



Florida Association of
Aging Services Providers

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Florida Association of Aging Services Providers

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Products and Amanda Hinz, Senior Friendship Centers,
Inc.

Message from the President

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



It's springtime in America! Well at least it feels that way. The vaccinations are progressing on schedule, and we are hopeful that by July 4th, at least seventy percent of all Americans will be fully vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus.

Now comes the hard part, reentering the community and returning to some form of normal existence. For many seniors, this is a daunting task; determining what we should and should not do when venturing out. More importantly, after this "long winter" of isolation, many are finding it difficult to reconnect to family and friends. We

are all aware that for many, the extended period of isolation led to bouts of anxiety and depression. The feelings crept into our daily lives. May was National Mental Health Month and this newsletter is devoted to this topic.

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This Issue's Sponsors



Senior
Friendship
Centers

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Fortunately, many agencies within the senior network have been preparing for this time and are starting to put these plans into action. Thanks to the efforts of the Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA), Florida Association of Area Agencies on Aging (F4A) and Florida Association of Aging Services Providers (FASP) innovative programs are being introduced, utilizing some of the funding from the American Rescue Act to target senior isolation and depression.

This newsletter focuses on the resources and programs available to our seniors during this time and I encourage everyone to take advantage of these offerings and share them in your communities. Further, the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) are working with providers throughout the State to find and develop innovative new ideas to address this critical need. I hasten to add, the Secretary of DOEA has encouraged that we seek out and develop new programs that target hard to reach and historically underserved communities to help bridge the gap in service delivery.

I am excited about the opportunities we have in the senior network as a result of the efforts of President Biden and the American Recovery Act, as well as, the increased General Revenue funding provided by Governor DeSantis and our State Legislature which seeks to move clients off the waitlists for services. One of the valuable



lessons we have learned over the last year has been the ability to work with new partners in the network and expand offerings to seniors. The meal programs are a prime example of how we can work within our communities with restaurants and other for-profit organizations to streamline our programs to meet local needs and at the same time, rethink guidelines for monitoring programs that offer the greatest flexibility and cost effectiveness; not to mention are much more appetizing.

The Fourth of July is right around the corner, and I hope everyone has a chance to get out and celebrate our nation's birthday with family and friends, face-to-face. Of course, the battle is not over, so be safe and take the necessary precautions to be sure it is a happy and healthy celebration!

Darrell Drummond



The Florida Department of Elder Affairs' (DOEA) Emergency Coordinating Officer coordinates with the Florida Division of Emergency Management on emergency preparedness issues and post-disaster response. DOEA ensures that the Area Agencies on

Aging and local service providers have all-hazards Disaster and Continuity of Operations Plans to be implemented during a threat of imminent disaster.

For more information and to view the 2021 Disaster Resource Guide, please visit DOEA's [website](#).

Who Takes Care of the Caregiver?

By: James Dodd, Summit Home Healthcare Products



Stress.
Anxiety.
Isolation.
Depression.
Overwhelmed.

These are familiar words for most of the world after the past year because of the global Pandemic.

These health issues have gotten a lot of attention in the media as more people face these challenges than ever before. The media's attention on these subjects has removed some of the stigma associated with these very real and debilitating disorders and people are openly talking about their struggles with them.

These same ailments have existed in the world of caregivers for generations without the same level of attention as they are getting now, often leaving caregivers to suffer in silence, unaware of how to treat their own conditions while they care for another person.

It is estimated by Johns Hopkins University that 65.7 million Americans serve as informal caregivers. Typically these individuals are relatives of an aging adult or the parent of a

disabled child. It's a misconception that most elderly reside in nursing homes, only just over 10% of aging adults are in nursing homes. Most have the care they need being provided in their homes by family and friends. The average age of these caregivers is 49, and typically female. This is a demographic that is accustomed to being self-reliant.

With an aging spouse or parent the decline in independence is often gradual. What started as an hour or two a week can increase slowly at first but with each passing year the time commitment and level of care will compound. Eventually there comes a point at which the caregiver is putting in more time than they are truly capable of and end up taking the time away from their own personal care and lives. They are overwhelmed by the impossible task of doing it all on their own.

