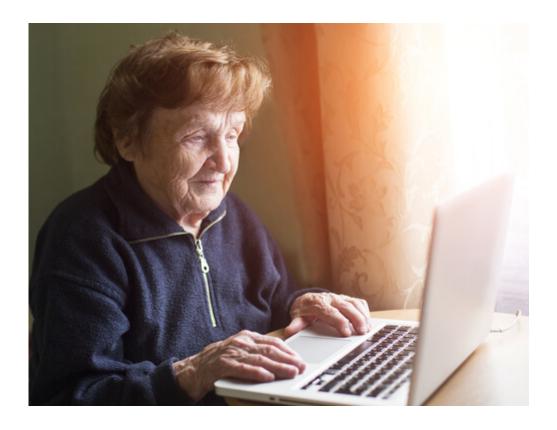# Aging Tech

No, this is not a blog about how your computer or smart phone stops working three years after you purchase it. Rather, it's about how technology can support our aging population. It may seem incongruous, *as Wired points out*, if you have ever tried to teach an older family member how to use an iPhone or join Facebook, but the development of home health tech – and the associated IT systems that link to a network of doctors and insurers – may hold the key to effective elderly care.

The concept is based on the lower cost and risk of home care versus doctor office or hospital visits. The development of appropriate technology will allow seniors to consistently monitor their health in their own homes, significantly reducing the number of costly doctor appointments, or worse: emergency room visits. When in-person attention is required, new tech is allowing the efficient coordination of house calls for older adults, further decreasing the necessity for hospital trips.

One study showed that this care-at-home approach saves an average of $3,070 per beneficiary. Another study, led by the Veterans Administration, showed a 35 percent reduction in hospital readmission and a 59 percent reduction in "bed days."

Cost savings and improved care have certainly gotten the approach noticed — especially since older adult treatment is often a public expense through Medicare and Medicaid. This year, the once-in-a-decade Conference on Aging will for the first time include technologists. In Congress, the Senate Committee on Aging held a hearing addressing the exact ways tech can help improve elderly treatment.

"The government has looked at these programs and sees that they've been able to reduce costs, specifically in the Medicare population, and says, 'Let's look at this further,'" says Valerie Steinmetz, program director of the Center for Technology and Aging.

So, the wheels are in motion, just in time for the peak of the unprecedented baby boomer generation to reach old age. The opportunity and the burden is now on the industry to develop these tools in time, the health and finances of millions may depend on it.

How do you think older adults can utilize technology at home to avoid trips to the doctor? Join the conversation by finding us on Twitter [@CNSICorp](https://twitter.com/CNSICorp).