

# Comcast Eyes Home Health Monitoring

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A couple years ago, Saturday Night Live spoofed how senior citizens use automated home assistant products such as Amazon's Echo by imagining a fictional product called Amazon Echo Silver—a device designed to help forgetful, hard of hearing seniors manage activities like turning up the thermostat. Now Comcast, the parent company of the network that broadcasts SNL, has entered the market for assistive devices intended to help the elderly age in place.

Comcast's device, which doesn't have a name yet but which reportedly has a "personality" like Amazon's Alexa, will enter the pilot stage later this year through partnerships with major hospitals.

"The device will monitor people's basic health metrics using ambient sensors, with a focus on whether someone is making frequent trips to the bathroom or spending more time than usual in bed. Comcast is also building tools for detecting falls," sources told CNBC.<sup>1</sup>

Additionally, Comcast is looking to provide the device to at-risk populations, including the elderly and individuals with disabilities, with no plans to only offer it to Comcast subscribers. The device will also not function like other devices that control light or television switches or perform internet searches. It will, however, be able to make emergency phone calls.

Comcast is the latest tech company to get into the home monitoring and healthcare device market, and like other home assistance, raises issues about data privacy for vulnerable populations. One market where Comcast could find traction with its device is providers that are financially penalized when Medicare patients return to the hospital within 30 days of discharge. There are several monitoring services for the aging-in-place market, and Comcast's broadband capabilities could help set it apart.

## Note

1. Farr, Christina. "Comcast is working on an in-home device to track people's health." CNBC. May 21, 2019. [www.cnbc.com/2019/05/21/comcast-working-on-home-health-device-similar-to-amazon-echo.html](http://www.cnbc.com/2019/05/21/comcast-working-on-home-health-device-similar-to-amazon-echo.html).

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