Japan's donut robotics and Charm Care Build New Eldercare Business Model with Humanoids Assisting Care Staff

The Business Alliance aims to implement physical AI and robotics in care facilities, starting with humanoid robot cinnamon.

MINATO-KU, TOKYO, JAPAN, October 5, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Japanese startup donut robotics Inc. (Head Office: Minato-ku, Tokyo; Representative Director: Taisuke Ono), which develops humanoid robots, has entered into a capital and business alliance agreement with Charm Care Corporation (Head Office: Kita-ku, Osaka; Representative Chairman and CEO: Takahiko Shimomura), an operator of private senior living facilities in Japan listed on the Prime Market of the Tokyo Stock Exchange. The partnership aims to implement physical AI and robotics technologies in eldercare settings.



donut robotics and Charm Care alliance



Development focus: Robot Nurse Call

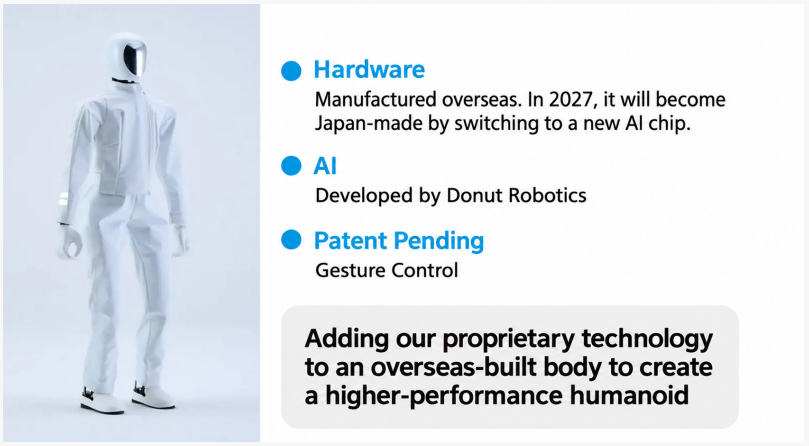
Charm Care will subscribe to ¥300 million worth of common shares issued by donut robotics. Since July 2026, the two companies have already been experimentally deploying the humanoid robot "cinnamon" at fee-based nursing homes operated by Charm Care. Going forward, they will expand its applications to support care-related tasks, including responding to nurse calls.

Background: Japan Faces a Growing Shortage of Eldercare

Japan is one of the world's most rapidly aging countries. While demand for eldercare services continues to grow, securing sufficient care workers has become a long-term social challenge. To maintain and improve the quality of care while providing services with limited human resources,

the use of technologies such as AI and robotics in healthcare is becoming increasingly important.

Charm Care operates more than 100 private nursing homes in the Kansai and Greater Tokyo areas. The two companies share the belief that the latests humanoids and AI technologies can help build a new model for eldercare operations in response to the social challenge of a shortage of care workers.



Robot details

Experiential Deployment: The Future features Robot Nurse Call Support

Prior to the alliance, Charm Care began experimentally deploying the humanoid robot “cinnamon” at one of its private eldercare facilities in July 2026.

Residents who have interacted with “cinnamon 1” have responded positively. The two companies are gaining confidence in the potential for a robot caregiver to serve as more than simply a tool for improving operational efficiency, and also contributing to making residents' daily lives richer and more fulfilling.

Vision-Language-Action (VLA), the AI that controls the humanoid, is still at an early stage of development worldwide. Going forward, the companies will enhance the robot’s already-completed patrol functions and begin developing support for nurse calls.

When a resident presses a nurse call button and communicates a request, the humanoid will come to the resident and assist in responding to that request. Responding to nurse calls represents a significant workload for staff operating eldercare facilities.

Over the longer term, development will proceed in stages to enable the robot to provide a wider range of support within eldercare facilities.

