



EVOLUTION OF VR FOR

SENIOR CARE

**JANUARY 17,
2026**

Prepared by
RENDEVER, INC.

Table Of Contents

01

Introduction

An overview of the report, outlining the purpose and objectives of exploring the state of VR in senior care.

04

The Story of VR in Senior Care

From early VR to widespread adoption of VR across various acuity settings, look at the key milestones and evolution that have gotten us to where we are today.

09

Research & Impact

Dive into the research validating the benefits that VR provides for older adults - including cognitive, emotional, and physical health improvements.

12

Evolving Use Cases

Explore the expanding applications of VR in senior care to understand how making the capital investment in VR is going to provide additional value within community, residential, and clinical settings.

13

Awareness & Perception

An analysis of how the media's portrayal of VR in senior care has shifted and how quickly awareness has grown in recent years.

16

Insights & Best Practices

Take away actionable insights and guidelines for successfully deploying and integrating VR into senior care setting.

20

Conclusion & Looking Ahead

Key takeaways offer a modern take on the role that VR will continue to play in senior care as the industry moves forward.

21

Appendices

Appendix A: Methodology

Appendix B: References



INTRODUCTION

The "Evolution of VR in Senior Care" report delves into the transformative impact of Virtual Reality (VR) technology on senior living communities. This comprehensive analysis highlights the growing adoption of VR in enhancing the quality of life for seniors, showcasing its cognitive, emotional, and physical health benefits. It also focuses on growing use cases and research inspiring the future evolution of the technology's role in senior care. Through detailed case studies, media coverage analysis, spotlights on industry leaders, and extensive usage analytics from Rendever, the report presents a clear picture of how VR is redefining what's possible within senior care.

By 2050, the number of people aged 65 years and older is projected to more than double. With the current social isolation epidemic for the aging community on the rise, technological advancements, like virtual reality, are being deployed to meaningfully address some of the challenges older adults face - especially mental health. While many say the aging community is tech-averse, that couldn't be farther from the truth as technology adoption skyrocketed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Pew Research Center, about 80% of Americans 55 and over are online, and today's 65-year-olds have spent much of their adult lives experiencing advances in technology firsthand. This report explores how VR specifically is a perfect tool for the modern aging demographic.

Key findings identified throughout this report reveal significant improvements in seniors' well-being, increased social engagement, and enhanced overall quality of life. The report also identifies challenges in technological adoption and provides actionable recommendations for successful implementation. The report serves as an essential resource for senior care providers, tech innovators, and industry stakeholders, aiming to foster informed decisions that lead to successful deployments, and promote the continued adoption of VR in senior care.

WHAT IS VR TECHNOLOGY?

Virtual Reality (VR) is an immersive technology that simulates a three-dimensional environment, allowing users to interact with digital surroundings in a way that feels real. Initially developed for gaming and entertainment, VR has expanded into various fields, including education, healthcare, and senior care. By providing engaging and interactive experiences, VR has the potential to address several challenges faced by older adults, such as social isolation, cognitive decline, and limited physical mobility.

Virtual Reality (VR) technology has undergone significant evolution since its inception, making notable impacts in various fields. The rise of VR within senior care is amongst the fastest growing impact-driven approaches, and benefits from lessons learned in the broader VR industry from standard use cases like gaming and employee training.

In the mid-2010s, companies like Rendever began pioneering the use of VR specifically for senior living communities. With a tailored design centered on connecting older adults, and research focused on building relationships across distance, Rendever led the charge in delivering an approach that supported staff and residents alike. By the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Rendever had fully established itself as a leader in the field of expanding peoples' environments to engage with the broader world through this technology.



ENTERPRISE VR

Modern enterprise VR solutions are provided by software-led companies who partner with hardware providers - such as Pico, HTC, Lenovo, and Meta - to provide enterprise-grade solutions that are purpose-built for their industries. These companies are key in ensuring successful implementation - and will typically merge tailored content, structured training and deployment programs, and advanced featured designed for VR use cases in a specific industry. They'll also generally manage the relationship with the hardware provider and in most cases will also provide necessary warranty and kitting services to support a clean deployment.

Usability, scalability, and training are key components of every enterprise solution, and these are perhaps more important for VR. Like all integrated software, when a company is evaluating enterprise VR providers, it's important to take a close look at UI/UX, data architecture, and the provider's experience servicing deployments at scale with the necessary industry know-how.

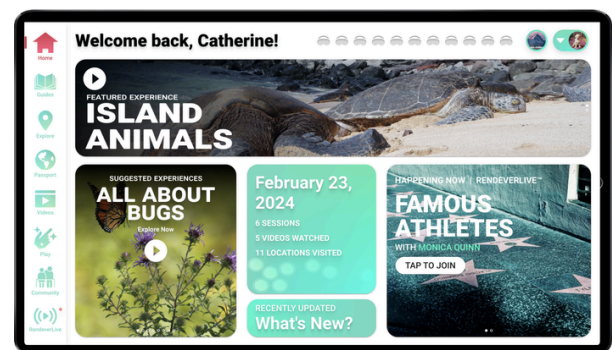
ENTERPRISE HARDWARE & DEPLOYMENTS

Like all technology, deploying VR successfully requires thinking through a few key components while building the approach. This report details a few things to think through to provide a discussion guide between care providers and VR solution providers.



Some of the headsets deployed to Rendever customers.

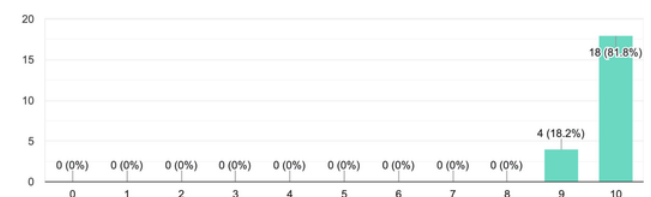
One of the biggest misconceptions is that all VR solutions are dependent on certain headsets. In fact, most enterprise partners can deploy on a variety of different headsets. We've found that hospice providers tend to prefer hardware that is lighter-weight and easily portable, while assisted living providers tend to favor durability. **Be sure to ask a prospective enterprise partner about their recommendation, while letting them know any staff preferences.**



All Rendever experiences can be controlled by a tablet.

One of the most common questions we get from prospective partners has to do with adoption by those they care for. A clean, user-friendly UI/UX is the key to any technology for an older population - or for any population, really - and that's why Rendever has been so focused on user acceptability since day one. As a result, a recent rollout with a senior living operator group led to an NPS score of 100 with their staff after learning how easy it was to use Rendever.

On a scale from 0-10, how likely are you to recommend Rendever to a friend or colleague?
22 responses



Rendever's recent NPS Score = 100

Successful deployments require satisfied staff. One of the biggest benefits provided by enterprise deployments is a validated approach guaranteed to set up the deployment team for success.

