

# Connect

September 2023

  
Global Centre for  
Modern Ageing

## A New Age for Asia-Pacific - Special Edition

Profound transformation is underway in the APAC region, marked by innovative thinking, and cutting-edge technologies. People-centred design is key.

### **A New Frontier for Ageing Well in Hong Kong**

Discover how Hong Kong is building momentum in the Innovation and Technology sector, through strategic investment in the ageing ecosystem, and the application of gerontechnology that enhances older adults' quality of life.

### **Celebrating Excellence in Innovation**

The GCMA was delighted to return as a 'Prize of Choice' for two significant awards at Ageing Asia's World Ageing Festival 2023. Inside, meet this year's worthy winners, *BeKind Solutions* and *Salvation Army Peacehaven*.

### **World Ageing Festival Highlights**

Read about our experience at this year's dynamic World Ageing Festival, held in Singapore, and unlock key learnings from GCMA's well-attended Virtual Masterclass on 'Designing for All Ages'.

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# Welcome from CEO Julianne Parkinson



## **Welcome to the Global Centre for Modern Ageing's special Asia-Pacific region edition.**

Despite our myriad cultural and societal differences, each of us longs to maintain our wellbeing, health, and quality of life.

Regardless of our spoken language, geographic location, or lifestyle, we are united in our shared aspiration to live comfortable, connected and fulfilling lives. That's why, as experts in the Longevity Economy, the Global Centre for Modern Ageing® applies a holistic lens to the ageing phenomenon. We are committed to improving the lives of older people wherever they live.

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*Within less than 30 years, it's projected that 1 in 4 people in the Asia Pacific region (or 1.3B adults) will be aged 60 plus.*

*Five of the world's oldest countries will be located at Australia's doorstep, with adults 65 years and over accounting for more than one third of the population in China & Taiwan, Korea, Japan and Singapore.*

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Across the entire region, there exists a pressing need for governments, businesses, researchers, and communities to join together with citizens, in order to identify and solve critical, unmet needs at scale.

Already, supply chains spurred by emerging technologies are seeking to better understand the changing needs of older populations, and racing to assemble to meet the changing needs of people at home.

Ageing Asia's recent World Ageing Festival in Singapore was a convergence of established suppliers and new market entrants from around the globe, offering a diverse array of solutions. Robotic companions, Dementia Tech, daily living solutions, and remote health monitoring technologies were on display, alongside examples of innovative precinct design, place-making for built environments, and community-led wellbeing initiatives.

At the GCMA, we are privileged to learn from the lived experience of older people, their friends, families, care providers, and other stakeholders in the wider community.

Through our nuanced understanding of older adults' expectations, aspirations and pain points, we are equipped to inform and guide the supply side, including product developers, to respond with usable, likeable and scalable products and services, that are genuinely fit for end users' purposes.

Such insights can inform capital investments and facilitate more effective allocation of public funding and resources. Strategic investment decisions, whether public, private, or a blend, are key to ensuring that beneficial innovations find their way into people's homes, workplaces, shopping precincts, transportation corridors, allied health and community centres.

On behalf of the GCMA team and our global network of partners, it brings us immense pleasure to present this edition's snapshot of advancements taking place worldwide. These innovations play a pivotal role in supporting the advancement of Ageing Well to the Asia-Pacific region.

**- Julianne Parkinson, CEO**

## New Frontier Roadmap for Hong Kong The Role Gerontech Can Play

At the GCMA, we recognise that ageing, while a shared experience in many aspects, is deeply intertwined with the context of our living environments.

Enter Hong Kong — a vivid illustration underscoring the importance and necessity of adopting a comprehensive, collaborative approach, in the formulation of a gerontechnology platform.

Hong Kong, as a nation, has embarked on a multi-year, integrated response to address complex challenges and promising opportunities.

### What is Gerontechnology?

The term describes a rapidly expanding category of tech-enabled products, services and solutions, specifically tailored to the needs and aspirations of older adults. Spanning many need domains, from health and housing to communication and leisure, gerontechnology can aid in the activities of daily living, supporting older people to lead dignified, independent lives, enriched by comfort and social connection.

The successful ageing well solutions of the future will stem from a close collaboration between the supply side and the demand side to ensure end-users receive fit-for-purpose offerings that enhance well-being through adoption.



