



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 Andrea Busada, Broward County Elderly and Veterans Services



The holidays are almost upon us and while many of us are already planning gatherings and celebrations, these holidays will be very difficult for the thousands of Floridians who were affected by the unprecedented damage from Hurricane Michael.

For those of you wishing to volunteer, you can contact your colleagues in the Panhandle, the Red Cross of North Florida at <https://www.redcross.org/local/florida/north-florida/volunteer.html>, and/or Volunteer Florida at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DCKMC6S>. For those of you who would like to assist via monetary contributions, I'm sure our sister agencies in the Panhandle would be appreciative of donations. In addition, Volunteer Florida has links to

agencies and organizations that they have vetted. These can be found at <https://www.volunteerflorida.org/emergency-management/#partners>.

Because of this storm, we will see an increase in the waitlist for services, so we have to be prepared to step up our advocacy efforts at both the state and local levels. The advocacy efforts of FASP members, in conjunction with the Florida Council on Aging's (FCOA) extraordinary annual advocacy initiative, have proven to be very effective. The state legislature has increased the funds allocated to home and community-based services each year since FCOA initiated those advocacy efforts. Now is not the time to be complacent – we have to work even harder this year! If you need any assistance or suggestions regarding advocacy efforts, please feel free to contact FASP or FCOA.

I wish all of you, your loved ones, your colleagues, and those that you serve a happy and peaceful holiday season.

Andrea Busada

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Sponsors:



Homelessness and the Elderly

By Faith Manfra

Homelessness does not discriminate and is a complex crisis that continues to be a growing part of society. There are factors that contribute to an individual becoming homeless such as unemployment, poor physical health, mental illness, disability, domestic violence, lack of affordable health care, addiction, rise in living costs, poverty, inability to achieve and maintain affordable housing, to name a few.



When thinking about homelessness, the elderly do not immediately come to mind. The National Alliance to End Homelessness has reported on evidence that homelessness is increasing among elderly adults especially with the anticipated growth of the baby boomers. In addition, the National Coalition for the Homeless reported among this growing elderly population are those living in poverty who have become homeless or who remain at constant risk of losing housing.

The elderly present with their own unique and complex needs. A key factor for homelessness among the elderly is the lack of affordable housing and the increase in poverty. In recent years, housing assistance programs have focused to target this subgroup; however, waiting lists for affordable senior housing, similar to the waitlist for in-home services, remain significant.

Unfortunately, in contrast to much of the homeless population, income growth is not an option for most elderly individuals, as they may have surpassed the age where they are able to work, their health may not enable them to work any longer, and they are unlikely to marry or remarry, or enter into a dual income household.



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In addition to the inability for low-income elders or homeless elders to access affordable housing, this sub-group faces challenges related to transportation, communication in the digital age and access to affordable healthcare. The elderly, whether already homeless or facing the threat of homelessness, are usually unaware of eligibility and availability for public assistance and supportive services, which although helpful would not be an overall solution.

Palm Beach County has taken action as it relates to homelessness through the establishment of a Homeless Advisory Board, which reflects a community commitment from government, law enforcement, philanthropists, faith and civic groups, social service agencies, business owners, housing entities, service providers and citizens to assist with this complex task. The combined efforts of the Board as well as service providers and programs help to:



- evaluate the accomplishment of existing programs and how the homeless connected to services and temporary housing;
- identify models successful in other communities for duplication;
- advocate on behalf of the homeless to impact public perception;
- bring about policy change for the availability of funding;
- ensure service providers have resources to offer services needed;
- strategize to develop permanent housing solutions.



The primary goal when addressing homelessness in the elderly population is prevention of housing loss. Providing more affordable and accessible housing that targets the elderly and the wrap around availability of supportive services may affect this crisis in the senior population.

