



Florida Association of
Aging Services Providers

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Florida Association of Aging Services Providers

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Message from the President

By Darrell J. Drummond, Council on Aging of St. Lucie, Inc.



Here we are in December, 2021 on the eve of a new year. Many things have changed in our lives over the past two (2) years as a result of dealing with COVID-19 that will shape our future in ways we are only now beginning to understand. This issue of our newsletter focuses on what the future may hold for us in the senior network and in our personal and professional lives. I am excited

about the prospect of the positive changes that have occurred and will now be the standard for successful operation into the future.

As a result of the epidemic, we in the service delivery industry were forced to find new ways to provide the needed services our seniors demand to function within our communities. The lack of ability to move freely throughout our

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This Issue's Sponsors



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neighborhoods and enjoy the personal contact with our friends and family posed a major obstacle to our daily lives.

Thanks to the creativity of the senior network and our many partners, new ways of delivering services were created and existing programs were modified and enhanced to continue to meet our client's needs. Fortunately, advances in technology have made it possible to deliver many services remotely and maintain connections throughout our network. Some of the new innovations include Zoom meetings, telehealth visits, internet recreational programs, just to name a few.



Many of the changes to the delivery of service have proven to be very effective and cost efficient. New partnerships have been formed and the quality of the services provided have improved as a result. Thanks to the epidemic, restaurants have become a major part of the meal programs and both industries have benefited from the relationship. There is no way that we will be able to retreat from this new dynamic going forward and the entire community is better off as a result.

Clearly, as we look to the future, we must remain focused on our ability to compete with outside entities and agendas that will spring up and attempt to market services to seniors. The standard for the network has always been the

maximization of services to the client rather than maximizing profit to the provider. Where we must always remember that we are powerless to provide assistance if we cannot meet our financial obligations, changes in how we view our businesses as business and not charity will be the key to our success and survival in the future.

I challenge all of us to work collaboratively throughout the network to foster programs which take advantage of the funding made available as a result of the American Rescue Plan Act and build upon our opportunities to increase educating our local and state elected leaders on our senior population needs and the great benefits derived from the utilization of the senior network.

To one and all, Happy Holidays and a safe, healthy and Happy New Year.

Darrell Drummond





Department of
ELDER AFFAIRS
STATE OF FLORIDA



Hooray! eCIRTS is Live!

Congrats, one and all!

eCIRTS go-live was a huge success!

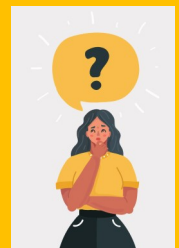
**Thank you for the hard work over the past
many months.**



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Have questions?

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Serving During Unprecedented Times

By: MaryJo McKay, Hillsborough County Department of Aging Services

COVID 19 tested the Aging Network's resilience, fortitude, flexibility and heart. Aging service providers across the Country made significant adjustments to their service delivery models to ensure seniors received life sustaining services. With Florida's large population of seniors, it only made sense for Florida to lead the way.

In Florida, partners grew closer, unlikely alliances were formed; and private/public partnership barriers were torn down. Everyone from the Governor's office, the Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA), local governments, Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), the Florida Council on Aging (FCOA), the Florida Association of Aging Service Providers (FASP), and the Florida Association of Senior Centers (FASC) all banded together to meet the common goal of providing services to our State's most vulnerable population. The new programs, the new partnerships, the flexibility in service delivery, the use of technology, and the increase in funding was an Aging Network utopia.

A survey of FASP members revealed: 100% of respondents expanded their use of technology and provided services in a different manner; 90% formed new partnerships; 85% provided a new service; and 80% plan to retain some portion of their new service delivery models.

Like many others, Hillsborough County Aging Services offered virtual programs to prevent loneliness and isolation, served congregate clients in either a grab n' go style or via home delivery; offered adult day care recipients in

home respite, case managers shifted to telephonic assessments; and nutrition employees enrolled meal clients daily. Aging Services partnered with local restaurants and food trucks to provide dinner meals, introduced parking lot bingo, outdoor movie theater



program, pet care, and everything virtual (nutrition education/cooking demonstrations, support groups, activities, seminars, and assessments). To further ensure seniors' safety, Aging Services coordinated vaccination clinics at local senior housing complexes and door to door vaccinations for homebound seniors. Also, like Broward County, Hillsborough County increased its financial support of its county's senior meal programs.



Now where do we go from here? Survey

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respondents like Aging True of Jacksonville hopes to maintain new partners like their local health department and Duval County UF/IFAS Extension Office; Niceville Senior Center states



that their daily attendance is almost at its pre-pandemic level, Senior Wellness Services of Central Florida will maintain some service provision flexibility; the Volen Center hopes to

retain its partnership with restaurants in some form, Meals on Wheels of South Florida is nurturing its new found partnership with two local senior medical centers who delivered meals to seniors when senior volunteerism was at an all-time low; Aging Matters of Brevard hopes to continue its newly established homeless prevention program; Tallahassee Senior Center indicates it will continue to offer several virtual programs; and to ensure the permanence and expansion of its virtual programs, Broward County purchased and distributed iN2L tablets and awarded its local AAA an additional \$100,000 to expand the DOEA's Uniper Pilot Project in Broward.

The Aging Network really showed the world why it exists!

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Collaboration Offers Support and Security for Caregivers and Seniors Living in Diverse Communities

The most essential principal for non-profit organizations is that the individual benefit is as important as the collective benefit they provide. Working together, non-profits can fulfill their respective missions of helping the needy in our community while collaborating in partnership to meet their overarching community outreach goals.