### What's involved?

In 2020, the Social Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Fund appointed a collaborative coalition of nine organisations with The Hong Kong Council of Social Service (HKCSS) as an Intermediary, to build an inclusive platform to facilitate the development of the gerontechnology ecosystem in Hong Kong.

The Global Centre for Modern Ageing (GCMA) joined this Consortium, as one of the Collaborative Partners, working together with local stakeholders, preparing the Blueprint Strategy Report which depicted the directions and roadmap of setting up a Gerontechnology Living Lab in Hong Kong - with literature review, ecosystem mapping research, values assessment research, protocol testing and recommendations.

Importantly, for the demand - and supply - sides, the Report highlighted the potential of the city's living lab innovation ecosystem to spur adoption of fit-for-purpose gerontech, transforming the experience of ageing and rehabilitation through technology.

The GCMA has been working closely with the collaborative partners and the HKCSS to build the Gerontechnology Platform in a continuous manner.

# Celebrating Excellence

## Ageing Asia World Ageing Festival 2023

### Eldercare Awards & Start Up Winners

The Ageing Asia Startup of the Year Award for 2023 was awarded to **BeKind Solutions Pte Ltd**, a Singapore-based social enterprise. Established in 2017 by Tan Lee Tuan, the company focuses on innovative solutions that enhance the well-being, comfort, and independence of older people. With a successful track record in East Asia, BeKind Solutions has meticulously developed and tested products tailored to the specific needs of older adults in the region. Operating in Singapore and exporting to Malaysia and Hong Kong, the company is now exploring opportunities in the Australian market.

**Salvation Army Peacehaven**, a long-standing institution, has secured the Ageing Asia Eldercare Innovation of the Year - Technology award. Led by Executive Director Low Mui Lang (Madam Low), the nursing home has developed the humanoid-enabled therapy program named "Dexie." This program employs humanoid robots for therapeutic interactions and stimulating activities, resulting in significant improvements in client engagement during exercises and cognitive tasks. Salvation Army Peacehaven's commitment to innovative care is further evidenced by its international accreditation by the Australian Council on

Healthcare Standards' EQUiP Residential Care Standards. The facility also leads the Jade Circle initiative, a collaboration with Lien Foundation and Khoo Chwee Neo Foundation, which focuses on elevating dementia care standards through autonomy-focused care models.

These awards highlight the invaluable contributions of BeKind Solutions and Salvation Army Peacehaven in advancing the care and well-being of our ageing population. Their innovative endeavours serve as a testament to the positive impact that dedication and ingenuity can have on improving the lives of older adults.

(L to R) Janice Chia, Julianne Parkinson, Ms LOW Yen Ling (Singapore's Minister of State, Ministry of Trade & Industry / Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth) and Dr Kelvin Tan (Singapore University of Social Sciences) meet LOBOT, a Japanese robot that provides love and companionship.



# CEO Awarded Global Ageing Influencer 2023

"Receiving the prestigious Ageing Asia Global Ageing Influencer Award at the 11th Asia Pacific Eldercare Innovation Awards in 2023 was an unexpected honour.

The GCMA's contemporary network champions the Modern Ageing® movement, which includes highlighting and informing the role AgeTech® plays in contributing to the longevity economy - an undeniable, global growth sector brimming with economic and social opportunities.

This award for 2023 celebrates the international importance of leading-edge, evidence-based, human-centred research, to spark innovation, commercialisation, and



Julianne Parkinson receiving Ageing Influencer Award from Dr Lam Ching-choi

the advancement of the quality of life for older people around the world.

Living longer without living better is not good enough. And while people's unmet needs related to ageing are often universally shared, everyone's journey is personal.

I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Janice Chia, the talented team at Ageing Asia, and the international Ageing Asia community. It was made all the more special by having Dr. the Honourable Lam Ching-choi bestow the award."

Julianne Parkinson

# Ageing Asia Masterclass

The GCMA conducted a virtual master class titled "Designing for All Ages: Creating Products for Every Age and Ability" at the Ageing Asia World Ageing Festival.