THE STORY OF VR IN SENIOR CARE

In early 2016, Rendever was founded with a specific question in mind: how do we address the growing urgency of social isolation amongst older adults? As the New York Times started mailing Google Cardboard headsets to people, videos abounded of people experiencing VR - and the joy and wonder evoked in those videos made it clear that the technology had power. The problem remained: the use of consumer VR hardware is quite challenging to learn, managing the devices is cumbersome, and the experience can be isolating.

Rendever was founded to address these challenges, and through doing so, open up a pathway for older adults to live more enriching lives. Much of modern retirement is idealized with travels, adventures, and bucket list experiences - but those can be out of reach for many, especially by the time they move into higher acuity senior living communities.

Today, Rendever had established itself as a leader in the field of expanding peoples' environments to engage with the broader world in clinical meaningful ways, creating immersive experiences tailored to the needs of older adults. The platform allows older adults to explore the greater world, revisit cherished memories, and engage in social activities, all from the comfort of their living spaces. As this has happened, other companies have joined the mission and built solutions for empathy training, staff training, physical therapy, and more. It's a bright field mostly defined by a shared mission to enliven the aging process.

2016

Rendever is founded in Boston, MA, alongside a rise in the VR hardware industry.

2018

Maplewood Senior Living is the first operator to roll out virtual reality to their entire portfolio of senior living communities.

2020

The NIA grants Rendever a \$2M grant to complete a clinical trial on the use of VR for dementia and family engagement.

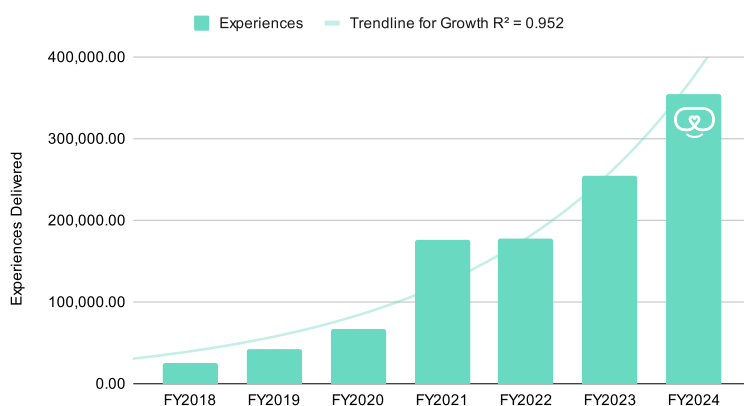
2022

In a period of 18 months, Rendever is named to TIME Magazine lists, including 2022 TIME Most Influential Company.

2024

Rendever launches the Thrive Program, paving the way for senior living communities to bring their community offerings to individuals aging-in-place.

Rendever Experiences Delivered Each Year



* FY2024 projections calculated as (H1 performance * 2.0)

** Data presented focuses on enterprise partner deployments. Data does not include experiences for individuals or delivered through Alcove

CURRENT ADOPTION OF VR IN SENIOR CARE

Today, VR is being widely adopted across acuity settings in senior care. Since 2016, the adoption of VR in senior care has skyrocketed, with over 50% of the largest national providers using VR in some capacity and recent industry surveys showing that 1 in 3 senior living operators plan to deploy VR solutions for their residents in 2025. This expansion has been driven by the technology's ability to provide relevant impact to the multiple stakeholders who serve the industry. For residents, it's been shown to combat social isolation, stimulate cognitive function, and provide therapeutic benefits. For operators, it provides a modern amenity that matches family demand, a meaningful way of improving resident engagement and engaging with family members, and a clinically validated intervention for a number of mental health challenges for residents and families alike. For staff at the point of deployment, the Rendeвер approach also decreases time spent planning for activities, engages external hosts, and provides a scalable, repeatable way of delivering joy.



The above map of Rendeвер's North America partners showcases the extensive adoption of VR technology across the continent. Senior living communities from coast to coast, including both urban and rural areas, have integrated VR into their programs. This widespread adoption underscores the versatility and universal appeal of VR in enhancing the quality of life for seniors.



Independent Living

Seniors in independent living communities use VR for virtual travel, educational experiences, and recreational activities, helping them stay mentally active and socially connected. There are now virtual fitness programs, like RendeверFit®, available and perfect for more independent residents.



Memory Care

For residents in memory care, VR offers a multisensory tool in the toolbox. There are VR-based approaches to reminiscence therapy, calming experiences, and tailored activities that help manage symptoms of dementia and improve quality of life. Growing clinical research on the use of VR for people living with dementia is building upon this adoption, including an NIA-funded clinical trial that Rendeвер will be publishing in early 2025 (NCT05150990).



Assisted Living

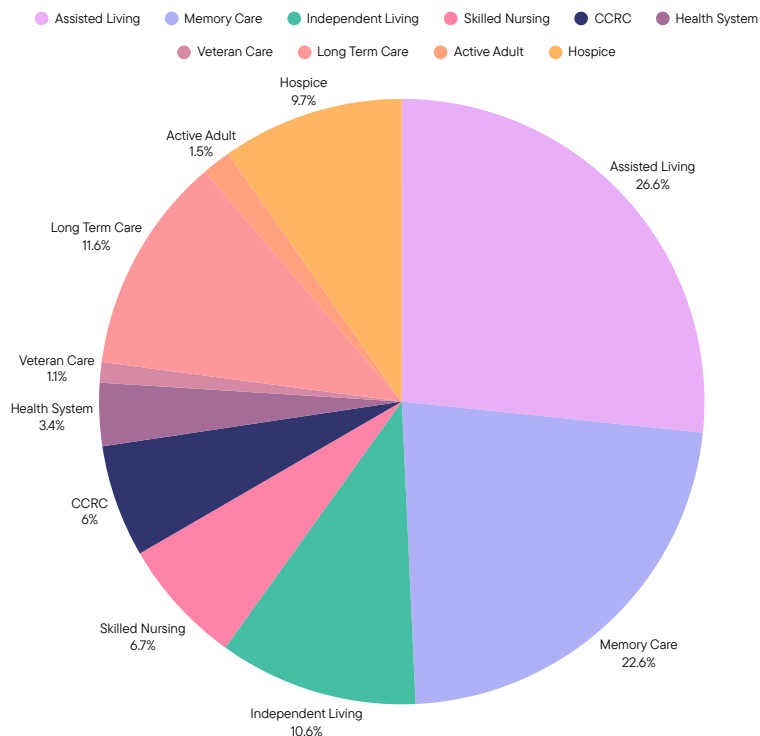
In assisted living settings, VR is used for everything from activities and family engagement to therapeutic purposes. The largest use of VR today is in assisted living, where the unique access to the world that VR provides is unmatched and perfect for the resident populations.



