



Florida Association of
Aging Services Providers

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Florida Association of Aging Services Providers

Guest Editors: John B. Clark and Josh Newby,
Council on Aging of West Florida

Message from the President

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



Let me begin by thanking everyone for your support in allowing me to lead our organization. Over the past six (6) years, Andrea Busada, has been an inspirational leader, a steady hand and an insightful presence within the Florida network. Her shoes will be hard to fill (especially for me) but I thank you so much, Andrea, for all that you have done for FASP. I look

forward to your continued presence and participation on our leadership team. I also welcome Tourea Robinson from Aging True to our team as our 2nd Vice President. Larry Dixon is leaving our Board as the AARP representative and I want to express how much I have enjoyed working with Larry over the years and thank him for his tireless work for this organization.

As we look forward to this year and the challenges we have

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been given as a result of the COVID-19 virus, our objective is fairly clear. We must be flexible enough to meet the needs of the seniors of this State and more importantly, continue to serve those clients who are committed to enjoying their golden years of life at home and independent. We have always advocated to our elected officials, locally, regionally and Statewide to expand programming and funding to advance our mission. Now, more than ever, with the requirement that seniors remain isolated for health reasons, loneliness and depression are the new struggles in their daily lives. We must be ever present in our delivery of services to keep them engaged within the overall community. This will be especially important as we enter the holiday season and look for ways to support seniors during this time of year.

I look forward to working with all of you and our Management Firm, Margaret Lynn Duggar and Associates, as we continue to advocate for seniors. We

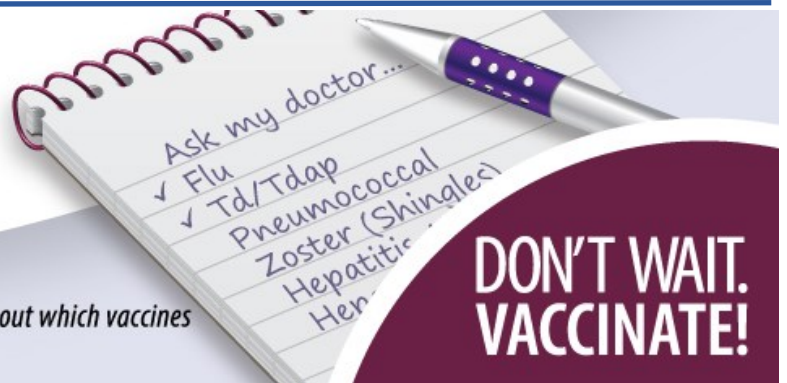
must remain vigilant in demanding that as we compete in this environment with for-profit companies, service is provided by all of us based on need and not purely profit. Our fight must be to insure that we are all operating on a level playing field; one that places the care of our seniors first. The requirements dictated by years of regulation must match the demands of our seniors who want quality service which doesn't have an added layer of cost brought on by some antiquated regulations. I am confident that we have willing partners in the leadership at Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) and Florida Association of Area Agencies on Aging (F4A).

My door is always open and I look forward to hearing from you as we move forward. Please remember that this is flu season, please encourage vaccinations for flu, pneumonia and shingles!

Darrell Drummond

What Vaccines do **You** need?

Adults need vaccines too! Answer a few quick questions to find out which vaccines you may need.



Adults need vaccines too! Use the CDC's [Adult Vaccine Self-Assessment Tool](#) to find out which vaccines you may need.



Loneliness and Social Isolation

By: John B. Clark, Council on Aging of West Florida



“Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty.”

Mother Teresa

Perhaps the holiday season is not the best time to talk about loneliness and social isolation, but on the other hand, it is perhaps the best time to touch on the topic. Whether we want to admit it or not, aging can bring us into a season of loss and sorrow. A loss of loved ones. A loss of friends. A loss of a job. A loss of independence (e.g. losing your driver's license or ability to drive). A loss of finances. These losses can lead to isolation and loneliness. This is compounded for those who are so-called “elder orphans,” that is, those who never had a spouse and/or child or a large extended family. This feeling of loneliness and isolation is further compounded during the holiday season when we are bombarded by TV shows, advertising, and other media—all revolving around “happy times” with loved ones or friends. And those without families, or who are isolated, are left feeling lonelier or more isolated. Men and women are social

animals and, by our very nature, have a desire to be with others, whether we want to admit it or not.

