Information Systems for the Social Wellbeing of Seniors

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Introduction

• Ageing population placing severe strain on health systems and national budgets
• E-health is perceived as a means to provide a high level of service while reducing the economic burden
• Also enormous benefits for those living in regional and remote areas
The Issue

- A large effort has been put into research and development of technical solutions to medical issues of monitoring devices and Internet-based consultations
  - Less effort into how to enhance the emotional and social needs of the ageing population
- Interviews with health-care providers reveal significant factors affecting the well-being of the elderly at home are isolation and loneliness
The Issue

• Lack of mobility of folk living into their 80s and 90s restricts social interaction
  – Those who move into independent self-managed units of full residential institutions are often dislocated from family and friends

• Those folk now in their 60s and 70s are increasingly more computer and Internet savvy

• Online communities exist but are created with top-down approach
  – Need for bottom-up approach
Proposed Research

• Seek to answer two related questions
  – To what extent can the elderly use information systems to address issues of loneliness and isolation?
  – How can systems be designed to meet the disparate needs of isolated elderly users?
• Explores the extent to which seniors participate in online communities, their capabilities for doing so and the potential for the creation and use of online communities by isolated seniors
Our Approach

• Research applies concepts from Complexity Theory to support an action research methodology

• Interventions will be carried out to provide incentives, resources and attractors among groups of senior Australians

• Explores the potential of social media

• Leverages on NBN rollout