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## Questions to Ask Series

Aging in Place and Assistive Technology

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# Questions to Ask Series

## Aging in Place and Assistive Technology

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*Dear Viewer,*

In today's world, the uncertainty of the economy and healthcare changes make many seniors wonder what lies ahead for them as they retire and make plans for their "Golden" years of life. For some this means not being able to afford assisted living or that dream retirement home. For caregivers this means increased demands of caring for aging parents that cannot afford the healthcare they had hoped for. Many parents do not want to move from their homes and certainly do not want to burden their children with caregiving; they have their own lives to live. So, what can one do as one heads into their retirement years? The answer is not simple and can be complex, but for most, it is Aging in Place.

**Regards, The Staff at [www.SeniorsResourceGuide.com](http://www.SeniorsResourceGuide.com)**

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## Introduction to The Seniors E-Guide

[www.SeniorsEGuide.com](http://www.SeniorsEGuide.com)

Our Seniors E-Guide is an Adobe Acrobat® format commonly called a pdf. By creating an e-guide (meaning electronic book) we are saving resources like trees and producing less pollution. The more important benefit is that our e-guides are quick references and many have links to companies providing senior services in your area. We hope you will find what you are looking for. If you do not send us an email – [email us now](#).

## Aging in Place and Assistive Technology

### What does it mean to Age in Place?

What Aging in Place means is remaining in your own home for the later years of your life; not moving into a smaller home, assisted living, or a retirement community etcetera. Aging in Place is the alternative to these retirement options and what a better place to age, than in ones own home where all is familiar. Does this mean changes will not need to be made? No, changes in the home will gradually take place, such as helps for mobility and safety as one may decline in years. In a positive vein, it is the best choice for many, because one can continue in an independent lifestyle and often remain very active. In our day of modern technology, this very topic of aging in place has become the forefront of inventive ideas to allow seniors to remain in their own home with the ongoing development and implementation of Assistive Technology.

### Things to consider while Aging in Place:

- Making your home safe – Aging in Place will require home modifications and often-structural changes. Consider what your financial need will be for such changes and who is available to make these changes under state and county codes.
- Living with Chronic Diseases at home – Consider what type of supports you will need in the future and perhaps now with caring for yourself or a loved one with a chronic disease.
- In-home caregivers and or companions – Take time to decide on what options there are for In home care and companions that will fit your lifestyle and needs. Perhaps you may want to consider a Geriatric Care Manager
- Understanding Risks involved – Consider carefully with your family and senior professionals what the risks are of staying in your own home as you age and make a care plan. Taking action now is the best plan.
- Transportation – Sometimes as we age driving becomes difficult and it is good to have a backup plan for transportation.
- Having that talk with Children – Take charge of your life now so your children will not have to decide for you, as your aging needs change. Have that long awaited talk about making known to your family what your plans and needs are for aging place.

- Making a Care Plan – A care plan is crucial for one to keep control of ones life from the standpoint of finances and health concerns while aging in place.

Note: While most Americans would rather choose to remain in their homes during their Golden years and often it is possible, there are some cases to consider when safety is priority for an aging senior. One must consider other alternatives for care such as a nursing home, assisted living or In-Home health care especially.

## **What is Assistive Technology?**

Assistive technology is a term now popularly used to refer to adaptive, assistive or rehabilitation products or devices designed towards providing greater independence to those with disabilities or limited abilities typically caused by the aging process. Assistive Technology products can assist people with a variety of tasks and improve their quality of life and allowing many to remain at home and Age in Place.

## **How can Assistive Technology help while Aging in Place?**

Assistive Technology now available for the Boomer generation and their parents is the key to successful Aging in Place. Universities and Government funded agencies have began a work in designing an ever-increasing base of Assistive Technology items to further the ability of aging adults to remain in their homes with a safe comfortable environment. These items can facilitate in areas of mobility, cognitive disorders, safety, and much more. Assistive Technology is the synergy behind Aging in Place and provides the foundation for the Aging American population.

The Assistive Technology industry is growing fast and this includes new technology that will allow families to monitor their aging parents at home through computer networking as well as enabling health care professionals and home health care agencies the ability to offer families healthcare information and care initiatives for their aging loved ones.

## **Assistive Technology Product Ideas to start out with:**

- The Safeway Step- to retrofit bath and shower for safety
- Handrails for shower
- Medical alert system
- Amplified phone with caller ID
- Anywhere light
- TV ears
- Door and faucet grips
- Wireless keyboard
- Hands free magnifying glass
- Stair and Bathtub lifts
- Bulb changing kit
- Ipad

Note: When purchasing Assistive Technology to Age in Place, it is not only important to consider what will be adaptive for your needs. It is also important to be sure you are purchasing quality equipment and devices from a reputable dealer and/or manufacturer. Be sure to do some research first and ask questions. Check if there are warranties with the equipment and see if your health insurance may cover some if not all of the cost. Many assistive technology items are considered private pay items.