Thus, when faced with loss, there becomes a very real danger of finding yourself isolated and adrift---this may not seem like a huge problem, but it is truly a health hazard. According to an article in this newsletter in September/October 2018, it was noted that “Social isolation is a pernicious problem among seniors with dire consequences. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 11 million people, or 28 percent of people aged 65 and older lived alone at the time of the [2010] census.” According to the article, “Risks can include higher rate of mortality when an elder does not 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,

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and depression. Elders who are isolated are also at greater risk of abuse and suicide.” Becoming socially isolated is not something to be ignored or trivialized. As Mike Magee, M.D. said in his *Book of Choices*, “Loneliness breeds only discontent. When no one cares, no one cares, period. The perception is the reality.” This feeling is akin to being in a room full of people but still feeling lonely and isolated. Other people would say you are not alone or isolated and have no reason to be lonely, but you are. That is your reality. Overcoming this reality as one ages is not without its challenges.

It really is too easy for the “experts” to say: get involved, volunteer, take a class, use technology (e.g. Facebook) to stay in touch with family (assuming you have family), attend church (assuming you had/have one and have not fallen off the radar), get a pet, or you’re never too old to find new friends (finding a true friend at any age is tough, and only tougher as we get older). No, I am not trying to be negative or to “poo-poo” all these ideas. These are good ideas worthy of consideration and some elders will use some of these ideas in a self-help way out of isolation. But for many elders who have experienced significant losses in life and now find themselves isolated and alone, it might be important for us to reach out to them and not vice-versa.

So, let us take baby steps, together. Do we know someone in our personal lives



who is possibly lonely and isolated? I suspect we all do. Call them. Ask them out to lunch or dinner. Gradually—but don’t throw it at them all at once—find out if they would be interested in volunteering or attending a church, and find out if they have a way to get there? Could they benefit from the visit of a Senior Companion or a friendly visitor, and would they be at all interested? Try to find out what their likes and dislikes are (again, a slow process). Don’t give up because they don’t jump at your suggestions or ideas. Don’t push them. It really is important to remember that people don’t become isolated (and in many cases, lonely) overnight. For most it was, and is, a gradual process. But it can be scary and frightening to suddenly realize you are alone. Unfortunately, by then, many can become paralyzed by inertia and may need help taking the first steps. And many will have become so isolated that they are hidden in the shadows of life. But remember for all of us this quote of Norman Cousins is so true, “The eternal quest of the individual human being is to shatter his loneliness.”



Overcoming Fear through Compassion

By: Lauren Clark and Josh Newby, Council on Aging of West Florida



“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”

-Margaret J. Wheatley

In the beginning of the pandemic, many of us felt like all of the social and economic systems that hold up life as we know it were collapsing around us. The closure of one industry or service exposed just how many others are dependent on it. In their personal lives, many found themselves relieved after canceled plans and began to reevaluate priorities. After both the relief of discovering what doesn't matter to us and the paralyzing fear of learning what we truly depend on to survive, we are left with the knowledge of what we really need as individuals and as a society. COVID-19 has taken a lot from us all, but it has shown us one thing that I hope we carry with us forever: what we truly care about at our very cores, as individuals, families, communities, and a nation.

Council on Aging's staff and Board of Directors debated fundraising at a time like this and asked ourselves how to be considerate of what our community was going through while sharing our own needs. We worried both about exploiting the disaster and of being too tentative

and losing funds that we depend on to exist. Ultimately, we knew we had to ask for help as the need rose and the community delivered. Within a few short weeks, we received over \$30,000 cash from more than 70 donors and a stock donation worth \$25,000! Meals on Wheels donations soared: checks coming in with notes about the donor's concern for those whom they have never met. Both the Florida Blue Foundation and the Healthcare Professionals Association of Northwest Florida made large donations to help us purchase emergency shelf-stable meals for the seniors dependent on our nutritional service.



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The generosity of a community can surprise you, and you won't know what they're capable of until you ask. And perhaps unsurprisingly, the tips for asking during this time are the same as asking during any time: demonstrate your fiscal responsibility, put your clients in the spotlight, steward your donors and thank them more times than you ask them. On top of that, engage your board and don't be afraid to go for the big requests.

Especially during a pandemic, remember to not neglect the small donors. Donations less than \$50 can add quickly. We recently had a fundraiser where the average gift was \$40, and our net on the event was over \$25,000. We spend a lot of our time chasing the big fish, and of course hooking one can pay massive dividends for years to come. But very often it's the smaller donors who will be your fiercest advocates and give their last penny before they even think of spending it on themselves.



