

Welcome to *Long-Term Living's* Platinum Products and Services special section!

We asked readers to nominate products that helped them do their jobs better and elevate patient care to new levels. Our readers heeded the call and nominated, in some cases, products that, literally, changed the outcome of patient care. The product finalists were chosen by *Long-Term Living's* editorial team, who asked product designers to comment on the development process. We hope you find these innovative products worth incorporating into the care plan at your facility.

—The editors at Long-Term Living

Product Name: Twiddle™Muff
Manufacturer: BeauLily, LLC
Designer: Margaret Light

BeauLily, LLC

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Nominations by: Karen Koch, Valley View Nursing Center, Montoursville, Pennsylvania; Barbara Friesner, AgeWise Living, New York, New York, whose comments follow: I got a Twiddle™Muff for my mother who has very advanced dementia and was pretty much the only thing that she connected to at that point in her illness. It did everything it said it would do it



Twiddle™Muff keeps hands warm and occupied.

kept her hands occupied, it gave her something to focus her eyes on, and it gave her a “companion.” After seeing the wonderful response in my mother, I became a huge TwiddleMuff supporter! I recommend it to my generational coaching clients and spearheaded the drive to purchase TwiddleMuff

for other residents of my mother’s nursing home. This is definitely an award winner!

What inspired you to invent/design this product?

Margaret Light: It broke my heart seeing my beloved grandmother, Lily, just sitting in a chair most of the day. By 90 years of age she was virtually blind and those once active and creative hands had become idle and chilled. I designed the TwiddleMuff as a unique way to keep her hands warm and happily occupied. It also reminded her of just how much she was loved even when I couldn’t be with her. Having worked in a care facility, I was well aware that any product used by the elderly had to be safe, easy to clean (industrial washer and dryer), and have a label for the resident’s name. Gleaning much advice from healthcare professionals, activity directors, and focus groups, my TwiddleMuffs have become the comforting, stimulating, and enjoyable products they are today! Grandmother Lily would be thrilled to know she was the impetus to improve the quality of life for so many!

What were the main challenges you encountered in designing this product and how did you resolve them?

Light: I had resolved that the TwiddleMuff would not only be soft and comforting, but also provide therapeutic benefits through tactile stimulation. It was necessary to experiment with a variety of textiles, testing them for the durability to stand up to repeated washings while maintaining their softness. The more challenging task was deciding what tactile elements would be incorporated. My life is filled with smart and talented family and friends so I didn’t hesitate to get their input. My sister-in-law is an occupational therapist and worked through various ‘gadget’ ideas with me. Local physical therapists in my hometown, reviewed the options and made suggestions. I ran focus groups with neighbors and colleagues to gather input on what they most appreciated for their elderly relatives. Area nursing homes allowed me to see how their residents responded. The final design



was many months in the making but was similar to the first one I’d made for my grandmother several years earlier. It’s now offered in the original version, plaid ‘Twiddle™Sport’, ‘Twiddle™Cat’ in cream or chocolate, and the newer ‘Twiddle™Pup’ in a soft beige. They all have the same gadgets with some color variability and include the squeeze ball (inside), wooden beads, clacky bag, and ribbons.