## **Assistive Technology Resources**

### **Assistive Technology Industry Association - ATIA**

This association has a searchable database of assistive technology companies that are members of the association – [CLICK HERE](#)

Actual Link: <https://www.atia.org/about-atia/membership-directory/page/2/>

### **Here is a list of companies that provide Assistive Technology Products:**

[www.ablenetinc.com](http://www.ablenetinc.com)

[www.ednabfashions.com](http://www.ednabfashions.com)

[www.livable.org](http://www.livable.org)

[www.accelelevator.com](http://www.accelelevator.com)

[www.elderdepot.com](http://www.elderdepot.com)

[www.mobility123.com/](http://www.mobility123.com/)

[www.activeforever.com](http://www.activeforever.com)

[www.enablemart.com](http://www.enablemart.com)

[www.mvmsinc.com](http://www.mvmsinc.com)

[www.adaptiveaccess.com](http://www.adaptiveaccess.com)

[www.firststreetonline.com](http://www.firststreetonline.com)

[www.nextavenue.org/](http://www.nextavenue.org/)

[www.allegromedical.com](http://www.allegromedical.com)

[www.goldviolin.blair.com](http://www.goldviolin.blair.com)

[www.saferwheelchairs.com](http://www.saferwheelchairs.com)

[www.assistiveware.com](http://www.assistiveware.com)

[www.grandcare.com/](http://www.grandcare.com/)

[www.stander.com/](http://www.stander.com/)

[www.buckandbuck.com](http://www.buckandbuck.com)

[www.homemods.org/](http://www.homemods.org/)

[www.clothesforseniors.com](http://www.clothesforseniors.com)

[www.homesensers.com/](http://www.homesensers.com/)

[www.clothingsolutions.com](http://www.clothingsolutions.com)

[www.comfortclothing.com](http://www.comfortclothing.com)

[www.cookstop.com](http://www.cookstop.com)

## **How to choose Assistive Technology**

Older adults should carefully evaluate their needs before purchasing AT. Using AT may change the mix of services that they require or affect the way that those services are provided. Needs assessment and planning are very important.

Usually, a needs assessment is most effective when done by a team working with the older adult in a place where the AT will be used. For example, someone who has trouble communicating or hearing might consult his or her doctor, an audiology specialist, a speech-language therapist, and family and friends. Together, they can identify precise challenges and help select the most effective devices available at the lowest cost. A professional member of the team, such as the audiology specialist, can also arrange for any training needed to use the equipment.

When considering AT, it is useful to consider high-tech and low-tech solutions. Older adults should also think about how their needs might change over time. High-tech devices tend to be

more expensive but may address many different needs. Low-tech equipment is usually less expensive but also less adaptable.

Source: <http://www.eldercare.gov/>

## **Paying for Assistive Technology**

January 2016 - Right now, no single private insurance plan or public program will pay for all types of Assistive Technology under any circumstances. However, Medicare Part B will cover up to 80% of the cost, if the items are durable medical equipment. Durable Medical Equipment are devices that are "primarily and customarily used to serve a medical purpose, and generally are not useful to a person in the absence of illness or injury." Contact Medicare to determine whether a particular type of AT is covered.

**Medicare - 1-800-633-4227 TTY: 1-877-486-2048**

Depending on where you live, the state-run Medicaid program may pay for some Assistive Technology. Keep in mind that when Medicaid covers part of the cost, the benefits do not usually provide the total amount needed to buy an expensive piece of equipment, such as a power wheelchair.

Older adults who are eligible for veteran benefits may be eligible for assistance from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), which has a model structure in place to pay for the large volume of equipment that it buys. The VA also invests in training people to use assistive devices.

**VA Health Benefits Service Center - 1-877-222- 8387**

Subsidy programs provide some types of Assistive Technology at a reduced cost or for free. Many businesses and nonprofit groups offer discounts, grants, or rebates to get consumers to try a specific product. Older adults should be cautious about participating in subsidy programs run by businesses with commercial interests in the product or service because of the potential for fraud.

Source: <http://www.eldercare.gov/>

## **Books on Aging in Place:**

***Aging in Place: Safely Living In Your "Home Sweet Home" Until You're 100 Plus***; by Donna Christner-Lile, NCC, RPC

***The Senior Solution: A Family Guide to Keeping Seniors Home for Life***; by Valerie VanBooven-Whitsell, RN, BSN, PGCM

***Retirement Life by Design***; by Pamela Pope, OT, Elder Care Specialist

***Making Your Home Senior-Friendly: A Guide for Family and Friends***; by Chuck Oaks

***Universal Design for the Home: Great-Looking, Great-Living Design for All Ages, Abilities, and Circumstances***; by Wendy A. Jordan

***Who Gets Grandma's Yellow Pie Plate?***; by University of Minnesota Extension Service

***Caregiving Without Regrets***; by Dr. Vicki Rackner



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### **Have Questions?**

Contact SeniorsResourceGuide.com by email: [SRGinfo@SeniorsResourceGuide.com](mailto:SRGinfo@SeniorsResourceGuide.com)  
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