will be more stressed and thus more motivated to favourably evaluate smart technology solutions when they perceive their problems as more serious, imminent, and longer in duration. Secondary appraisals encompass how older people become aware of both denotative and evaluative information about their alternative coping solutions and assess whether these options can eliminate or reduce their discrepant individual or environmental circumstances. The model proposes that older people receive both external and internal information that enable them to appraise their coping options. External information includes messaging from the media, medical and long-term care professionals, companies, and vendors promoting their products, government agencies administering social programs, family, and friends. Internal information includes the favourable or unfavourable attitudes older people have formed because of their memories or “direct experiences” about “things” (people, events, activities, objects) in their past lives. Older people will be differently persuaded by their external and internal information, referring to its ability to shape, change, or modify their coping appraisals. The model proposes that the more persuaded older people are by their external and internal information, the more positive or more negative will be their smart technology appraisals. Older people are also proposed as more positively appraising their possible smart technology solutions when they have more resilient personalities. These more hopeful, optimistic, and achievement-oriented individuals are more likely to believe that they can cope with adversity and get things done (perceived self-efficacy) and they are more open to novel ideas and experiences (adaptive flexibility). When appraising smart technology coping options, older people distinguish three of their attributes: perceived efficaciousness, perceived usability, and perceived collateral damages (unintended harmful outcomes). The more positively older people evaluate these attributes, the more likely that they will adopt these smart technology products.

Keywords: technology acceptance models, gerontechnology, older consumers
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