

Innovative approaches to dealing with population ageing

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Populations around the world are rapidly ageing. Unless societies develop innovative ways of responding to this demographic shift, these older populations will place a heavy burden on governments for health care, social services and financial support. However, older people are also a neglected resource, having skills, experience and wisdom that can make a great contribution to societies. A range of creative approaches are starting to be explored at both individual and population levels that overcome the physical limitations of ageing and break down the barriers that prevent older people from continuing to work and contribute more broadly to society. This presentation will explore approaches that are currently being implemented or in development. It will also explore some possible avenues for future research in this area that have been overlooked by current strategies.

Keywords: ageing, technology, frailty, social integration

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Changing practices: Home and community based care technologies for independent living

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For all the international attention to healthcare reform, precious little attention has been paid to challenging the hundred year old premise that care is best practiced in an institutional environment, delivered by highly trained medical experts, and deployed reactively once someone is already sick, frail, or injured. If we are truly to improve quality of life for more people -and more older people- globally, while slowing the growth of healthcare costs, then we have to find ways to move beyond hospital- and clinic-centric practices to home and community based ones. We have to shift the locus of care -as well as some of the expertise and responsibility- to the home and to the family. The convergence of computing, communications, consumer electronics, and medical technologies offers us a 'platform' for doing this. These technologies, while no magic pill, offer innovative ways to do home-based prevention, early detection, behaviour change, social support, and caregiver engagement. Examples will be provided and prototypes shown from Intel's ethnographic and pilot research in more than 1000 homes of seniors from 20 different countries that explore how independent living technologies can help us to rethink the aging experience from 'patient' to 'provider' and shift care to the home.

Keywords: independent living, health innovation, aging services

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