



Center for Aging Services Technologies

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Boomers Willing to Pay for Technology That Allows Parents, Selves More Independent Living

BOSTON, MA – Baby boomers would spend up to \$100 each month on technology to ensure healthier living and independence as they age.

In a series of focus groups with people age 50-65, the Center for Aging Services Technologies (CAST) found that most participants would be willing to pay \$50 each month for electronic monitoring technologies such as medication reminders to enable their aging parents and themselves to live independently in the community. About half of the participants said they would pay \$100 per month. In addition, participants were extremely interested in owning a device that maintained their medical records and provided them with control over this information.

The focus group results were presented at the Healthcare Unbound conference by Kari Miner-Olson, chief information officer of Front Porch and leader of the CAST research team that conducted the focus groups.

“These findings should be a wake up call for technology corporations, who are missing a tremendous potential market for services,” Miner said. “Every seven seconds a Baby Boomer turns 50. The need for technologies to help these individuals age in place, on their terms, is tremendous.

Some of the study’s other key findings include:

- Boomers believed it was important to maintain personal and financial independence, remain healthy and not become a burden to their children.
- Technologies that are easy to use, integrated monitoring and sensing solutions and included visual and audio capabilities impressed participants.
- Boomers are impressed by the possibilities that technology could enrich communication, alleviate the challenges of daily life and preserve social connectedness.

- Participants are eager to have access to reliable information and choices about care options.

“Improvements in technology for the aging could not only improve their quality of care and life, but also reduce our nation’s ever-growing healthcare costs,” said Helen Higgins, Business Development Manager of Hewlett-Packard and co-chair of the research group. “In particular, electronic medical records can provide a foundation for transforming how health care and aging services are delivered in the U.S.”

CAST held 10 focus groups in five states during March 2005. Each focus group was led by the same CAST trained moderator and videotaped for analyses by researchers. Additionally, participants also completed a written questionnaire about their background and experiences with technology.

After completing the study, researchers recommend that companies, federal researchers, policy makers and consumers investigate the role technology can play in improving efficiency and effectiveness in the health care field.

“There is tremendous opportunity for public policy to help move important innovations to the marketplace,” said Russell Bodoff, executive director of CAST. “Recent legislative and Administration initiatives are a start, but we look forward to helping to achieve a bold agenda that will revolutionize options for seniors.”

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Established in 2003, The Center for Aging Services Technologies (CAST) has brought together researchers from universities, technology companies, aging services organizations and government representatives. CAST is focusing on the application of technologies that will help identify potential solutions to the aging services challenge faced by the global community. CAST is a program of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (AAHSA). The members of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging (www.aahsa.org) serve two million people every day through mission-driven, not-for-profit organizations dedicated to providing the services people need, when they need them, in the place they call home. AAHSA's commitment is to create the future of aging services through quality people can trust. CAST's web site is www.agingtech.org AAHSA's Web site is www.aahsa.org.