

SECOND ANNUAL “AGING AND CAREGIVING DIGITAL HEALTH REVERSE PITCHES”: Expert Panel for Digital Health Entrepreneurs on Aging and Caregiving

On October 11, 2018, the Massachusetts eHealth Institute (MeHI) in collaboration with Aging2.0 Boston convened our second annual “Aging and Caregiving Digital Health Reverse Pitches” event. Hosted by Babson Boston, 90 entrepreneurs, students and executives in the aging space came together to explore the use of innovative tech solutions to support healthy aging and caregiving. The ‘reverse pitch’-style event allowed customers to pitch tech entrepreneurs on the challenges they face and used the ensuing collaborative discussion to brainstorm novel solutions.

At this event, MeHI’s Director, Laurance Stuntz, discussed leveraging Massachusetts’ strength in technology and innovation and highlighted some of the resources available to startups at massdigitalhealth.org, including the recently launched [Digital Health Marketplace](#) designed to connect digital health companies with customers. He also highlighted the importance of these ‘reverse pitch’-style events, noting that customers are looking to partner with entrepreneurs and companies to design solutions that address their real world challenges in ways that will be of optimal benefit to their consumers and users.

Keynote speaker Alice Bonner, Massachusetts Secretary of Elder Affairs, shared her own personal experience as an informal caregiver, discussed how technology can improve caregiving, and emphasized the Baker Administration’s goal of making Massachusetts the “Silicon Valley for innovative technology, products and services related to aging.”

The Reverse Pitch panel, moderated by Sally Abrahms, an award-winning writer focused on 50+ issues, included:

- **Andy Miller**, SVP Innovation and Product Development, AARP: “What new, disruptive technologies can help consumers transition to their normal selves after surgery?” Andy presented statistics showing that more than 50% of people over 65 will have at least one surgery, with more than 25% of those surgeries resulting in some sort of cognitive impact on the patient. This cognitive impact costs patients in the US more than \$160 Billion per year. AARP also spoke about their experience with past partnerships to build startups and launch businesses. Andy shared insight into what makes successful partnership between entrepreneurs and investors.



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- **Chetan Parekh**, Associate Brand Director & Innovation Portfolio Leader, Proctor and Gamble: “We want to keep people at home longer as they age.” Proctor and Gamble is focused on innovative solutions that will enable aging at home, including solutions related to hydration, mobility, skin health management, showering, bathing and preventing falls.
- **Leigh Anne Cappello**, SVP Brand Strategy and Marketing, Benchmark Senior Living: “We need to be able to leverage technology in more ‘invisible ways’ for the senior market so that we garner all the benefits of information, prediction, and social connectivity without sacrificing the all-important human connection.” Leigh Anne also talked about the need for connections to caregivers, inter-generational connections, and the need to create solutions for seniors that do not scream “look at me, I’m old.”
- **Peter Ross**, CEO and Co-Founder, Senior Helpers: “We need technology that helps us communicate with clinicians about how their patient is doing at home.” Senior Helpers has more than 300 franchises nationwide, employing about 30,000 paid caregivers. Peter also highlighted that starting on January 1, 2019, Medicare Advantage plans will be allowed to reimburse for home care visits. Senior Helpers is very interested in technology that can track home care visits and can provide information back to the Provider and plans.



Caregiving is something that impacts all people of all ages at some point in their life. As Rosalyn Carter famously said: “There are only four types of people in the world: Those who are caregivers; Those who are currently caregivers; Those who will be caregivers; And those who will need caregivers.” As the demographics of the nation and of Massachusetts change, with the aging population increasing unlike before, the need for caregiving will also continue to rise. This event allowed for entrepreneurs and customers to engage in discussions addressing how Massachusetts can best leverage new technologies to increase support for family caregiving and caregivers in the Commonwealth.



The Massachusetts eHealth Institute (MeHI): @MassEHealth

Learn more about MeHI’s Aging and Caregiving Initiative: [Aging and Caregiving Initiative program webpage](#).

Learn more about the MeHI’s Digital Health Marketplace, view the [Marketplace Program](#). If you are a digital health company or customer of digital health solutions, [register today](#) to be a part of the Marketplace program.

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