

# Empowering Caregivers Through Technology

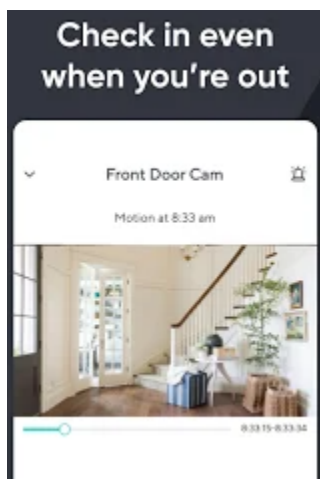
Larimer Office on Aging  
2021 Educational Forum



*The right technology, used for the right person, at the right time, and in the right way, has the potential to improve the independence, safety, and well-being of a person needing care....and directly improve the independence and well-being of their caregiver.” - Jill Couch, MS, OT/L*

## TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE INDEPENDENCE

- Low-tech options (i.e. Velcro) to provide independence with the TV remote and the telephone
- GPS/tracking watch to improve safety such as walks in the neighborhood, and make it more possible for folks to remain in their own homes
- Emergency alert bracelets or necklaces
- Tile technology
- Smart home systems
- Medication dispensers
- Simple phones or phones with large numbers
- Health apps such as Vitals, UCHealth’s Bio sticker; telehealth monitoring (rural)



## SAFETY

- GPS watch, emergency alert/pendant/watch system for wandering and fall detection
- Cameras in the home to note activities, monitor nutrition, monitor wandering, analyze falls
- Chair, bed, door alarms to alert caregiver of loved one's activities/prevent falls
- Hallway lights, night lights, for fall prevention. Good lighting for indoors and outdoors, especially bathrooms, hallways, stairways & garages.
- Adaptive equipment such as grab bars, railings, tub benches, ramps and seat risers.

## WELL-BEING

- Intentional use of the TV, tablet/ipad, and/or audio devices (ipods, alexa, speakers, etc.) to bring in favorites shows, music, and videos of interest
- Individual and facilities' use of tablets for Facetime, Skype and Messenger calls with family or group participation in DF groups for folks and CG
- Families send short videos and/or pictures of grandkids
- Digital photo frame, i.e. smart frames with instant imported pictures
- Alexa/google hub for information, music and calls
- Personal robotic pet companions



## POTENTIAL PITFALLS

- Watches, phones, iPad, iPod need to be charged
- Batteries die and power outages occur
- TV's need to be turned on and programmed to person's favorite shows
- Software updates needed
- Technology installed incorrectly for the person can be a hazard
- A false sense of meeting a person's needs
- Technology malfunctions, wears out
- Voice recognition technology struggles with quiet voices or difficulty understanding how to use it.

**Let us not neglect the need most often observed and most often expressed...that of human connection. But let us know that technology used well can bring relief and increased independence, safety, and well-being...while freeing up a caregiver's time and energy so they can then spend time "being well" with their loved ones.**

## Other Resources:

Older adults falls prevention information: <https://www.cdc.gov/falls/index.html>

Mather Institute on Aging: <https://www.matherinstitute.com/>

Dementia Together: <https://dementiatogether.org/>

Dementia Action Alliance: <https://daanow.org/>

Sign up for newsletters from these organizations that provide online opportunities/activities:

[Road Scholar](#)

[Senior Planet](#)

## Technology devices used by Ayn and Barbara:

[Door /Window sensor-Tessan brand](#)

[Solar Powered Camera-ieGeek brand](#)

[Automatic Pill Dispenser](#)

[Companion Pet Pup-Joy for All Brand](#)

[Gizmo GPS watch-Verizon](#)



## Technology Reference by Betsy:

[The DAWN Method](#)

[Seat Assist](#)

[Rechargeable Motion-Sensor Lights for Stairs or Closets](#)

[Motion-Sensor Overhead Light Fixture for Room](#)

[No Touch Infrared Thermometer](#)

[Finger Pulse Oximeter](#)

[Arm Blood Pressure Monitor](#)

[Wireless Caregiver Pager](#)

[PhonaK](#)

[Digital photo frame](#)



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