A caregiver can often be in denial about the decline, or feel embarrassed or shame about their relative's diminished cognitive or physical abilities. They may be reluctant to have other friends or relatives assist them in giving care. Sometimes they may be the only family member willing to put in the time and effort necessary to support the older and/or disabled family member. Other caregivers may just feel guilty asking for any help.

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Common issues of individuals being overwhelmed by caregiving can include:

- Guilt for feeling like they haven't done enough, when in truth they are trying to do too much.
- Anger and frustration with the disabled person who needs care.
- Isolation from spending all of one's available time caregiving for an individual in decline.
- Anxiety about managing time, finances or the life tasks they sacrifice for giving care.
- Depression from seeing a loved one in decline and being overwhelmed with the care.

So who takes care of the Caregiver?

Caregivers need to take care of themselves in order to be effective givers of care.

Firstly, a caregiver must be realistic about how much time they can dedicate to caregiving without sacrificing the things they need to do for themselves. They must find help for the care needs that exceed that threshold, or they risk being overwhelmed. They can't be afraid to ask for help from other family or loved ones, or accept that aid when it's offered. Creating a team to help the older and/or disabled individual can keep everyone involved from taking on too much. It can be a difficult realization for some that they are not failing, but that instead they need help. Taking care of a relative with many needs is not a chore that should, or even can, be done alone.

If there isn't other family to help, then there is still help available. Adult day care, in-home



nursing, respite companionship, housekeeping and a whole host of other in-home services are there that can give the caregiver some relief. Of course these services cost money, but this is the kind of thing retirement savings should be used for. If the money isn't there, then the individual may qualify for programs such as Home Care for the Elderly, Alzheimer's Disease Initiative, and Community Care for the Elderly or Florida's Medicaid Long Term Care which can provide financial assistance or home and community based care services.

The second most important thing a caregiver can do is make me-time and not make one's entire life about giving care. They need to make sure that not all of the time they spend with that loved one is about managing their illness and make sure to get some quality time with them too! Caregivers need to stay socially connected outside of the caregiving relationships; so go out with friends for meals or conversation. Another stress relieving activity that can help is getting some exercise through activities like yoga, walking or swimming.

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An overwhelmed caregiver may not even know where to begin to look for help, but fortunately they aren't alone. With 64 million caregivers out there, plenty of support groups and programs exist that can help. Not only is there a lot of advice online for caregivers, but social media, like Facebook, has hundreds of support groups filled with people experiencing these same issues. Some of these groups may even be locally based and are easily found by using the media platform's search function. The participants in the group can provide a level of understanding that others unfamiliar with

caregiving cannot, and can even help a caregiver find assistance in their community. They also can help to ease the emotional strain of caregiving for a declining loved one by normalizing the feelings associated with being overburdened.

Caring for an aging or disabled person can be an experience full of rewards and there is some evidence that caregivers tend to live a little longer than their peers. With the proper support, planning, time management, and assistance, a caregiver can avoid the pitfall of being overwhelmed by the process and spend quality time with their loved one while also managing their illness. For those who find they are being overwhelmed caring for a loved one, there are more resources and support available, partially due to the pandemic highlighting many of the same mental health challenges that caregivers face.

National Mental Health Month

Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental illness. During May, Mental Health America (MHA) and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) join the national movement to raise awareness about mental health. Each year they fight the stigma, provide support, educate the public and advocate for policies that support people with mental illness and their families.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on the mental health of people of all ages. Now, more than ever, it is critical to reduce the stigma around mental health struggles, so individuals do not avoid seeking help. MHA's [website](#) provides practical tools that everyone can use to improve their mental health and increase their resiliency regardless of their personal situation.

Now more than ever, we need to find ways to stay connected with our community. No one should feel alone or without the information, support or help they need. For more information, please visit NAMI's [website](#).



**YOU ARE
NOT
ALONE**



Sneakers

By: Amanda Hinz, Senior Friendship Centers



Sneakers – one of the few things you really should buy in the store; try them on, walk around... hop, skip, jump. Make sure that they not only fit well, but will be comfortable.

