

# Connecting Seniors to Care: Implementing Amazon Alexa Technology into the Homes of Meals on Wheels (MOW) Clients

## A. Goal:

The Interfaith Ministries for Greater Houston (IMGH) Connecting Seniors to Care project explored the ways that a virtual assistant device (Amazon Echo Show 8) with Alexa can support the social determinants of health together with Meals on Wheels (MOW) deliveries to improve health outcomes, reduce isolation, and provide innovations to support the principles of Aging in Place of older adults.

## B. Objectives:

- 1) Conduct an IRB approved medical study measuring physical and mental conditions through multiple interventions including meal delivery and technology implementation.
- 2) Pilot a program that promotes Mental, Physical, and Spiritual well-being along with Caregiver coordination in the homes of MOW Clients with an installed virtual assistant device (Amazon Echo Show 8 with Alexa) utilizing a custom developed Amazon Alexa skill (*application*).
- 3) Study the feasibility of technology utilization and acceptance by older adults receiving MOW.

## C. Overview of Project:

The project was a feasibility study involving 2 cohorts totaling 110 clients in the Greater Houston Area. Cohort 1 involved 52 clients in an 18-week, 3 phase, 3 interventions (Meals, virtual assistant device, and expanded technology interaction) study conducted in partnership with University of Texas Health Science Center. Cohort 2 study involved 58 clients in a 12-week, 2 phase, 2 interventions (Virtual assistant device and custom developed IMGH MOW Well-Being Menu) study.

## D. Project Results:

The majority of project participant's responses were positive towards using the Amazon Echo Show 8 with Alexa. The top 5 uses being: Music, Asking Alexa a Question, Weather, Pleasantry (humorous interaction or remark with Alexa) and Asking the Time. Participants valued the device as a voice assistant and its ease of use. This study proved the implementation of technology is feasible and warrants expansion.

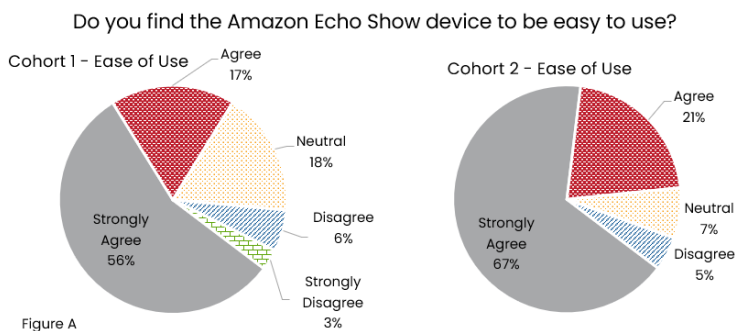


Figure A. Based on the Technology Acceptance Measurement (TAM) majority of clients agreed the device was easy to use.

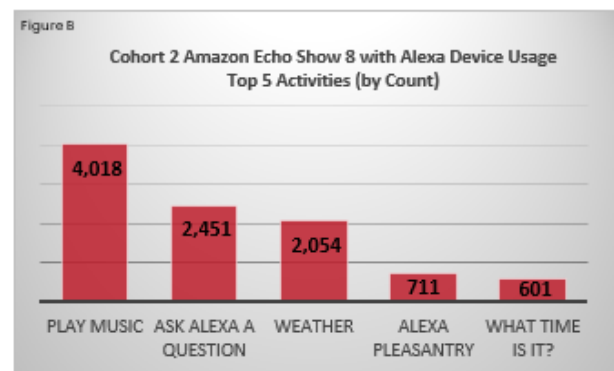


Figure B. Demonstrates the overall Amazon Echo Show 8 device utilization by all cohort 2 clients during the study.