One mistake we caution you to avoid (and this is one we've made a time or two, as well): avoid crisis fatigue. First, there's the pandemic, then an economic downturn, throw in a hurricane or two and pretty soon your donors start to feel like the world is ending with every crisis you encounter...and they start to wonder if you're really prepared or just crying wolf. Make your asks meaningful and unique. Be honest, but don't think that every funding request is an emergency. Some requests can wait, some can be combined. Be judicious of your needs and your donors' time the way they expect you to be judicious over their gifts.

We often just think about philanthropists as millionaires sharing a piece of their fortune with a charity, but philanthropy is so much more than that. Philanthropy is how we make sense of our place in the world and can do just one good thing when everything else feels like it is spinning out of control. Philanthropy is how we come together as a community to use our collective power and change the world.

Thank You!
FOR YOUR DONATION



The Best Shot for a Long Life

By: Josh Newby, Council on Aging of West Florida



We all get sick, and at the height of the sickness we've all wished we could do something—anything—to feel whole again. Whether it's something as simple as the sniffles or painful and uncomfortable like the chickenpox, we'll do anything to get back to normal. And yet for many older Americans, 15 minutes of time and a simple needle prick are too high a price to pay for a near-guarantee that we'll never have to experience these awful ailments in the first place.

Vaccination has been around in one form or another for a thousand years, but modern technology and medical science has allowed for immunization to be practiced across the globe and against more than 25 diseases. These vaccines save millions of lives a year and many life-threatening illnesses have been eradicated due to widespread herd immunity. And while much of focus around vaccinations revolves around infants and children, there has been a recent push to evangelize elder adults with the gospel of preventable diseases such as influenza, pneumococcal, tetanus and others.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), vaccines are especially important for adults over 65.

As we get older, our immune system weakens, and complications from serious diseases can result in hospitalization or even death. In fact, despite making up only 15 percent of the population, elder adults account for over 50 percent of vaccine-preventable deaths each year. Unfortunately, the reason is clear: only about half of seniors get the vaccines recommended of them. Scott Rivkees, Florida's State Surgeon General, has even declared a public health emergency regarding the prevalence of hepatitis A.

"As we grow older, the immune system does not work as well due to fewer immune cells in the body that bring about healing, which ultimately increases the risk of illness," said a CVS Pharmacy spokesperson. "Because of this, it is important for seniors to protect themselves with vaccines to decrease the risks from an aging immune system."

The specific vaccines recommended for senior citizens include influenza, which is generally given in the fall by the end of October; pneumococcal, which becomes much more dangerous after age 50; herpes zoster, also known as the shingles or chickenpox; tetanus; hepatitis A and B; and measles, mumps and rubella (MMR). According to the HHS, Medicare Part B covers vaccines that



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protect against the flu and pneumococcal disease, and the hepatitis B vaccine if you're at increased risk for hepatitis B. It also covers vaccines that you might need after an injury (like the tetanus vaccine) or encountering a disease (like the rabies vaccine). Medicare Part D plans generally cover more vaccines than Part B, but depending on your Medicare Part D plan, you may have out-of-pocket costs for these vaccines.

There are many reasons senior adults may be hesitant to receive the vaccinations they should—chief among them is that the vaccination causes the disease it is designed to prevent. While this is a myth, some vaccines, like the flu shot, are not 100 percent effective at preventing it altogether, though they do reduce the chances and the severity. Another reason is costly co-payments of \$100 or more for vaccinations not covered by Medicare Part B. Yet another challenge is that many doctors' offices do not store some vaccines. The patient is asked to come back at another time, and they rarely do. Finally, many senior adults are simply not aware that they need updated and new vaccinations; many assume the ones they received as a child are adequate.

"While no vaccine is 100 percent effective, it is the best way to protect yourself from illness," said a CVS Pharmacy spokesperson. "For the annual flu vaccine, the CDC monitors strains from past years and conducts studies to determine how well the flu shot protects against the flu year-over-year. When the flu vaccine viruses match the circulating flu viruses well, the flu vaccine has been shown to reduce the risk of illness by between 40



percent and 60 percent. The new shingles vaccine, Shingrix, is more than 90 percent effective, and with almost half of the cases of shingles being seen in adults 60 and older, it's important for older adults to get the vaccine. As for pneumococcal vaccines, there are two options and both are more than 60 percent effective in most cases. Older adults should receive this vaccine as they are more likely to develop severe complications from pneumonia that can lead to death."