Sneakers. Sneakers were going to be the thing that *forced* me to go into a store for the first time in 16 months.

My head told me it's fine; I'm fully vaccinated. But my body was shutting down. I was silent the entire way to the store. My husband asked if I was ok. And it occurred to me that maybe I wasn't. The anxiety of going in public became overwhelming to me at that moment.

The introvert in me didn't hate the idea of being forced to stay at home with my family, safe and happy in our little bubble. And I knew my anxiety wasn't about a fear of getting sick, it was the rapid change in my routine that was throwing me off; I needed time to process how my life was about to shift. Not only were draw-string pants and slippers going to be tough to give up, but I was going to have to leave my house? Go back to the office? Put my son in daycare for the first time? Walk the aisles at the grocery store and do my own shopping?



According to the American Psychological Association (APA), I am not alone – nearly half of Americans are feeling this same sense of angst. It's imperative that those of us who are struggling don't let our anxiety stall us. Even an introvert like me recognizes the need for social interactions from time to time, if for no other reason than to make sure I can still button my jeans.

Dealing with the anxiety and depression that COVID-19 has left us with cannot and should not be dealt with alone. The APA points out that anxiety is fueled by avoidance; avoiding this reintegration will do far more harm than good. I encourage all of us that are struggling to take baby steps – Ask a close friend if you can stop by their place to say hello or go to the store later in the evening when it's less crowded. Summer concerts can be a 2022 goal. It will be tough at first, but it will get easier.

Who knows, maybe it's like riding a bike – with my fancy new sneakers.





OLDER AMERICANS MONTH



COMMUNITIES OF STRENGTH: MAY 2021

Every May, the Administration for Community Living leads our nation's observance of Older Americans Month. On May 3, 2021, President Biden issued a Proclamation on Older Americans Month. The Proclamation states in part:

During Older Americans Month, we celebrate older Americans and the key role they play in sharing the wisdom and experience that inform today's decisions and actions, and fostering the connection and engagement that build strong, resilient communities. And, we recognize our responsibility to ensure that every American has the opportunity to age with dignity.

The COVID-19 pandemic has imposed tremendous hardships on our Nation's older Americans. Older adults — particularly those from communities of color — have comprised the majority of deaths from COVID-19, with more than 80 percent of all deaths to date occurring in persons 65 and older. Many older Americans have also suffered extreme social isolation from being separated from friends, family, and community resources throughout the pandemic. In spite of this, older Americans have stepped up to support their families, friends, and neighbors. They are among our essential workers, volunteers, and donors, bolstering their communities and inspiring others to do the same.

The full Proclamation can be found [here](#).

Upcoming Events

Florida Conference on Aging

August 10 -11, 2021

FCOA
2021
Virtual

For more information , please visit <https://fcoa.org/Conference>

Workshop tracks are posted on the website.



Humana | Healthy Horizons™

Recognize a Valuable Service Employee and a Senior Volunteer with a FASP Award!

The 2021 FASP Awards Committee is accepting nominations for the Humana Healthy Horizons Best Direct Service Employee of the Year and the Humana Healthy Horizons Senior Volunteer of the Year Awards.

The deadline for submissions is **Wednesday, June 30, 2021**.

FASP Members are encouraged to nominate a Florida aging service employee or senior volunteer who has:

- **Added value to the service benefiting and being delivered to elders**
- **Gone above and beyond to provide customer service and ensure customer satisfaction**
- **Developed community resources and support for provided services**
- **Demonstrated a high level of commitment to excellence**

The Humana Healthy Horizons Best Direct Service Employee of the Year Award acknowledges an employee who makes a difference in the lives of seniors individually or through a unit, group, agency or organization.

The Humana Healthy Horizons Senior Volunteer of the Year Award acknowledges the accomplishments of a Senior Volunteer who serves clients.

FASP will present these awards during the Florida Conference on Aging to honor the dedication of Florida service employees and volunteers. The 2021 Florida Conference on Aging will be held virtually August 10-11th.

Due to the generosity of Humana Healthy Horizons in Florida, Award winners will receive \$500 for themselves and \$500 for their agency, one year complimentary membership in FASP and complimentary registration to the Florida Conference on Aging.

