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UNLEASHING THE
POWER AND PASSION
OF NURSING

Meet
Anita
Depatie,
a nurse who
enables
more older
adults to live
at home



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MOST ADULTS who are 65 or older say they want to continue living at home as long as possible. Research by Anita Depatie, a nurse and alumna of the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC Davis, investigates how innovative technology may enable older adults to do just that.

For her Master of Science—Leadership Track thesis project, Depatie conducted a study that examined rural, older adults' readiness to adopt mobile-health technologies to manage chronic diseases and promote health. Finding ways to encourage the effective use of mobile-health technology among older adults in rural areas has many possible benefits, in Depatie's view. First, this technology could provide vital connections to health care in areas where providers are either far away or in short supply. Second, by permitting older adults to monitor their health conditions, technology could empower these individuals to continue living in their homes and prevent more costly interventions.

"Creating ways to deliver and monitor health care among older adults who live at home will be crucial in the coming decades as the population ages," Depatie said. "If we can get programs into the community to help people care for themselves, we can improve health and reduce the burden on the health-care system



Master's-degree alumna Anita Depatie demonstrates a blood pressure monitoring tool that operates on an iPad.

She conducted mobile-health technology demonstrations—and complimentary blood pressure screenings—for older adults at two senior centers in rural Amador and Calaveras counties in Northern California. Using an iPad and a special application, Depatie showed participants how to read their blood pressure measurements and enable users to track and share the results.

Following the demonstration, Depatie conducted anonymous surveys with the participants to determine their interest in the technology and discover what factors might prevent them from doing so.

"Technology has great potential to help people monitor their health status, manage their medications, remind them about health-care appointments and

"I think technology can be a great tool for helping older adults succeed in the community and in their homes."

—Master's-degree alumna Anita Depatie

that we have now." The incorporation of innovative technology into nursing research, education and practice is a core attribute of the

School of Nursing and the Nursing Science and Health-Care Leadership Graduate Degree Program.

Depatie analyzed what factors promote and hinder rural, older adults' adoption of mobile technologies for health-related purposes in the home. The study grew out of Depatie's love for technology and her experience working in home-health care with older adults.

help them access health information," Depatie said. "I think technology can be a great tool for helping older adults succeed in the community and in their homes, and increase access to health care for those in remote rural areas."

Blood pressure monitoring is just one example of how mobile technology could be used to promote health in homes, Depatie said. Mobile-health technologies exist, for instance, to help patients monitor their weight and share this information with their providers.

"Weight fluctuations are an important warning sign among people with congestive heart failure," Depatie said, "and catching a weight gain quickly can help prevent hospitalizations among older adults with this condition."

Currently, Depatie works for a worldwide health management company to help individuals who face complex health problems manage their care at home. She provides education and access to health-related resources to her clients, who live all over Northern California, Oregon and Washington. Depatie hopes to incorporate her knowledge of mobile-health technology to improve services and extend her reach into rural areas.

Depatie's graduate study was supported in part through a Quinby-Young Scholarship for Healthy Aging.

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