In 2021, Florida Power & Light (FPL) and the Florida Council on Aging (FCOA) generously donated hurricane meal kits to United HomeCare (UHC) and other aging service providers throughout the State of Florida. United HomeCare, a Miami non-profit and home and community care provider, collaborated with and eight (8) community non-profit organizations including Florida Memorial University, The Thelma Gibson Health Initiative, Helping Our People Every Day (H.O.P.E.), and Bridge to Hope for food distribution delivering 2,430 Hurricane Meal Kits for a 3-day supply of food to 810 older adults aged 60 plus and met the needs of over 10 underserved communities.



Together we were able to reach underserved and under-represented pockets of the Miami community, helping individuals on the waitlist to prepare for the Hurricane Season, and providing application assistance to Black, Afro-Caribbean and Hispanic seniors from underserved and under-represented areas of Miami. The food was delivered locally and facilitated with transportation through in-kind support from International 3PL. A long-term benefit of this project for the non-profits was the new and lasting relationships that were formed with organizations inside and outside the Aging Network.

“Building a strong and diverse workforce helps ensure caregiver resources for older adults.”

Building a strong and diverse workforce helps to ensure that all older adults have the necessary caregiver resources they will need to be able to age in place in the comfort of their home. Collaborations can help organizations to build bridges into diverse communities. Some collaborations can also blossom into partnerships. In 2020-2021,

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United HomeCare developed community outreach partnerships with Florida Memorial University and Thelma Gibson Health Initiative.

These partnerships, sponsored in part with the generous support of United Way of Miami, TD Charitable Foundation and Simply Foundation, enable UHC to employ and train individuals that want to work as caregivers for the elderly and disabled of Miami and Monroe Counties.

Additionally, UHC assists seniors, disabled adults, and family caregivers in need of supports by providing application assistance for public home and community-based care and long-term care programs as well as referrals for other community resources.

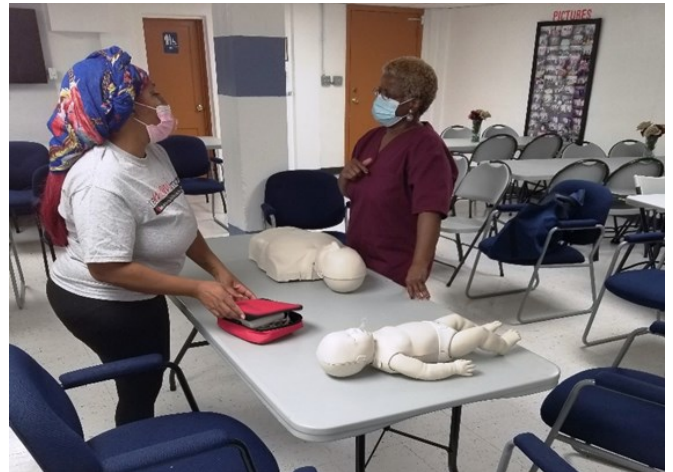
“All Home Care Providers will continue to experience a caregiver workforce shortage.”

Looking toward 2022, all home care providers will continue to experience caregiver workforce shortages. The home health aide workforce shortages are evident throughout the country exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and its variants, in addition to stagnant wages and growing inflation.

“These are integral issues for our legislators and regulators to help solve.”

As Aging Service Providers, we must continue to unite and advocate for more competitive wages for Home Health Aides and stability in this industry. These are integral issues for our legislators and regulators to help solve.

What is certain is that we can count on caring non-profits to help reach the community and meet their most pressing needs. Nonprofits are the backbone of our grassroot efforts to help reach the community and meet their most pressing needs.

**“Strong collaborations and volunteerism are key and a safety net of much needed support in our communities.”**

Strong collaborations are key to providing a safety net of much needed support, relief, and security for the neediest and most underserved and under-represented populations. Volunteers make a positive difference in our community! They inspire, bring joy, and lend a valuable helping hand to non-profits.

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“United HomeCare® AVUS Connect Program motivates youth, and tomorrow’s future leaders, to help our elderly.”



This year, United HomeCare’s AVUS Connect Intergenerational Program Volunteers have been dedicated to busting senior isolation. More than 15 high school and junior high school students are actively engaged in making weekly phone calls for friendly conversations to over 50 homebound older adults.

AVUS Connect Volunteers aim to help our elderly by providing social contact to alleviate loneliness and isolation. Youth Volunteers have also helped with special projects such as

food distribution drives in collaboration with community non-profits.

The AVUS Connect Program was started by Shawn Martinez, a Junior at Belen Jesuit Highschool in Miami, Class of 2023, in honor of his maternal grandmothers who passed months apart in 2019-2020. Seeing both his grandfathers suffer after the loss of their lifetime partners, he started to call them and FaceTime with them, and saw the powerful impact of having a friendly conversation that lifted their spirits. Shawn has taken a leadership role at United HomeCare to grow the AVUS Connect Volunteer Program with participation from high schools throughout South Florida including Belen Jesuit Preparatory School, Columbus High, Our Lady of Lourdes Academy, American Heritage School, Doral Academy, J.C. Bermudez Doral Senior High and G. Holmes Braddock Senior High among other schools.

Students are also learning about research and will publish an article in 2022 on the impact of their senior reassurance efforts on seniors who are experiencing loneliness and social isolation. The results will be presented at the American Gerontological Society Conference in 2022.

For more information, contact United HomeCare® at 305.716.0710 or visit www.unitedhomecare.com.



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