You can submit nominations at:

Humana Healthy Horizons Best Direct Service Employee of the Year

<https://fasp.wufoo.com/forms/best-direct-service-employee-award-nomination/>

Humana Healthy Horizons Senior Volunteer of the Year

<https://fasp.wufoo.com/forms/senior-volunteer-of-the-year-award/>

If you have any questions, please contact moreinfo@fasp.net or call **(850) 222-3524**.



Florida Leaders Recognize June 15th as World Elder Abuse Awareness Day



On June 15, 2021, Department of Children and Families Secretary Shevaun Harris and Department of Elder Affairs Secretary Richard Prudom released a joint statement in recognition of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD). WEAAD serves as a call-to-action for our communities to raise awareness about abuse, neglect, and elder exploitation.

Statement from the Department of Children and Families

“Each day, the Department serves older adults who are victims of abuse, exploitation, and neglect through our Adult Protective Services’ program,” said Florida Department of Children and Families Secretary Shevaun Harris. “World Elder Abuse Awareness Day serves as a reminder of the importance of supporting and protecting our seniors.

Older adults are the mothers, fathers and citizens who have built our society and spent a lifetime sharing their knowledge and wisdom. Our agency stands committed to safeguarding their right to a safe and dignified life.”

Statement from the Department of Elder Affairs

“Florida’s 5.5 million older adults are a vital and important part of every community,” said Florida Department of Elder Affairs Secretary Richard Prudom. “Older adults are leaders, mentors, and volunteers and they deserve to remain active members of the state without the threat of abuse, neglect, and exploitation. In recognition of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD) in June, Florida’s Aging Network has scheduled live and virtual events throughout the month to empower Florida’s older population.”

To learn more about World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, please visit: [NCEA - World Elder Abuse Awareness Day \(acl.gov\)](https://www.ncea-elderabuse.org/)

Learn the signs of [adult abuse](#). If you know or have reasonable cause to suspect that an older adult is being abused, neglected, or exploited, please report your concerns to the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-962-2873.



Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month in Florida

On June 1, 2021, Governor DeSantis issued a [Proclamation](#) observing June 2021 as Alzheimer's Disease and Brain Awareness Month in Florida.

[The Longest Day](#) is the day with the most light — the summer solstice. On June 20, people from across the world fought the darkness of Alzheimer's through a fundraising activity of their choice. It is a day when the world comes together to raise funds and awareness for the care, support, and research efforts of the Alzheimer's Association.



According to the [Alzheimer's Association](#), Alzheimer's disease is a growing public health crisis in Florida. Without an effective treatment or cure, the impact of Alzheimer's will continue to increase and the numbers in Florida will escalate.

Recent data shows:

- 580,000 people aged 65 and older living with Alzheimer's in Florida.
- 11.3% of people aged 45 and older have subjective cognitive decline.
- 527,000 family caregivers bear the burden of the disease in Florida.
- 685 million hours of unpaid care provided by Alzheimer's caregivers.
- \$10.6 billion is the value of the unpaid care.
- \$2.7 billion is the cost of Alzheimer's to the state Medicaid program.

Find more information about Florida at: [Alzheimer's Statistics](#), [Cognitive Decline](#), [Dementia Caregiving](#)

FAAST Regional Demonstration Center Projects Open for Proposals

The Assistive Technology Advisory Council has approved a new service delivery model for the Florida Alliance for Assistive Services and Technology's (FAAST) Regional Demonstration Centers. These

Centers are subcontracts of FAAST that provide FAAST services such as assistive technology device demonstrations, loans, training, and information and assistance activities to specific regions of Florida.

FAAST is asking organizations across the state that serve individuals with disabilities of all ages and have experience working with assistive technology to submit a proposal for a Regional Demonstration Center in their region. For more information on submitting a Regional Demonstration Center Project proposal and important dates, visit <https://faast.org/faast-rdc-projects-open-for-proposals/>.



Difficult Situations in the Next Six Months

In a recent survey of the FASP membership, we asked about the most difficult situations that you will be facing in the next six months. Several members responded and their concerns were about returning to work, staffing levels, and the uncertainty of returning to pre-pandemic interactions and situations. Businesses have begun reopening, restrictions have been relaxed, and individuals have received vaccinations but it will be hard for some to transition back into their pre-pandemic routines.

