

Innovative Care for Seniors

By Jessica Derkis

In Silicon Valley and beyond, there is a flood of new apps, programs and devices that seek to address forgetfulness, loneliness and isolation as well as physical needs of people growing older. But, as with anything, it doesn't hurt to revisit the basics.

"Eat your vegetables, get good sleep and exercise," says Mehrdad Ayati, MD, Stanford Geriatrician, founder of Bay Area Senior Care Society and author of *"Pathways to Healthy Aging."*

Imagine that. Mom was right. But in this hubbub world and the hectic days and long commutes of this area in particular, how does one follow these tried and true models? Dr. Ayati noted that one follows the other.

If you exercise, do so outside, soak up that Vitamin D and work up an appetite. Eat plenty of leafy greens and the whole rainbow of colors really. Snack lightly and often to fuel your movement. When the day is done, lower those shades, cool your room and fall to sleep.

That's not to say all will be right again but this is a good start.

What other technologies are local aging gurus recommending?

Check out a pretty nifty invention, the Free2Go Mobility aid. Frustrated daughter, Lesli Jenkins Wang, noticed that her mother would skip beverages the day before an outing and realized that public bathrooms are a pain for those with walkers. The navigation alone! She designed a rolling walker that doubles as a toilet lift and seat – with a built-in wipes holder even. Check it out at Free2GoMobility.com.

Dr. Sonya Kim's company, Aloha VR, is getting some great buzz, too. NPR recently featured 103-year-old Virginia Anderlini enjoying a virtual reality visit to a Hawaiian beach complete with setting sun, lapping waves and flowing palm fronds. Entering an immersive other world, fulfilling bucket list destinations and calming sounds "help inspire them to live another day, where they're happy," Kim noted.

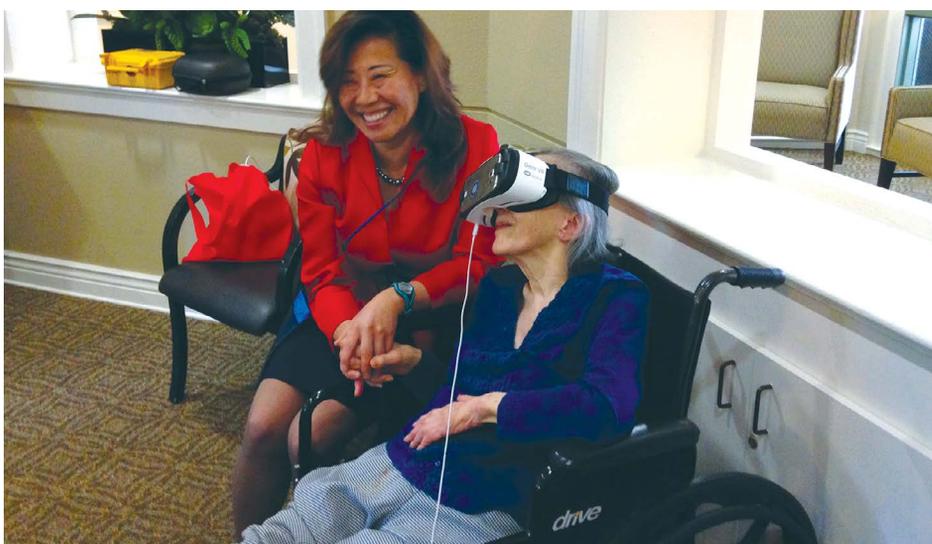
Recent successes include improving mood and cooperation with a once agitated senior who was nearly asked to leave his community. Find more at OneCaringTeam.com.

Kensington Place Redwood City, too, uses tools to make the lives of residents' with memory loss safer, more fulfilled and enjoyable. A high tech system monitors residents for wakefulness, pacing, even bathroom habits without compromising privacy or peace of mind.

This helps caregivers to be responsive to needs as they occur. The advanced "Haven" neighborhood boasts an open kitchen with cool-touch induction cooktops under the granite and beautifully plated options to interact with rather than a lengthy and complicated menu.

with Stanford Internist, Bryant Lin, MD, to create an app to unify communication between the patient, hospital physicians, primary care doctors, patient navigators, care communities and family in a single conversation.

They are working to effectively clarify the often many moving parts of senior's life from home to the emergency room to surgery to recovery to a rehabilitation center so that important information, appointments and medicine are not missed or delayed. Trials will begin soon and you can watch their progress at <http://zingcares.com>.



Enjoying a virtual tour of Hawaii

Simple pleasures like on-demand movies, projecting karaoke onto the big screen via iPad and long distance video calling have all been helpful for residents to connect with each other and the world around them. In fact, a couple residents have smart phones and love Snapchat®!

There is much more coming, too, thanks to local entrepreneurs, educational institutions, investors, and organizations like Aging2.0 fostering innovation in growing older. For instance, Stanford alumni and Biodesigner, Theo Tam, is teaming up

Senior care is a burgeoning arena where out-of-the-box thinkers are needed. Thankfully, there are already several looking for ways to make aging kinder and gentler.

Til then, though, eat your veggies!

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