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## Five Recent Voice-Enabled Innovations for Older Adults 2020

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**Voice-enabled innovation softly races ahead.** Technology innovation announcements whiz by at what seems to be a breakneck pace. Consider [Amazon's Whisper Mode](#) <sup>[1]</sup> – “I think you just whispered to me – Sau ‘turn on’ Whisper Mode.” Not just for insomniacs, imagine its utility for the faint-voiced older adult wanting to ask a question. Or consider [Apple Family Setup](#) <sup>[2]</sup>, which enables an Apple Watch to be set up and used without an iPhone, enabling texts, calls and GPS location. Or in-Car voice technology like Garmin Speak-Plus for directions without a screen (that’s a plus). Here are five from recent times:

**[Amazon Care Hub](#)** <sup>[3]</sup>. "Care Hub represents the [next iteration of smart speakers](#) <sup>[4]</sup>, which have evolved from just playing music or providing the weather forecast, to enabling home security services and now supporting senior citizens at home. With Amazon's Care Hub, users can receive notifications of their loved ones' own Alexa interactions to monitor their activity throughout the day or ensure they have been reminded to take their medication, for example. A user can also “drop in” on a loved one by video calling them within the app. And most importantly, if a loved one uses their voice to call for help, Alexa will notify the user. ([Alexa cannot call 911](#) <sup>[5]</sup>, but will notify the designated emergency contact.)" Learn more at [Care Hub](#) <sup>[3]</sup>. Not yet released.

**[Amazon Guard Plus](#)**. <sup>[6]</sup> "Guard Plus will add a more robust "sounds of activity" detector, which will listen for doors opening or closing and other sounds associated with unwanted visitors. Second, Guard Plus will bring deterrence features, for instance triggering Alexa to play a recording of dogs barking if a security camera catches someone sneaking around the back of the house while you're away. Finally, the Guard Plus will add a new hands-free emergency help line, run by a third-party company, to connect users to emergency services like police, the fire department or emergency contacts." Learn more at [CNET](#) <sup>[6]</sup>.

**[Constant Companion](#)**. <sup>[7]</sup> "Constant Companion uses voice technology and video to create engaging experiences for older adults, anyone living alone, and senior communities. The company's mission is to make people's lives better by increasing their connection and protection. Constant Companion's systems are supported by advanced security to protect privacy, as well as professional 24/7 monitoring. The monitoring system is voice activated, eliminating the need for wearable devices. The company protects individuals throughout the U.S. and partners with home care providers and assisted living facilities in about 200 cities nationwide." Learn more at [Constantcompanion.com](#) <sup>[7]</sup>.

**[Google Nest Hub Max](#)** <sup>[8]</sup>. "The Nest Hub Max, with its large screen, loud speakers, and built-in camera, is suitable device for keeping connected with family and friends Google Assistant and Nest teams have, well, teamed up, to [improve that user experience for seniors](#) <sup>[9]</sup> to make their lives easier during these times. Nest Hub Maxes will have a pre-loaded shortlist of contacts that will

make it easier to make a video call with as few taps as needed. There will also be new “What can you do?” informational cards that will give users hints at the many things they can ask Google Assistant to do for them." [Piloted at Merrill Gardens](#) [10]. Learn more at [SlashGear](#) [8].

**[HandsFree Health Medical Alert](#)** [11]. "HandsFree Health™ announced a medical alert system that integrates 24/7 emergency monitoring with the popular voice assistant, WellBe. The new medical alert experience uniquely combines the WellBe® Emergency Alert Smartwatch, WellBe voice assistant, and WellBe app for wellness support with emergency services help. WellBe Emergency Alert Smartwatch expands on the HandsFree Health voice technology platform with a sleek smartwatch that provides the comfort of emergency support directly through the watch or through the WellBe voice assistant device. The smartwatch can be used all day long as a heart rate monitor and pedometer and along with WellBe Smart Speaker, the HandsFree Health platform offers medication reminders, appointment reminders, and can record blood pressure, glucose and weight." Learn more at [HandsFree Health](#) [11].

**category tags:** [Voice First/AI/Voice Assistants](#) [12], [Telehealth-RPM-Voice Health](#) [13]

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[1] <https://www.the-ambient.com/how-to/turn-on-alexa-whisper-mode-1218>

[2] <https://www.cnn.com/2020/09/15/apple-watch-family-settings-feature-requires-no-iphone-a-first.html>

[3] <https://www.amazon.com/b?node=21390531011>

[4] <https://venturebeat.com/2020/09/24/amazon-launches-care-hub-for-family-to-monitor-senior-citizens/>

[5] <https://www.digitaltrends.com/home/alexa-care-hub-helps-keep-families-connected/>

[6] <https://www.cnet.com/news/amazon-echo-alexa-guard-plus-transforms-smart-speaker-into-security-device/>

[7] <https://www.constantcompanion.com/>

[8] <https://www.slashgear.com/google-nest-hub-max-to-offer-an-easier-experience-for-seniors-19621133/>

[9] <https://www.blog.google/products/google-nest/nest-hub-max-covid-19-merrill-garden/>

[10] <https://www.mcknightsseniorliving.com/home/news/google-pilots-nest-hub-max-at-merrill-gardens-retirement-communities/>

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