Skilled Nursing

Communities with a combined assisted living and skilled nursing have an easier time adopting VR due to differences in margin profiles for skilled nursing facilities (SNFs). Communities may use budgets from CMP or other available funds to adopt VR. There are growing options for VR-based therapy modules perfect for skilled nursing, and some communities have started doing home VR-based home assessments to reduce likelihood of readmissions.

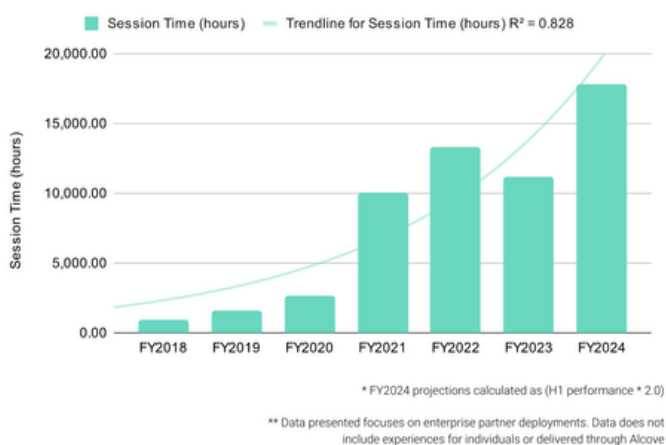
In senior care settings, the standard approach for many operators with new technology is to start with a smaller initial deployment before moving towards a larger rollout, sometimes in phases. For example, in the last year, 34 operating groups who partner with Rendever expanded their VR deployment to 113 additional community locations. All in all, Rendever is now deployed in over 700 care settings across North America everywhere from independent living to hospice care. While deployments grow, awareness within communities has also grown to the point that residents are enjoying VR more than ever. Overall Rendever sessions have risen more than 70% year-over-year, helping the aging population live happier, healthier, more connected lives.



Rendever deployments by acuity setting.

The senior care industry provides a number of meaningful options for older adults to live. The above breakdown provides a snapshot of adoption by acuity level for Rendever.

Rendever Session Time By Year



1950 days, 08 hours, 25 minutes

Total time spent by senior care organizations leading Rendever sessions with their end users since 2018.

A total of 46,808.42 hours have been spent leading Rendever sessions in senior care settings over the past 8 years. Approximately 43% of those have occurred within the last 12 months (between July 2023 and June 2024). Not only are operators implementing VR, community partners are using it now more than ever.

IN-HOME PROVIDERS BENEFITTING FROM VR

Virtual reality is well established in enterprise care settings, and now providers are starting to bring the technology into the home environment, where an estimated 90% of older adults prefer to stay throughout the aging process. Individuals at home may choose to buy their own headset, or receive a tailored solution through one of their care agencies.



Hospice

VR is being used in hospice care to offer comforting and soothing experiences, helping patients manage pain, reduce anxiety, and find peace during their transition journey. It also provides family members with meaningful experiences that can provide final positive moments of joy and connection.



Home Care

Those aging-in-place are at a heightened risk of social isolation, and VR technology can be used to connect with families at a distance and build better relationships with direct care providers through meaningful shared experiences.



Life Care Advocates

Life care advocate agencies are uniquely positioned to use VR to both offer positive life experiences while offering a window into senior living. Virtual tours of local communities allow that conversation to be navigated from the comfort of home.

THE THRIVE PROGRAM

This program was built on the success of Rendevar's landmark Thrive Study - the clinical trial funded by the NIA that evaluated how VR technology improves the lives of older adults and their family members. We partnered with senior living communities, and hosted Rendevar VR sessions for residents and family members who live far away, allowing seniors to connect with loved ones remotely on a weekly basis, and found significant improvements in mental health for both older adults and their families. It's now also being used to help older adults connect across living environments.

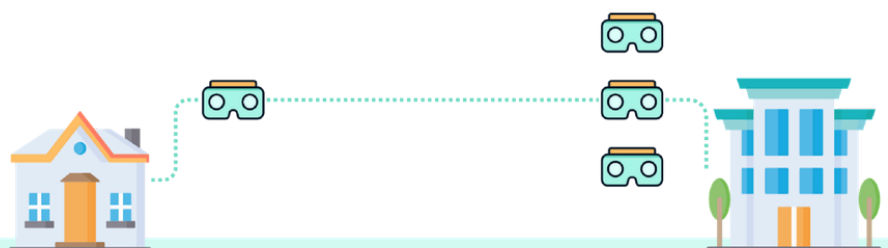
After just 4 weeks with the Thrive Program:

Impact on family members:

- Improvement in community satisfaction
- Improvement in family connection
- Improvement in depression scores
- Decrease in stress
- Decrease in caregiver burden

Impact on residents:

- Improvement in community satisfaction
- Improvement in family connection
- Improvement in quality of life
- Improvement in social network
- Improvement in Mental Health Index Score
- Decrease in pain



INDUSTRY LEADER SPOTLIGHT



CLINT FOWLER

Director of Resident Services

Leisure Care

“Working with Rendever since 2020, we’ve seen firsthand how impactful this technology has been for our residents. Residents at Leisure Care communities have been immersing themselves in virtual reality experiences for several years. Virtual experiences allow our residents the ability to check off some bucket list destinations, revisit milestone locations. We also use this platform to pre-plan our Travel by Leisure Care adventures to locations all over the world. Rendever has without question elevated our activities and programs in our communities & we continue to explore new ways to create positive experiences in partnership with Rendever.”

Deployments:

23

Experiences Delivered:

13,500+



KAYLA SPARLING

National Manager, Recreation & Rehabilitation

Extendicare

“Here at Extendicare, we have over 30+ communities using Rendever across Canada. With over 15,000 moments to date in 2024, it’s one of the organization’s most successful programs! Its innovative software provides residents with an opportunity to experience things they never thought possible, see places on their bucket list, and visit the neighbourhood they grew up in. Our residents and staff thoroughly enjoy the program and having this technology in the homes.”

Deployments:

33

Experiences Delivered:

145,000+

RESEARCH & IMPACT

Ongoing research is exploring the diverse applications of VR in senior care, such as rehabilitation, memory care, hospice and palliative care, independent living, healthcare, and aging-in-place. This research aims to harness VR's potential to preserve and stimulate memory, alleviate pain, improve social and mental health, promote physical well-being and ultimately provide accessible opportunities for a longer, healthier, and more connected life.

When starting Rendeвер, we knew the industry needed to see the proof. So, we worked with the world-renowned MIT AgeLab and Benchmark Senior Living to conduct the first study on the use of social VR for residents of senior living communities. and found that after just two weeks of daily group Rendeвер sessions, participants reported statistically significant decreases in depression scores and increases in multiple measures of social wellbeing. Most interestingly, people started to trust each other more. When thinking of the foundational elements of a human relationship, trust is pretty significant, so this was a really exciting result.