Features of the "cinnamon" Humanoid Series

Development of "cinnamon" began in 2017, when its proposal as a translation and guidance robot was selected for a robot demonstration project at Haneda Airport. Since then, its conversational capabilities have been enhanced with the cooperation of numerous Japanese companies, with its deployment in real-world settings providing for real-use experience. The current efforts are to transition to a Japan-made humanoid by modifying chips and beginning assembly in Japan based on the overseas-manufactured hardware.

1. Gesture Control Enables Voice-Free Operation

donut robotics has filed a patent application for “gesture control technology,” which the company describes as the world’s first for humanoid robots. Gestures and finger movements can be used to give instructions to the robot, allowing humanoids to be operated in noisy environments such as factories and construction sites, as well as situations where voice commands are difficult to hear. The technology may also be easier to use for people with hearing impairments.

2. Vision Recognition AI Understands Its Surroundings and Describes Them in Words

The robot is equipped with an AI model capable of understanding both language and visual information; it can recognize the images of the situation in front of it and describe what it sees in its own words. This capability is expected to have applications in areas such as monitoring and patrols, including eldercare and security.

3. Learning Movements from Video

The robot can learn movements from videos of people and motion-capture data, enabling it to acquire new movements in a short period of time. This allows it to achieve smooth movements with less of the stiffness traditionally associated with robots.

4. A Lineup Designed for Different Applications

cinnamon 1: A mass-production humanoid approximately 170 cm tall that walks on two legs. It is designed for applications in manufacturing, construction, eldercare, security and other settings. Announced in January 2026.

cinnamon mini: A compact humanoid approximately 130 cm tall and around 35 kg, designed for applications in the service and entertainment sectors, including in-store guidance, hotel reception and dance-based spatial entertainment. Unveiled for the first time in April 2026 at SusHi Tech Tokyo 2026, one of Asia’s largest innovation conferences. At a collaborative stage performance with popular Japanese music group ATARASHII GAKKO!, four units danced alongside the group’s members.

cinnamon 2: A next-generation model scheduled to be officially announced in fall 2026. Following an advance demonstration at AI Expo Summer 2026 in August 2026, it appeared live on a Japanese television news program, where it demonstrated smooth dance movements learned from video and vision recognition AI capable of describing the studio environment in words.

Comment from Taisuke Ono, Representative Director, donut robotics Inc.

“12 years ago, I founded the company because I wanted to create a small robot that could watch over my mother, who lived far away. It is deeply meaningful to see the robot I named cinnamon evolve so dramatically, and now have the opportunity to support elderly residents alongside Charm Care. With their extensive knowledge of care settings and their numerous eldercare facilities operations, together we can continue evolving humanoid robots in real-world care environments.

Eldercare presents many challenges for physical AI, but I believe we must overcome these.

There is only little that cinnamon can do now, but in a few years, I hope it will move in ways that are almost unrecognizable compared with today, enriching residents’ lives while reducing the burden on those working in care facilities. We will continue working toward that goal.”

About donut robotics

Founded in a garage in Kitakyushu, Fukuoka Prefecture, in 2014 and incorporated in 2016, donut robotics is a robotics and AI development company. In 2017, the company was selected for a robot demonstration project at Haneda Airport. In 2022 it exhibited at CES, one of the world’s largest technology trade shows, in Las Vegas, USA. In 2024, it received the EY Innovative Startup 2024 award in the Robotics category. Its work has also been featured by major international media outlets including The New York Times, Forbes, The Wall Street Journal and TIME.

Company Profile

Company name: donut robotics Inc.
Representative: Taisuke Ono, Representative Director
Head Office: Roppongi Midtown Tower 18F, 9-7-1 Akasaka, Minato-ku, Tokyo
Established: 2016
Capital: ¥308,346,726
Business: Design, manufacture and sale of humanoid robots and other robotic technologies

URL: https://www.donutrobotics.com/

Media Contact

donut robotics Co., Ltd.
Support Team
Email: info@donutrobotics.com

Taisuke Ono
donut robotics Co., Ltd.
81-3-6804-6139

info@donutrobotics.com

This press release can be viewed online at: https://www.einpresswire.com/article/946835650

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.
© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.