The master class attracted approximately 30 participants, primarily from Southeast Asia, including product designers, manufacturers, distributors, and entrepreneurs. The session focused on the importance of developing tailored products for older adults and featured engaging case studies that provided valuable insights into addressing their unique needs.

Notable takeaways underscored the importance of usability, accessibility, and actively involving older adults in the design process. The participants' high level of engagement was evident through their active participation and enthusiastic messages in the chatbox.

The impact of the master class extended beyond the session, with participants connecting with our team on LinkedIn and expressing personal appreciation, highlighting the workshop's value and influence on their approach to inclusive product design.

Dr. Saeed Pahlevan Sharif



Dr Saeed Pahlevan Sharif and Kristy Ashton



Julianne Parkinson tours Project Futurus with (L-R) Elaine Leung, Peter Kwok and Dorothy Wong from The Hong Kong Council of Social Service, alongside Stephanie Law (Culture Homes), Queenie Man (Project Futurus) and Kenneth Chan (Culture Homes)

## GCMA visits Hong Kong

New frontiers in ageing well require pathways to be forged and ecosystems to be developed and grown. Connectivity and shared understanding of each other's roles is key. It was a pleasure recently to connect in person with a number of the impressive leaders who form part of the evolving Hong Kong Gerontechnology ecosystem.

Special thanks to Grace Chan, Peter Kwok, Dorothy Wong and Elaine Leung for the tour of the Jockey Club "age at home" Gerontech Education and Retail Service Centre.

Thanks also to Stephanie Law and Kenneth Chan for leading the Culture Homes tour, and to Queenie Man for showcasing The Project Futurus.

It was also interesting to visit Hong Kong Housing Society's Elderly Resources Centre with Patrick Sze leading the tour.

Appreciation is extended to The Tanner Hill's team for showcasing their accommodation and community spaces and amenities.

Finally, a visit to Haven of Hope Christian Service Unit to share ideas with Dr Lam Ching-choi's dedicated team, including Grace Yew. We toured the latest refurbishments of the Service Unit including a thoughtfully designed, interactive courtyard.

Together this multifaceted, ecosystem guided tour provided the opportunity for the GCMA to listen, learn and share feedback and suggestions relating to ageing well in Hong Kong.



Julianne Parkinson with members of The Hong Kong Council of Social Service team (L-R) Peter Kwok, Grace Chan, Dorothy Wong and Elaine Leung.



# Commonwealth Government's Intergenerational Report released August 2023

The GCMA welcomes the Intergenerational Report that explores Australia's future.

What we highlight from the nation's debate is the active role older Australians can further play in meeting the nation's challenges as we strive for greater prosperity for all.

Our focus:

- Inclusive workforces of the future
- Skilling older Australians for cross-sectorial workforce demand
- The role AgeTech® can play in supporting people to live well at home
- Call out to product developers to independently test and validate new products aimed at older adults as part of their consumer target market.



*View our recent interview with Sky News Australia on the Intergenerational Report at [gcma.net.au](http://gcma.net.au)*

## A special thank you for supporting us in order to support others

We deeply appreciate and acknowledge the professional partnerships that support the GCMA's efforts in market. We extend our thanks to **Thomson Geer Lawyers**, communication experts **The Big Smoke Media Group**, and BDO for their meaningful contributions. The reason we partner so well is based on values alignment about the importance of ageing well and its role in strategically addressing rising and compelling, global market needs.

**Thomson Geer**  
Lawyers

**THE BIG SMOKE.**

**BDO**

## Looking Forward...

On 3 and 5 October 2023, CEO Julianne Parkinson will be speaking at the Ageing Asia Australasia Ageing Master Class - held in conjunction with the 12th Asia Pacific Eldercare Innovation Awards 2024 Global Launch.

The Master Class is a two-day, comprehensive deep dive into the future of aged and community care, exploring evidence-based practices and strategies, policy, as well as the transformational potential of AgeTech®.

**AUSTRALASIA AGEING MASTER CLASS**

Co-creation of sustainable innovations that address issues in ageing

Ms Julianne Parkinson, CEO, Global Centre for Modern Ageing, Australia

3 OCTOBER | SYDNEY | AUSTRALIA  
Ageing Asia 5 OCTOBER | MELBOURNE | AUSTRALIA

# Stay connected!



Have a query, or want to contribute?

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