Since then, the arena of research on virtual reality for older adults has become a global area of interest. As the world has come to understand the profound impacts of social isolation, varied research has explored the holistic impact of VR on the aging process. In the coming pages, we'll go over some of the key benefits we've seen in the published literature, along with a few highlights from smaller industry case studies.



COGNITIVE AND EMOTIONAL BENEFITS

Emotional Well-being

VR plays an inspiring role in improving emotional well-being and quality of life. Quality of life and overall well-being surveys measure aspects such as emotional well-being, quality of social connections, physical health, and overall life satisfaction. Research shows that immersive VR experiences can significantly increase positive emotions, decrease negative emotions, improve quality of life and personal connections while reducing symptoms of depression, anxiety, pain, and loneliness (Afifi et al., 2021; Afifi et al., 2023; Lin et al., 2018). Feedback from senior care communities highlights a marked improvement in the quality of life among residents using Rendevers platform. Residents report feeling more connected, energetic, less anxious, and more emotionally fulfilled following VR experiences (Afifi et al., 2021; Afifi et al., 2022; Lin, 2017; Spector et al., 2010).

Cognitive Stimulation

Virtual reality (VR) has emerged as a potent tool for cognitive stimulation therapy (CST) among older adults, including those living with dementia. With tools like Rendevers, CST is easily accessible, customizable and engaging. From visiting favorite locations, viewing family photos or videos, playing games such as Guess the Location, trivia, balloon popper and more, individuals and groups can enjoy CST to reduce cognitive decline. Research has shown that VR interventions, such as cognitive training exercises and reminiscence therapy, can significantly enhance cognitive functions including memory, attention, language, and slow cognitive decline (Man et al., 2012; Optale et al., 2010; Hill et al., 2017; Spector et al., 2010).

Socialization & Loneliness

VR is an effective tool for combating social isolation among older adults. Rendevers VR platform includes networked communication capabilities that merge avatar-based interaction, voice communication, flexible social network assignment models with standard network protocols to ease access to locked community networking. This approach with Rendevers has been instrumental in fostering social interactions and real friendships, improving community satisfaction, expanding social networks and improving trust - which has potential neurochemical ties to oxytocin that future research may look to measure. Ultimately, the shared experiences in networked VR sessions translates into significant improvements in social and mental health (Vi at Bentley Village, The Goodman Group, Lin et al., 2017; Afifi et al., 2021; Afifi et al., 2023). Additionally, residents have expressed increased satisfaction with their senior living community and a greater sense of inclusion within the community.

After just 8 weeks with Rendevers:

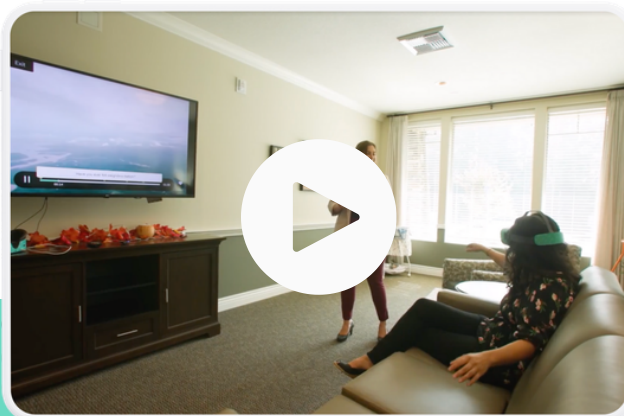
On average, residents felt 33% more satisfied with their community.

- 36% increase in feeling included
- 52% increase in self-reported physical health
- 37% increase in self-reported memory
- 30% increase in interest of community activities
- 25% improvement in feelings about the future**

VOICES OF AMERICA DOCUMENTARY ON VR FOR DEMENTIA

FEATURING:

Oakmont Senior Living
University of California, Santa Barbara



PHYSICAL AND FUNCTIONAL HEALTH BENEFITS

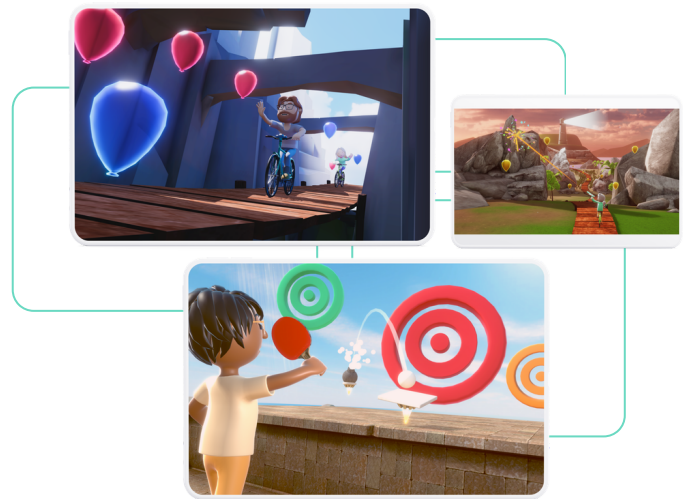
Physical Therapy and Mobility

There's a growing trend of using virtual reality for physical exercise, and increasingly for physical therapy. VR technology is unique for combining highly engaging visual stimuli with hardware that is capable of tracking multi-limb movement. With this, it is possible to engage in physical activity either actively or passively through well-designed applications. For Rendeever, we've created a product called RendeeverFit® which is merging physical activities with cognitive stimulation and social engagement.

RendeeverFit® is one example of interactive video game-based exercise - also known as exergaming. The recent adoption by older adults has been shown to substantially increase the enjoyment of physical activity and in turn, has resulted in increased engagement in physical activity (Chao et al., 2015; Ismail et al., 2022).

Physical Health

The Front Porch Center for Innovation and Wellbeing conducted a study in partnership with the University of Southern California that demonstrated significant improvements in older adults' physical and social health after using RendeeverFit® twice a week for four weeks. Participants (age 65-99, avg 76.3 years) showed signs of enhanced mobility, 44% decrease in pain interference, 48% decrease in fall anxiety, 33% reduction in feelings of loneliness, and 36% improvement in ratings of trust with members of their senior living community (Niemiec and Martinez, 2023).



After just 4 weeks with RendeeverFit®:

94% of participants increased on their TUG scores by nearly ~1.0s

48% decrease in fall worry

44% decrease in pain interference

33% decrease in loneliness

30% increase in trust of other residents

+9% increase in movement speed

★ What is a TUG score?

The Time Up and Go (TUG) test is a widely used performance-based measurement of balance, functional mobility, and fall risk. It's a timed test that measures how quickly someone stands up, walks ten feet, turns around, comes back, and sits down.



EVOLVING USE CASES

Future advancements in VR technology are expected to further customize experiences for seniors, incorporating personalized therapeutic interventions, providing additional value to a broader range of stakeholders, and expanding access across various senior care environments. With over 90% of older adults expressing a preference to age in place, enhancing VR's accessibility, enriching the feature set for operators, and equipping caregivers with VR technology pose a promising role in the future of senior care.