Misinformation and lack of resources cause almost 90,000 preventable deaths a year. Whatever the reason for those 89,999 tragic cases, ask yourself, what is the reason I have not gotten vaccinated? If the reason is laziness, lack of education or another surmountable challenge, Council on Aging of West Florida encourages you to overcome that hesitation and do it. Your life may very well depend on it. If a lack of resources prevents you from receiving immunization, contact your local Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (595-6500) or in Santa Rosa County (983-5200). There may be programs available to you.

Holiday Celebrations and Activities During the COVID Pandemic

With everyone dealing with the Coronavirus pandemic, we wanted to know how your organizations are planning to celebrate the holidays despite the restrictions in place and general uncertainty. We received the following responses to a survey that was sent to the FASP membership:



The [Bay County Council on Aging](#) does not have any special activities planned for the holidays this year. However, the local Knights of Columbus will fix a traditional dinner for Thanksgiving and then again for Christmas



this year as has been an annual practice for many years. On Thanksgiving morning, the Knights will use the Bay County Council on Aging's kitchen to prepare, cook and plate everything in to-go boxes. They provide all the ingredients needed for the meal.

Volunteers deliver the meals to seniors who are on Meals on Wheels and do not have any family or friends in the area to celebrate the

holiday. The same process is repeated for the Christmas holiday, on Christmas Eve day. Even with the pandemic, the Knights are making plans to serve Thanksgiving and Christmas meals this year for senior adults in the community. Andrea Marsh said "It will be so nice for seniors to have something 'normal' to look forward to that hasn't changed this year because of the Coronavirus."

The [Council on Aging of West Florida](#) will have an outdoor holiday lunch as they always do, just with more spaces in between each guest! For the holidays, they are soliciting gift cards from the community and will mail them to clients. They generally do a Christmas for Seniors initiative with actual tangible gifts that are wrapped and distributed, but they are adapting to COVID this year while ensuring their participants can still have a Merry Christmas. In addition, their adult day care will have many holiday themed activities, and their social media channels will offer holiday crafts for people to try at home.



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[Senior Friendship Centers'](#) Senior Center will have music and dancing party as usual, but implementing their COVID precautions. The Friendship At Home/Relief program may have some activities if the volunteers are receptive. The Friendship At Home volunteers will deliver holiday gifts to the clients' homes or at food distribution sites. If available, they will deliver Giving Tree gifts. For the past few years, they have received gift card donations which will be delivered to clients. The Senior Center is partnering with development to do a wreath sale fundraiser in Sarasota.

[Silver Santas](#) of Pinellas County is a grassroots project that provides gifts during the holiday season to isolated and low-income seniors living in assisted living and senior housing communities and at home. The purpose of the program is to provide gifts and seasonal cheer to those who might otherwise be forgotten during the holidays. Silver Santas is a program of the of Better Living for Seniors (BLS) and is affiliated with the [Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc.](#) For more information, questions, or comments about the Silver Santas program, visit their [website](#) or email SilverSantas.Info@gmail.com.



[The Volen Center](#) plans on celebrating the holiday season with their clients in smaller festive celebrations, socially distanced. They will decorate all of their Centers. In their adult day care program, they will have a festive art class, design your own holiday cookies, and other independent programs tailored to the holiday season. Virtual holiday themed activities will be provided for their Senior Center clients.

[Elder Care Services' Elder Elf Program](#) brightens the holidays for seniors who will receive gifts and other essentials to help them throughout the year. If you are interested in adopting one of their clients for the holidays, please complete this [form](#). You will be matched with a senior and sent a wish list of presents and essential items. Gifts may be dropped off at 2518 W. Tennessee St., Tallahassee, FL, 32304 or taken directly to the senior if it can be coordinated. Contact Nicole Ballas at ballasn@ecsbigbend.org or (850) 245-5945 for more information.



Produce Distribution in Manatee County

Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee's Mobile Produce Pantry is just as it sounds—a produce pantry on wheels! Thanks to United Way Suncoast's investment in this critical program, The Food Bank of Manatee, a PLUS program of Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee, will be distributing free, fresh produce the third Thursday of each month starting Thursday, September 17, 2020 through May 20, 2021 at the following locations:

Visible Men Academy
921 63rd Avenue East
Bradenton, FL 34203
8 am – 10 am

Sozo Missions
3124 17th Street East
Bradenton, FL 34208
8 am – 10 am

Increasing Joy Ministries
2515 37th Street East
Palmetto, FL 34221
(Enter on Oakhurst Road)
12:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Please share!