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Continued from page 3*Supplemental comments from Margaret Lynn Dug-*

gar: As your FASP management staff, we continue to encourage volunteer editors to include important topics, like this one. We feel homelessness among the older adult population is underreported and we know the problem is growing. Since we discussed homelessness on the editorial call for this issue, Hurricane Michael has demolished much of the housing in several counties in the Panhandle of North Florida. While we have no statistics this soon after the storm, it is safe to assume that some elder Floridians will become newly homeless as a result of this strong hurricane. As those of you who have staffed post-hurricane services recently know, there are few if any resources for housing for persons on any age following a hurricane. And, while the homelessness following a natural disaster differs in some ways from the homelessness of other older adults – the main difference being the suddenness of the loss of your home, many of the other aspects of elder homelessness are quite similar. They include:



- the lack of financial resources to cover interim expenses once you are homeless;
- limited assets to secure a loan or financing for new housing;
- lack of affordable housing stock;
- managing to “get by” on limited resources until a major event, such as the death of a spouse, a serious illness; a major weather event, need for a new roof or other expensive item, or as similar problem; and/or
- increasing rental charges due to the increased demand for housing in Florida.



I know some of you are working closely with the resources in your communities who serve homeless populations to expand their services to newly homeless elders. I suggest everyone develop these relationships.





Know of Someone Who Needs Help After Hurricane Michael? Here's What To Do

Dave Bruns, AARP Florida



With electricity, cell phone service and even landline communications knocked out or damaged in much of the eastern Florida Panhandle after Hurricane Michael, one major emerging need is for information about who needs help.

While most people age 50-plus treasure their independence and vigor, natural disasters can hit older people especially hard. AARP is working to connect those you care about to assistance.

At present, it is difficult if not impossible for public officials and aid workers to get in touch with residents age 50-plus of North Florida who may need assistance. The communications gap is at its worst in rural areas and smaller communities in North Florida, some of which are just starting to receive outside assistance.

With no internet service, those who need assistance the most can probably not read this message. But if you know someone age 50-plus in the affected area, perhaps you can help.

You may know of people in the storm-affected area who need:

Evacuation. For some residents of the storm-affected area, continuing to live in their homes will not be an option. Homes may have suffered such severe damage as to be uninhabitable. In the hardest-hit areas, even after restoration of electrical power to the area, the home may not be in condition to safely use that power. For people age 50-plus in this situation, evacuation may be the best or only option. State and federal officials are providing emergency housing help in some cases.

Medical assistance. Many older residents may need electrical power to operate medical equipment such as power wheelchairs, oxygen accumulators or other equipment. Without power, these 50-plus residents may need assistance. If you know of a relative, friend or contact in the storm-affected area who may not be on the radar of state and local aging-service professionals, please let officials know that they may need help.

Sanitary needs. Some older North Floridians may need adult diapers or other supplies that may now be in short supply. Charities, churches and other organizations are collecting donations of such items and may be able to help.

Food, water and ice. With hot, humid weather lingering in North Florida and power restoration days or weeks away, residents across the storm-affected area may need basic supplies. Emergency roofing repairs. Even a home that is structurally sound may become uninhabitable if roof leaks create mold infestations. Some homes will need tarps or other emergency roofing. Some social service organizations, church groups and other organizations are providing.

Prescription drugs. Many people 50-plus rely on prescription drugs to remain active and independent. But they may be running low on their prescriptions and find it difficult to get to a pharmacy – and in some areas, pharmacies may not be open.

If you know of people who have these needs, please contact the state of Florida's Elder Helpline at 1-800-963-5337. Call volumes have been high so please be prepared to wait, or leave a message.

Affected counties in FL: Bay, Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Taylor, Wakulla, and Washington.



What is SOAR?

The SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery or [SOAR](#) program increases access to Social Security disability benefits for people with behavioral health issues experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The program is funded by the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) (SAMHSA) and provides monthly income and healthcare benefits. SOAR seeks to end homelessness by providing better access to Social Security.

Their goal is “to recover, people need meaningful work and the ability to enhance their skills through education.”

