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Technology Design for Successful Aging: Support for Social Engagement

Abstract: The Human Factors and Aging Laboratory (www.hfaging.org) is specifically oriented toward developing a fundamental understanding of aging and bringing that knowledge to bear on design issues important to the enjoyment, quality and safety of everyday activities of older adults. Embedded in the overarching philosophy of our laboratory is the belief in the importance of understanding successful aging. The concept of successful aging refers to factors that allow individuals to function effectively and autonomously as they age. Our research does not emphasize loss of function associated with aging; rather, we wish to understand factors that are responsible for retaining and enhancing a person's ability to function in later life. There is much potential for technology to enable older adults to age successfully. In this presentation I will focus specifically on support for social engagement, connectedness, and community participation. I will first provide a brief overview of the importance of social engagement for the quality of life of older adults. I will discuss examples of how current technologies can be used to support social engagement (e.g., apps, mobile devices, social networking, in-home assistive technologies) as well as how our team is involved in using new technologies (e.g., robotics, telepresence, virtual reality) to enable autonomy and independence for older adults.

Biography: Wendy A. Rogers, Ph.D. – Shahid and Ann Carlson Khan Professor of Applied Health Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Her primary appointment is in the Department of Kinesiology and Community Health. She also has an appointment in the Educational Psychology Department and is an affiliate faculty member of the Beckman Institute and the Illinois Informatics Institute. She received her B.A. from the University of Massachusetts - Dartmouth, and her M.S. (1989) and Ph.D. (1991) from the Georgia Institute of Technology. She is a Certified Human Factors Professional (BCPE Certificate #1539). Her research interests include design for aging; technology acceptance; human-automation interaction; aging-in-place; human-robot interaction; aging with disabilities; cognitive aging; and skill acquisition and training. She is the Program Director of CHART (Collaborations in Health, Aging, Research, and Technology), and the Director of the Human Factors and Aging Laboratory (www.hfaging.org). Her research is funded by: the National Institutes of Health (National Institute on Aging) as part of the Center for Research and Education on Aging and Technology Enhancement (www.create-center.org); and the Department of Health and Human Services (National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research; NIDILRR) Rehabilitation Engineering Research Center on *Technologies to Support Successful Aging with Disability* (www.techsage.gatech.edu). She is a fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA), the Gerontological Society of America (GSA), and the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society (HFES). She currently serves as the Chief Editorial Advisor for APA.