For up-to-date information, visit <https://mealsonwheelsplus.org/mpp/>



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Choose Fruits and Vegetables for a Healthy Diet!

Fruits and vegetables provide a variety of nutrients, vitamins, minerals, and fiber—while remaining naturally low in calories, fat, and sodium. In addition, they lower your risk of developing certain chronic diseases including heart disease, high blood pressure, and some cancers. Fill your plate with fruits and vegetables rich in vitamins and minerals that help you feel healthy and energized.

Resources

- Meals on Wheels giving away produce in Manatee County, citing an increase in need
- Fresh produce distributed in Manatee County

Avoiding Coronavirus Scams

Recently the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) conducted a webinar on coronavirus scams, older adults, and financial protection. During the webinar, resources to help consumers avoid scams during the pandemic were discussed. Some of the information is provided below.

The best defense against scams is to say NO if anyone contacts you by phone, in person, by text message, or email and asks for your:

- Social Security number
- Bank account number
- Credit card information
- Medicare ID number
- Drivers license number
- Any other personally identifiable information

Types of scams to watch out for:

- Vaccine, cure, air filters, and testing scams
- Fake coronavirus-related charity scams
- "Person in need" scams
- Scams targeting Social Security benefits
- COVID-19 government imposter scams



Consumers are also advised to hang up on robocalls, watch out for phishing emails, emails claiming to be from the CDC, WHO or other agencies, and to do their homework when it comes to donations.

You can help keep those you care about from falling for a scam, regardless of their age or health status. If you spot a scam, report it to the FTC at <https://reportfraud.ftc.gov/#/>

The FTC reports that the top COVID-related reports/complaints are online shopping, scam text messages and phone scams.

Resources

- [Coronavirus Advice for Consumers](#)
- [Resources for older adults and their families](#)
- [Resources to help you avoid scams](#)
- [COVID-19 Quick Reference Guide for Investors and Market Participants](#)

Caregiving During a Crisis

November is [National Family Caregivers Month](#). It is a time to recognize and honor family caregivers across the country and enables us to:

- Raise awareness of family caregiver issues;
- Celebrate the efforts of family caregivers;
- Educate family caregivers about self-identification; and
- Increase support for family caregivers.

Before COVID, family caregivers managed health emergencies, juggled priorities, and suffered isolation. The pandemic brings even more challenges as family caregivers handle increasing demands and restrictions. During the month, Caregiver Action Network (CAN) will address the new realities family caregivers face with their loved ones during these uncertain times. Some topics include video conferencing, risk, and how to deal with added costs. Resources are provided in the [Family Caregiver Toolbox](#).

In addition, [Genworth's Caregiving in COVID-19: Consumer Sentiment Study](#) found that one in three Americans became caregivers overnight. With little time to prepare, these new caregivers are providing for their children or older family members, and 53% of Americans felt more stress.

Caregiving impacts the whole family and when you add in the pressures of the pandemic, it is further complicated by each family member's own risk perceptions. Each person will need to decide the acceptable



level of risk they are comfortable with and try to minimize the spread of the virus.

Due to the pandemic, families have been forced to be apart and for caregivers this has increased their isolation. Many feel guilty that they are not coping with the added stress and responsibilities. For family members who have been forced to stay away for fear of spreading the virus or restrictions at facilities, the pandemic has added to the guilt that they are not doing enough. Experts suggest that caregivers take the long view and think about what they have done and not focus on the current situation. Caregivers are also encouraged to accept that the restrictions are out of their control and are being used to protect their loved ones.

Resources

- [Dealing with Caregiver Guilt During the Coronavirus Crisis](#)
- [Caregivers Should Use Their Pandemic Guilt as a Force to Drive Effectiveness](#)
- [Who Decides How Much Risk is Too Much Risk?](#)
- [How COVID-19 is aggravating the caregiving crisis](#)



FASP is on Social Media—Are You?

Find our Sponsor on Social Media!



<https://www.facebook.com/coawfla/>

<https://twitter.com/coawfla>

Resources

OCTOBER IS HEALTH LITERACY MONTH

- [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion—Health Literacy](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control—Health Literacy](#)



The **Veterans Crisis Line** is a free, confidential resource for all those who have served.

Text 838255
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