Most organizations expressed concerns regarding staffing levels, shortages and issues with recruiting and retaining staff. For community based service organizations, salaries for staff are usually based on the unit rates the agency receives for reimbursement. Rate increases have not been keeping up with the demand for salaries or inflation which creates staffing issues for many of these organizations. Some displaced employees found alternative employment during the pandemic and may be

**STAFF
SHORTAGE**

earning more in their new positions which has left vacancies at their previous employment and staffing shortages in many job sectors.

In a recent [study](#) published by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, researchers asked about the challenges home care agencies faced during the pandemic to maintain sufficient staffing levels and manage staff turnover. It was reported that staffing in home care agencies was already problematic before the pandemic, and that staffing shortages have worsened since. Many respondents reported that staff left their jobs due to fear of



exposure to the virus from clients and insufficient access to PPE to help protect them. Another burden was placed on the home care workforce by the closure of schools and childcare centers.

Study respondents also reported that they had difficulty recruiting staff despite an increase in unemployed workers. This is in part because these jobs often have low wages and do not provide full-time employment or comprehensive benefits.

One other reason that was noted for staffing challenges was a shift in client loads. Clients who used home care for meal preparation or housekeeping and did not have life-threatening needs canceled their services to avoid exposure. Some clients only wanted nurses to enter their homes which limited the number of clients for aides and therapists. Post-acute referrals were reduced as elective surgeries were canceled. This initial decline in demand for home health and home care services resulted in cuts to staff hours. However at the time of study interviews in December 2020 and January 2021, many respondents reported that client loads had returned to normal.

Another issue that many employers are facing is that employees would like to

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continue working remotely and not return to in-person employment. Some employees may be experiencing anxiety about returning to work and engaging in the social

interactions that they are no longer accustomed to or have not experienced in awhile. If you are returning to work soon, the [Cleveland Clinic](#) offers some ways to make the process easier.

Another concern that was raised is convincing clients that facilities are safe with regard to COVID-19 precautions and having participants unwilling to attend in-person events. After more than a year of social distancing and taking extra precautions to avoid exposure, it will be difficult to convince some individuals to return to in-person events or activities.

[Cleveland Clinic](#) shares information on how you can decide what activities are safe. In the [article](#), it says that you should consider time, space and people when you are choosing to attend an event or activity and weigh the level of personal risk you find acceptable for the activity. For dining, you should consider whether there is spacing between the tables and/or barriers, if the staff are wearing masks and what cleaning protocols are in place. For classes or workshops, you should consider group size, spacing between people, and not sharing equipment. It advises that the person call ahead to see what protocols are in place, so having knowledgeable staff available to answer any questions or posted protocols available for review may help individuals decide to return to the facilities and resume activities.

Travel was delayed or restricted for many individuals during the pandemic and now that there are opportunities to travel again, you may have concerns about whether it is the right time to plan a vacation. In his article, [Do's and Don'ts of \(Almost\) Post-Pandemic Travel](#), Bruce

Horovitz offers an account of his family's recent trip to California, travel tips for the fully vaccinated and some opinions from medical experts at Johns Hopkins University and the Mayo Clinic.

Concerns were also expressed about attending doctor's appointments or getting lab work. Mayo Clinic Staff offer advice on [how to safely go to your doctor during the COVID-19 pandemic](#). These steps including checking for information regarding wearing masks, temperature checks, patient limits, etc.

The last concern that was raised was regarding the upcoming summer storms and hurricane

season. Hurricane season officially started on June 1st. The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) offers advice from public health and emergency health professionals to help you safely prepare, evacuate and shelter for severe storms while protecting yourself and others from COVID-19. More tips are offered at Ready.gov to help you prepare for [severe weather](#) and [power outages](#).



In Case You Missed It: Florida Department of Elder Affairs Celebrates Older Floridians during the 2021 Senior Summit

On Thursday, May 20, 2021, the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) hosted the virtual 2021 Senior Summit, an annual event that welcomed nearly 400 elders and advocates from across the state of Florida to honor the many contributions of Florida seniors and highlight entertainment, celebrations, and stories throughout the Sunshine State.

