

# The Rise of Home Healthcare

Mary K. Logan

**N**inety million Americans live with chronic medical conditions, and experts say that 75% of direct healthcare costs go to managing these conditions. Add to this the expectations of Baby Boomers that we will live longer and continue to hide our ages and conditions until we drop (who are we fooling). Throw in healthcare reform, evidence-based medicine, and advances in technology. Now you are seeing the perfect environment for the explosive growth of home healthcare.

It's easy to envision our own homes in 10 years, thoughtfully designed for various types of monitoring devices, where a medical device looks like a piece of furniture; where we subscribe to various apps that turn our phone into an electronic nurse's aide and load data automatically into our physician's network; and where we "manage" our own diseases in the comfort of an easy chair with help from an assortment of special equipment all designed with the consumer in mind. It's also a scary thought from the perspective of a non-technical person who struggles to figure out how to use the universal remote control for a simple television set and DVD player.

AAMI's constituents historically have been people whose work focuses on medical devices used primarily in controlled healthcare settings. Their—your—world is



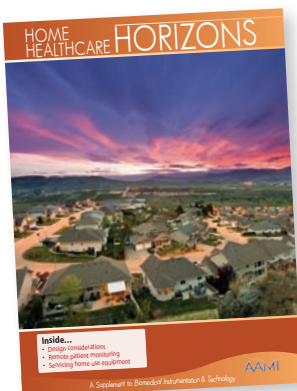
being challenged with healthcare moving out of those controlled settings. Clinical technology managers must begin to think about managing equipment beyond the walls of the traditional acute care environment—any time, any place.

In developing this issue of *Horizons*, we recognized that we need to help our constituents better understand how the home healthcare arena is going to impact all of us. How can good design make home use devices safer and easier to use? What is the U.S. Food and Drug Administration doing in this arena, and

what standards efforts are underway? How should home use devices be serviced, and how does connectivity and remote monitoring factor in?

Regardless of your role, these articles will help you think about the special challenges that need to be considered with home healthcare devices, from design to maintenance. With every challenge, there is an opportunity, and we hope you see yours in the pages that follow.

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ON THE  
COVER

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*Home Healthcare Horizons* is a special, one-time magazine focused exclusively on home healthcare issues. The latest in a series of special *Horizons* publications released by AAMI, it examines the challenges faced as medical devices migrate away from controlled, acute care environments into the home environment.

Founded in 1967, AAMI is a unique alliance of more than 6,000 members united by the common goal of increasing the understanding and beneficial use of medical instrumentation.