Resources and Information about SOAR

[SOAR Works](#)

[SOAR WORKS | Florida](#)

[SOAR Florida Contacts](#)

[SAMHSA.gov](#)

[SOAR Application Process](#)

[SOAR Broward County](#)

See More Resources on Page 10



Senior Veterans

According to the 2012 U.S. Census brief, there were over 12.4 million Veterans aged 65 or older. With 1,281,900 people serving active duty and an additional 801,200 serving in reserve capacities according to 2017 numbers, this number will only grow.



Resources Available to Military Veterans

[Florida Department of Veteran Affairs](#)

For 24-hour counsel, call the National Veteran Crisis Hotline at 1-800-273-8255. You are NOT alone! Veterans in Florida, call the Florida Veterans Support Line at 1-844-MyFLVet (693-5838) or 2-1-1.

[Florida Care Planning Council](#)

[U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs](#)

[MilitaryBenefits.Info | 10 Veterans Benefits You May Not Know About](#)

[Military.com | 2018 Veterans Pension Rates](#)

[Homeless Veterans Resources](#)

[Real Warriors | Resources for Military Veterans](#)

Florida Association of Senior Centers Announce 2018 Flo Goldmann Award Winner

The Florence R. Goldmann Award is conferred annually upon an FASC member organization for distinguished service by a Senior Center. There were four wonderful applicants for the award this year, but it was still a tough decision for the judges. Ultimately, one center scored highest and their mission statement tells exactly why: "...to encourage an atmosphere designed for healthy aging where older adults can be empowered to actively participate and be an integral part of their community." And they are doing just that daily with their programming, outreach and in-house services.

The Florida Association of Senior Centers is pleased to announce the 2018 Flo Goldmann Award winner is the Southcentral/Southeast Focal Point Senior Center in Miramar, Florida. The Center opened in 1976 and is nationally accredited through the National Council on Aging/National Institute of Senior Centers.



FASC President, Sally Marvin, Focal Point Director Katrina Davenport, and staff member Krishauna DeLisser

The Center boasts 361 active volunteers who logged over 10,000 hours of service in 2017. Volunteers share their talent, time and life experiences with participants. They also help with lunch support, leading exercise, art and special interest classes such as dance, jewelry making, knitting, arts and crafts, card games, music and with anything else they can do!

Some of the services provided by the Focal Point Senior Center include adult day services, congregate meal service, financial assistance, information and referral, intergenerational programming,

and transportation to get to the Center, shopping, medical appointments and trips. One of their favorite programs in 2017 was the implementation of a water aerobics class.

This Center is also very involved with community partnerships such as Meals on Wheels, Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE), Harmony Development, Broward County Elderly and Veteran's Affairs, among others.

The Center strives to provide their members with a "home away from home" atmosphere through their friendly staff, outreach and opportunities for fun, friendship and education.

Over all, the Southcentral/Southeast Focal Point Senior Center exemplifies good practices in senior center management and so is quite deserving of the Florence R. Goldmann Award in 2018. Go to the FASC website (Floridaseniorcenters.net) for pictures of the award presentation made at the Florida Conference on Aging in August 2018.

Social Isolation and How to Prevent It

Social isolation is a pernicious problem among seniors with dire consequences. According to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) 11 million, or 28% of people, aged 65 and older, lived alone at the time of the census.

Risks can include, higher rate of mortality they don't have someone to encourage them to seek medical help when there are signs of illness. Isolation can impact physical and mental health, such as high blood pressure, dementia, and depression. Seniors who are isolated are also at greater risk of abuse.



How can social isolation be prevented?