“DOEA and the Aging Network came together to present a remarkable virtual Senior Summit event. Florida continues to put Seniors First and show the nation our seniors are resilient,” said DOEA Secretary Richard Prudom. “One of the Department’s most important goals is to honor and celebrate our elders, and the Senior Summit is the perfect opportunity to do that.”



The Senior Summit was co-hosted by Florida Department of Elder Affairs Secretary Richard Prudom and Feeding Florida’s Executive Director, Robin Safley (pictured above). The summit highlighted speakers and presentations such as:

- State Surgeon General Scott Rivkees, of the Florida Department of Health, who discussed the importance of vaccinations; and
- Michelle Branham, Vice President of Public Policy from the Florida Alzheimer’s Association, who shared the mission behind Project: VITAL; and
- Jeff Johnson, State Director of AARP Florida who shared how Livable Communities have impacted areas statewide; and
- DOEA’s Restaurant Meal Initiative, which highlighted the passion of Padrino’s Cuban Restaurant and Offerdahl’s Off-the-Grill to serve Florida’s elders; and
- 2020 Ms. Senior Florida Edina McGrath, a 94-year-old tap dancer who dazzled attendees with her routine; and
- Live Q&A chat feature.

To view the encore Senior Summit presentation, visit FloridaSeniorSummit.org.



Member News

The Bay County Council on Aging celebrated 50 years of service in the community in May.
Happy 50th Anniversary!



Job Opportunity—Executive Director

Small non-profit agency in Miami-Dade County is seeking to hire an Executive Director. The selected candidate will overlap with the current Executive Director for training prior to the current director's planned retirement. The successful candidate will possess the following experience:

- Successful grant writing and other aspects of fund raising.
- Management of contract compliance including creation of reports and progress tracking.
- Understanding/oversight of fund accounting and ability to directly supervise and verify the accuracy of fiscal accounting team.
- Working with Excel spreadsheets and databases for budgeting and program reporting.
- Reporting to a non-profit board of directors.
- Community relations and membership in key elder service associations.
- Working with organizations that utilize a large number of volunteers and subcontractors to accomplish their mission.
- Recommendation of strategies and direction to the board of directors.
- Ability to jump into and resolve day-to-day operational challenges.



Acceptable Training & Experience:

- Bachelor's degree in Social Work, Psychology, Business Administration or related field and 4 years non-profit managerial experience or an equivalent combination of training and experience which provides the required knowledge, abilities and skills. Master's degree or MBA a plus.
- Management experience with community-based services for the elderly in South Florida is a plus (especially meals-on-wheel, transportation and counseling).
- Bilingual or Trilingual a plus.

If interested, please send your resume and salary requirements to dk@nmf620.org.





FASP is on Social Media—Are You?

Find our Sponsors on Social Media!



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<https://www.facebook.com/friendshipcenters/?fref=ts>

https://twitter.com/sfc_fl

<https://www.youtube.com/user/SeniorFriendship>

DOEA's We'll Meet You At Home Campaign

Across the state, the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) and the state's 11 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and providers are working together to ensure

Florida's elders remain healthy, safe, and independent. DOEA is also ensuring the COVID-19 local vaccine resources are available statewide.

**WE'LL MEET
YOU AT
HOME**

**Vaccine Visits for
Homebound Seniors**



The [We'll Meet You at Home campaign](#) is a statewide initiative to disseminate resources and bring COVID-19 vaccinations to homebound seniors, provide transportation to vaccination sites, or book an appointment. [Florida's Area Agencies on Aging](#) are there to assist.

DOEA is hosting a communications campaign that shows there is still vaccine hesitancy in the elder population. DOEA intends to conduct a communications campaign to spread positive, current vaccine access information. Social media graphics, video files and radio audio files are available on their [website](#).

Call 1-800-96-ELDER (963-5337) to be connected to your local Agency on Aging.



Thank You Sponsors!



Senior Resource
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Promoting Independence in our Community

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



Council on Aging
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