Upcoming projects aim to leverage Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital biomarkers in order to enhance real-time identification of opportunities to improve health outcomes. These initiatives can empower older adults to remain in their preferred living environments while leveraging VR to improve their quality of life. The below use cases offer a glimpse of some of the rapidly evolving areas that senior care operators are turning to while developing their approach to VR.

Family Engagement

In a landmark study funded by the NIA, 26 senior living communities across the country used VR to connect their residents with family members living at a distance. Early results of this branch of research have shown significant mental health benefits for both parties, including decreases in caregiver guilt and burden.

Dementia & Empathy Training

One of the unique features of VR is the ability to walk in someone else's shoes. There are many companies that provide VR training for various job skillsets, but the ability to connect to someone's lived experience and build empathy in VR is highly beneficial in senior care. This has been especially true with recent rates of industry turnover and the need to onboard employees into both the job and the industry – soft skills included. Rendever officially launched Dementia & Empathy Training in the summer of 2025. It is now being used for staff onboarding, family outreach, and first responder training.



Touring Communities

Using 360° cameras, providers can create immersive tours of communities that showcase the building without compromising the privacy of residents. VR enables multiple tours to occur from one location – even one's own home – and sales teams can then see where visitors are in the VR experience in real-time.

Home Safety Assessments

When leaving an acute care stay, the discharge planning process typically involves conducting a risk assessment to verify that patients can independently manage their health post-hospitalization and carry out daily activities. From the standpoint of preventing falls and readmission, a crucial part of this is a home safety assessment. Using 360° cameras paired with VR is now providing a more authentic and immersive preview of the challenges patients may face.

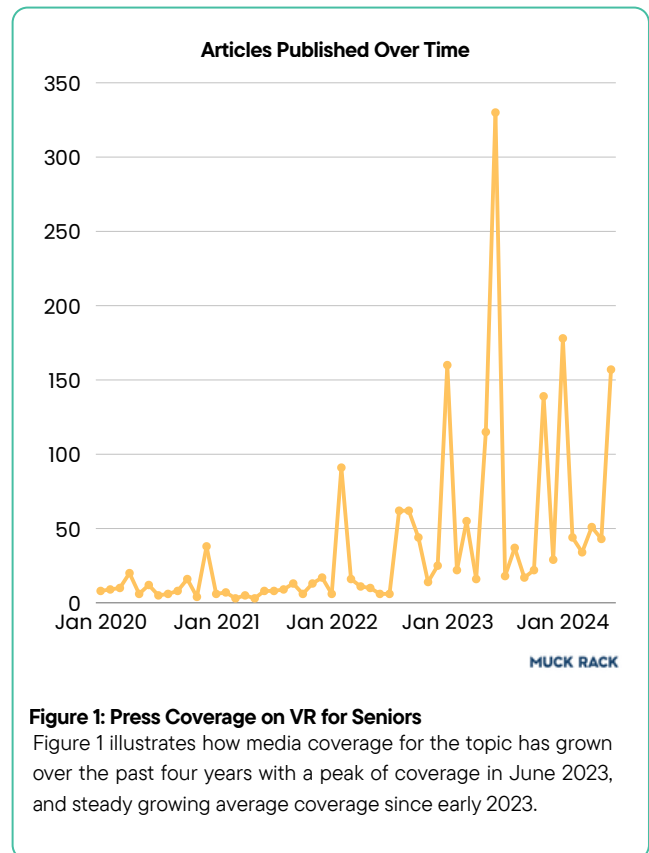
AWARENESS & PERCEPTION

Virtual reality for seniors has been a growing topic of discussion in the press. While initial coverage focused on the inherent surprise in using cutting-edge technology with a demographic often misrepresented and stereotyped as being “tech-averse.” Now, the media depicts immersive technology as an effective tool the older population uses to treat loneliness, build relationships with fellow senior living residents, and improve their cognitive and physical abilities.

Many national publications, such as [The Washington Post](#), [The Wall Street Journal](#), and [The New York Times](#), have covered stories on the use of VR for seniors.

Heartwarming stories illustrating how senior living communities nationwide implement the technology into their programming are routinely covered in local TV markets, such as [Fox 9 Minneapolis](#), [ABC News Duluth](#), and [NBC News 8 Pennsylvania](#). Stories like the ones in [ABC 7 Tampa](#) and [CBS News](#) share how individual seniors are experiencing life-changing moments through VR or are using it to cope with health challenges. These regularly are syndicated to TV stations nationwide. Even the popular sports network, [ESPN](#), has covered how VR is used to connect with sports fans undergoing health treatments.

“THIS TECHNOLOGY IS A BLESSING FOR THE YOUNG AND OLD”



Within the senior living trade verticals, leading publications like [McKnight's Senior Living](#), [Senior Housing News](#), and [Senior Living News](#) are publishing stories to chronicle the growing adoption of the technology by senior living operators.

Media coverage of VR for seniors rapidly increased in 2020 and 2021 to showcase how the technology connected people despite pandemic challenges that kept everyone isolated at home. This includes national stories like this one on [CBS Sunday Morning](#).

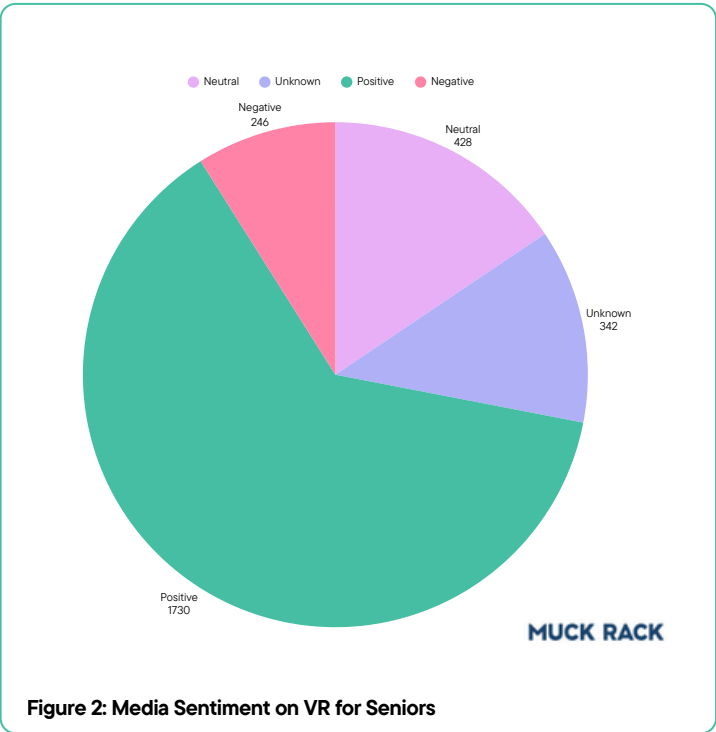
Market trends

Those early stories also include a look at the behind-the-scenes work being done to establish and validate virtual reality as a resolution to some of the biggest challenges faced by seniors entering shared living spaces. This included reporting on clinical trials and scientific studies and the resulting data to illustrate the positive and promising impact of the technology. For example, in 2021, McKnight's Senior Living reported on Rendever's new clinical trial with the National Institute on Aging and the University of California, Santa Barbara studying the effects of VR on senior residents and their families.