- Volunteering! If a senior is able, volunteering helps them to be active, connected with their community, and makes them feel good about making their world a better place. Checkout: [5 Reasons Volunteerism is Great for Seniors](#)



- Take a class! Whether cultivating a long held interest or learning something new, taking a class will give seniors a chance to interact with new people and get their brains moving. Get some ideas: [Ageless Grace | Senior Citizen Activities](#)
- Technology! They can use devices to stay in touch with friends and family. This solution may not work for everyone but according to [PEW Research](#), 4-in-10 seniors owned smartphones in 2017, which is double the number from 2013. Findings indicate that seniors are using technology and social media more. This can help seniors stay connected with long distance friends and family members. Checkout: [5 Benefits of Technology to Share with Seniors and Their Caregivers](#)



More Information and Resources

- [20 Facts about Senior Isolation That Will Stun You](#)
- [Connect 2 Affect | Powered by AARP Foundation](#)
- ['You can't be lonely and be a healthy person.' How seniors can combat isolation](#)
- [14 Ways to Help Seniors Avoid Isolation](#)
- [How To Combat Loneliness And Isolation As We Age](#)
- [Never Too Old to Find New Friends](#)

Suicide and Seniors

Usually when suicide is discussed the conversation is focused on younger people but people over 65 are more at risk. Factors that can lead to suicide are depression resulting from social isolation, mood disorders, substance abuse, and undiagnosed mental illness. Warning signs can include, giving away prized possessions, sudden interest in setting their affairs in order when they previously had no interest, comments like “Things would be better without me” or “Life isn’t worth living”.



Ways to help include, connecting with them, and encouraging them to connect with other people. Encouraging them to seek medical attention, whether their problems stem from physical or psychological issues, can also help. Feeling trapped due to chronic pain can contribute to suicidal thoughts. Older adults are also less likely to admit that they need help so great patience is required while trying to assist them.

How can you help a suicidal loved one? Here are some resources:

- [Preventing Suicide Among Seniors](#)
- [Older Adults At Greatest Risk For Suicide](#)
- [Elder Suicide: A Needless Tragedy](#)
- [Toolkit | Seniors' Suicide Prevention](#)
- [Preventing Suicide in Older Adults](#)
- [Talking About Suicide With Senior Loved Ones](#)
- [Suicide in the Elderly](#)





FASP is on Facebook—Are You?

Do you or your organization have a Facebook or Twitter account?

We would love to “like” “Friend” and/or “follow” you too!

FASP - Florida Association of Aging Services Providers [Facebook](#) page

FASP - Florida Association of Aging Services Providers [Twitter](#)

DOEA - Florida Department of Elder Affairs [Facebook](#) page

FCOA - Florida Council on Aging [Facebook](#) page

FCOA - Florida Council on Aging [Twitter](#)



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Resources



[Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness \(PATH\)](#)

[Cooperative Agreements to Benefit Homeless Individuals \(CABHI\)](#)

[Grants for the Benefit of Homeless Individuals—Services in Supportive Housing \(GBHI-SSH\)](#)

The [SOAR Application Toolbox \(link is external\)](#) has the tools and forms case managers need to complete and submit an SSI/SSDI application using the SOAR process. The [SOAR Resources Library \(link is external\)](#) provides articles, webinars, and other materials about topics that relate to homelessness and [mental and substance use disorders](#). Access [common questions by topic \(link is external\)](#) to learn more about the SOAR program and other SAMHSA services.



Upcoming Events

AGING^{2.0}

OPTIMIZE

NOV. 14-15, 2018 | HERBST THEATRE | SAN FRANCISCO WAR MEMORIAL

November 14-15 [Optimize 2018 | Aging 2.0](#)



November 14-18 [2018 GSA Annual Scientific Meeting](#)

Save the date! 2019 [Florida Conference on Aging](#)
August 19-21 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Orland, FL!



Past Sponsors



<http://agingtrue.org/>



<https://friendshipcenters.org/>



<https://www.seniorresourceassociation.org/>



<http://www.volencenter.com>



<http://www.southwestsocial.org/>



<http://www.coawfla.org/>



Council on Aging
of St. Lucie, Inc.

<http://www.coasl.com/>



SM

<https://www.hillsboroughcounty.org/en/government/departments/aging>

Hillsborough
County Florida



Real Possibilities

<http://www.aarp.org>