Over the years, the conversation has gradually shifted to more uplifting stories of how virtual reality is opening opportunities for the aging population. In the years following the pandemic, there has been increased attention on the health and well-being of seniors in long-term care communities. There is an increased priority to share stories displaying how senior living operators are adopting new technology to offer the best care to their residents and keep their programming fresh. McKnight's Senior Living's May 2024 article about Leisure Care's deployment of virtual reality says, "VR is becoming a game changer at many senior living and long-term care communities. By offering immersive experiences, VR has shown early promise in alleviating loneliness, stimulating cognitive function, and encouraging gentle physical activity, to name but a few benefits."



(Top) What two people sharing an experience in VR look like in the real world. (Right) What they see in the virtual environment. Vibrant user experiences provide great talking points for reporters and lead to positive sentiment.



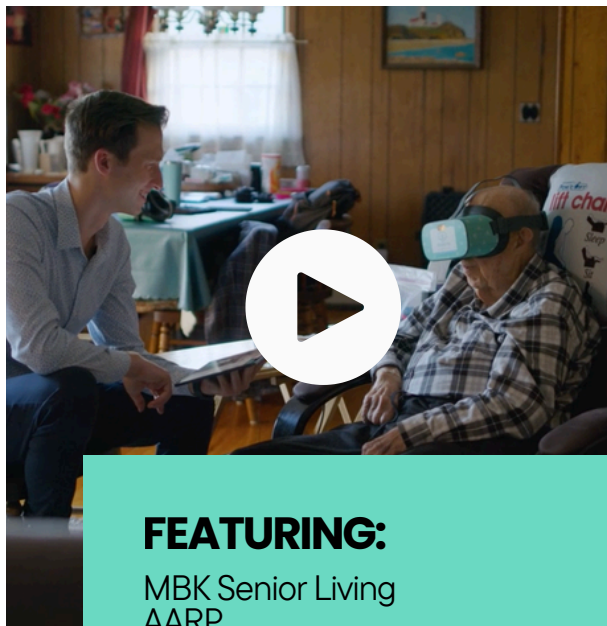
Public Perception

A steady cadence of media coverage centered around how VR is used with older adults is creating widespread awareness among the public. From the articles in Figure 1, data shows that stories on VR for seniors have accumulated more than seven billion views in the past four years. People worldwide are seeing how virtual reality is used by older adults in recreational, clinical, and reminiscent therapeutic ways. Overall, when VR for seniors is covered in the press, the sentiment is overwhelmingly positive as displayed in Figure 2.

Given the growing number of media coverage and the 63% positive sentiment of the stories, the public's perception of the technology is a welcomed one. Frequently the articles are met with thoughts and conversations by readers and viewers of how they relate to the story - wishing they could use the VR with their aging loved ones or how they never thought to use the technology with this audience since it is generally geared toward younger populations. For example, following the Wall Street Journal's January 2023 article, readers said, "Any ideas for helping the elderly to become less lonely are most welcome," and "As the son of someone who suffered from dementia, anything that can provide some amount of relief and ease the loneliness is worth exploring."

The media coverage has helped influence the public's perception and awareness of virtual reality for seniors. In the earlier years, the media's coverage of the concept was met with skepticism that needed validation through data and real-world case studies with positive outcomes. For example, The New York Times' May 2022 article states, "Still, larger studies are needed before everyone over the age of 75 is putting on a headset." Now, and especially as VR is no longer a foreign concept to the public, journalists are sharing more human-interest, feel-good stories relating to VR for seniors because that is what the readers are looking for. The Washington Post's December 2023 article says, "This technology is a blessing for the young and old."

Because of the way the media portrays these stories, the public understands how unique it is for older adults to be using such advanced technology in various ways. They are also learning about the social and health benefits it brings. Stereotypes of seniors being tech-averse are diminishing because it is being proven through media coverage that older adults are great adopters of technology - and the impact is high. A Washington Post reader said, **"I'm 74 and started in VR three years ago...and VR makes me feel the only limit on my life is my imagination."** As far as the media and the public is concerned, VR for seniors is an area of interest that is showcasing a positive outlook on the future of aging, one that is ready to be explored and built upon.



FEATURING:

MBK Senior Living
AARP
Rendever

* Technology's Golden Age

A film showcase by BBC Storyworks

Rendever was featured in a film series produced by BBC Storyworks that focused on the rise of technology that impacts and redefines our aging process.

Watch it here:





INSIGHTS & BEST PRACTICES

Implementing VR in senior care settings can significantly enhance the quality of life for older adults. Here are best practices to ensure a successful VR program:



There are a number of things to keep top of mind while planning for implementation. In the following page, we'll focus on the 8 most important insights garnered from both sides of the deployment process.

Tailor Experiences to Individual Needs

Customize VR experiences based on residents' preferences and needs. Use detailed profiles to select activities that resonate with their interests and health goals.

Offer a wide variety of VR experiences, such as virtual travel, games, relaxation exercises, and social activities, to cater to diverse preferences.

Simplify the User Experience for Recipients

Ensure the VR system is easy to use with an intuitive interface. Seniors should be able to navigate the system with minimal assistance.

Choose VR headsets that are lightweight and adjustable. Incorporate features to prevent motion sickness and ensure prolonged comfort during use. Communicate needs to the solution partner to make sure they can provide the right solution.

Provide Comprehensive Training

Train staff thoroughly on using and troubleshooting the VR system. Staff should be comfortable guiding residents and other staff through the experience. Lean on the VR partner to take the reigns here, and ensure they provide access to follow-up trainings and on-demand resources to share with involved staff.

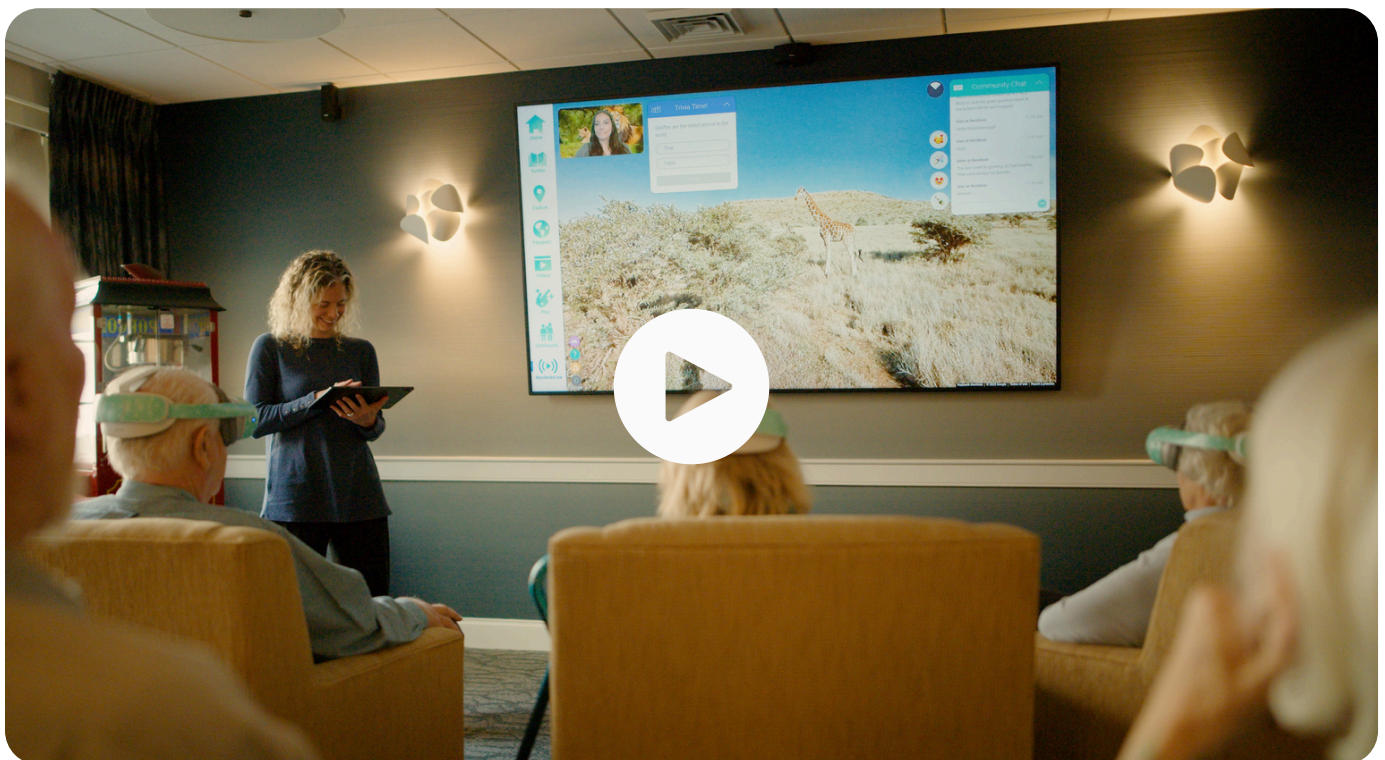
Offer introductory sessions for end users to help familiarize them with VR. Then, start hosting sessions to build upon the excitement and comfort.

Create a Supportive Environment

Involve family members and caregivers in the VR experience. This can strengthen social bonds and enhance the overall experience for residents.

For staff, consider implementing a feedback system to gather insights and identify where more support is needed. Ideally, the VR company should provide a hands-on and proactive approach.

A supportive environment should include the actual built environment. When preparing for deployment, think about where the experience will be delivering. It should be in an area that has a strong and consistent connection to Wi-Fi networks (think: close to an access point) and should include comfortable chairs with deep seats. Swivel chairs are not for everyone. We tend to recommend sturdy chairs with arm rests that can be used to ground while comfortably turning - this can also be safer for groups that include people in a wheelchair. Finally, consider an environment that includes a TV so the experience can be casted to the screen. This way, more individuals can participate, which in turn can broaden the sense of community and overall impact.



Plan for and ensure Wi-Fi compatibility

While many VR systems can be utilized partially without a connection to the internet, Wi-Fi is required for access to real-time experiences, custom content, and any updates provided to the service. When using VR features that require Wi-Fi, the minimum connection necessary is roughly 15-20 mbps download speed. In general, if the connection is strong enough to stream video, it should be capable of supporting a group VR session.

Work with an enterprise-grade partner

Bringing on a partner focused on senior care and dedicated to the successful rollout of VR within senior care settings is perhaps the only surefire path to success. When engaging with potential partners, be sure to focus on reliability, customer service, and access to data and analytics that will set the deployment up for success.



MICHELLE SMITH

Practice Lead, Research, Quality, Knowledge Mobilization for Seniors Care

Interior Health

Deployments:

12

Experiences Delivered:

15,000+

“

"Since 2020, we've been implementing and expanding a VR program at our long-term care homes to enhance seniors' quality of life and improve their care. We've witnessed VR's positive impacts, connecting seniors with their families, community, and the world beyond their homes, while also serving as a non-pharmacological tool to elevate care standards. Amid these successes, we've encountered significant challenges with WiFi quality and connectivity in certain locations, influenced by geographic factors and local infrastructure.

Rather than viewing this as a barrier to VR implementation, we see it as an opportunity to effect necessary improvements in WiFi access across our long-term care homes. This includes structural enhancements and the deployment of WiFi hotspot devices to support VR equipment in challenging environments. Looking ahead, we foresee increasing opportunities for VR and other technologies to further enhance seniors' quality of life and care. Therefore, we've prioritized enhancing WiFi infrastructure across our facilities.

Rendever has been an invaluable partner, supporting our ongoing implementation and assisting in overcoming these challenges."



Watch how one Marquis community is using Rendeever.

“It was an easy decision to incorporate Rendeever into our programs at Marquis. We’ve found various ways to incorporate the platforms beyond the activity calendar. For example, we recently used Rendeever’s platforms to augment our virtual summer Olympic Games for our seniors, with a session hosted by former Olympic athlete Andrew Weiss. Everyone enjoyed competitive cycling on RendeeverFit™ and trivia on RendeeverLive™.

Virtual Reality is powering the future of aging, and it’s exciting to be at the forefront of innovation, witnessing its positive effects on our residents both mentally and physically. The joy and stimulation these experiences bring are truly transformative, enhancing the quality of life and well-being for everyone involved.”

Integrate VR into Weekly Schedules for Accessibility

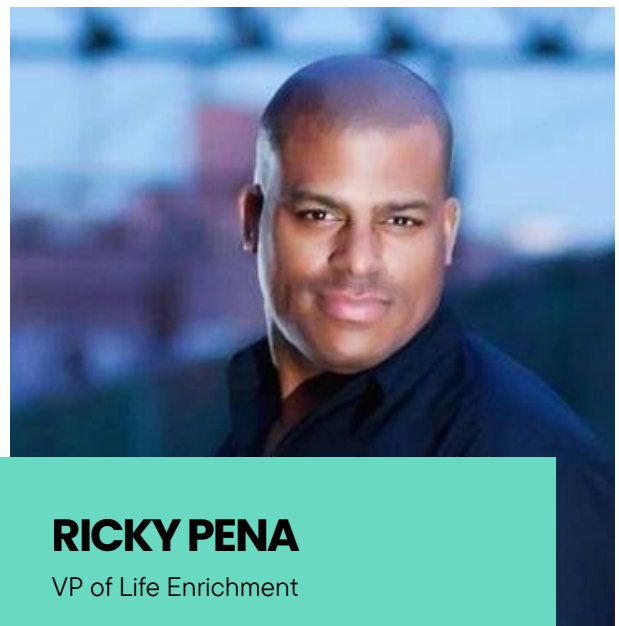
Intentionally incorporate VR sessions into the existing activities calendar. Schedule regular sessions to make VR a routine part of residents' lives. Avoid simply naming it “VR Session” and instead detail the specific program being planned.

Aim to schedule VR activities at different times of the day throughout the week to accommodate different energy levels and preferences.

Focus on Impact, Especially Mental Health and Well-being

Utilize VR for mental health support, such as mindfulness exercises, relaxation, and stress relief.

Select VR experiences that are engaging and stimulating to maintain residents' interest and encourage regular use.



Deployments:

34

Experiences Delivered:

61,000+

RICKY PENA

VP of Life Enrichment

Marquis Health Consulting Services



CONCLUSION

As technology evolves, its applications in senior care will expand, offering even more opportunities to bridge the gap between what we understand as aging today, and what we envision as healthy aging tomorrow. For many, VR is still new, but it's one of the pieces of technology that older adults have adopted with impressive eagerness and meaning. With benefits ranging across cognitive stimulation, social engagement, and therapeutic interventions, it's no wonder that the excitement surrounding VR in senior care is palpable. This technology is paving the way for new, life-enhancing experiences that resonate deeply with residents and caregivers alike.

At the heart of this movement is a mission to improve the quality of life for seniors, fostering connections, reducing isolation, and providing joy through immersive experiences. Rendever's commitment to making VR accessible across various care settings ensures that these benefits reach as many seniors as possible. The future of VR in senior care is bright, with endless possibilities for creating meaningful, impactful experiences that support the well-being of older adults.

**VR IS NOT THE
FUTURE. IT'S
ALREADY
HAPPENING.**

Hopefully, by now, you see that VR is not a part of the "future" of senior care. It's already here and happening. At Rendever, we're proud to be spearheading this mission. We wouldn't have any success to point to if it weren't for our amazing network of care partners who are dedicated to improving the lives of older adults everywhere. If you're early in your journey here, we welcome you to connect with our team and allow you to show you how everything we've discussed in this report plays out in the real world.

To a bright future for older adults everywhere,

Kyle Rand
CEO | Rendever



APPENDIX A:

METHODOLOGY

Rendever's Evolution of VR in Senior Care Report is a culmination of years worth of in-depth research, analysis, expert insight and evaluation. Rendever's deep-rooted respect for research and the value it provides is exemplified within the report. As shown throughout, large amounts of the data and insights selected are the results of studies and research conducted on behalf of, or in partnership with Rendever. The company upholds its integrity in providing unbiased, comprehensive and well-developed research and analysis that accurately reflects the outcomes and impact of VR usage among older adults.

Rendever's research largely centers around deploying the virtual reality technology to pre-selected groups of senior living communities, staff and families for a specific amount of time and measuring individual experiences as they relate to the social health and connection of users. Assessments are performed beforehand to establish a baseline and afterwards to accurately understand the impact Rendever's virtual reality implementation has on its users. Rendever's research is supported by organizations such as the National Institute on Aging (NIA), National Institute on Health (NIH), University of Southern California - Santa Barbara, and more.

Further insights in the State of VR in Senior Care Report were collected through various data collecting platforms such as MuckRack, research publications, along with Rendever's extensive analytics, institutionalized knowledge, and wide-ranging client feedback having navigated hundreds of deployments in care settings across North America.

APPENDIX B:

REFERENCES

Afifi, T., Collins, N. L., Rand, K., Fujiwara, K., Mazur, A., Otmar, C., ... & Logsdon, R. (2021). Testing the feasibility of virtual reality with older adults with cognitive impairments and their family members who live at a distance. *Innovation in aging*, 5(2), igab014.

Afifi, T., Collins, N., Rand, K., Otmar, C., Mazur, A., Dunbar, N. E., ... & Logsdon, R. (2023). Using virtual reality to improve the quality of life of older adults with cognitive impairments and their family members who live at a distance. *Health Communication*, 38(9), 1904-1915.

Chao, Y. Y., Scherer, Y. K., & Montgomery, C. A. (2015). Effects of using Nintendo Wii™ exergames in older adults: a review of the literature. *Journal of aging and health*, 27(3), 379-402.

Gibbor, L., Yates, L., Volkmer, A., & Spector, A. (2021). Cognitive stimulation therapy (CST) for dementia: a systematic review of qualitative research. *Aging & Mental Health*, 25(6), 980-990.

Hill, N. T., Mowszowski, L., Naismith, S. L., Chadwick, V. L., Valenzuela, M., & Lampit, A. (2017). Computerized cognitive training in older adults with mild cognitive impairment or dementia: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 174(4), 329-340.

Ismail, N. A., Hashim, H. A., & Ahmad Yusof, H. (2022). Physical activity and exergames among older adults: a scoping review. *Games for Health Journal*, 11(1), 1-17.

Lin, X. X. C. (2017). Designing virtual reality (VR) experience for older adults and determine its impact on their overall well-being (Doctoral dissertation, Massachusetts Institute of Technology).

Lin, C. X., Lee, C., Lally, D., & Coughlin, J. F. (2018). Impact of virtual reality (VR) experience on older adults' well-being. In *Human Aspects of IT for the Aged Population. Applications in Health, Assistance, and Entertainment: 4th International Conference, ITAP 2018, Held as Part of HCI International 2018, Las Vegas, NV, USA, July 15–20, 2018, Proceedings, Part II* 4 (pp. 89-100). Springer International Publishing.

Man, D. W., Chung, J. C., & Lee, G. Y. (2012). Evaluation of a virtual reality-based memory training programme for Hong Kong Chinese older adults with questionable dementia: a pilot study. *International journal of geriatric psychiatry*, 27(5), 513-520.

Optale, G., Urgesi, C., Busato, V., Marin, S., Piron, L., Priftis, K., ... & Bordin, A. (2010). Controlling memory impairment in elderly adults using virtual reality memory training: a randomized controlled pilot study. *Neurorehabilitation and neural repair*, 24(4), 348-357.

Spector, A., Orrell, M., & Woods, B. (2010). Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST): effects on different areas of cognitive function for people with dementia. *International journal of geriatric psychiatry*, 25(12), 1253-1258.