



Senior Concerns Update, July 1, 2020

Many new programs so please read on.....

The contagious nature of COVID-19 has resulted in stay-in-home orders and social distancing policies that have an incredible impact on seniors' day-to-day lives and activities. Older adults in our community are staying at home, having little interaction with the outside world.

Loneliness and social isolation for older adults have a deep emotional impact, sometimes leading to depression and anxiety. Maybe less well known is the profound impact loneliness has on physical health. One study found loneliness had similar health effects on older adults as smoking 15 cigarettes a day!



At Senior Concerns, we continue to turn our attention to ensuring the basic needs for older adults are met. Recognizing that the stay in home orders for older adults will remain in effect for an extended period of time, we have begun creating ways to **address and help mitigate the negative health impacts of loneliness and reduce social isolation**. These developments are now infused into almost all our programs.

Adult Day Program

The date and format for reopening of our Adult Day program is uncertain at this time. We recently surveyed our participant families to **understand their thoughts around masks, social distancing, and other guidelines that will likely be in place when we do open**.

To support those caring for their loved one with dementia or Parkinson's disease at home, we are **contemplating offering two in-home programs**; one that provides one-on-one activities and socialization for the participant and one that offers one-on-one counseling and support for the family caregiver. Both

programs would be offered on a fee basis.

We still offer twice per week **free Zoom Activity sessions**, with brain games, music, and conversation. We also offer a list of online tools and resources for continuing these types of activities at home.

Our two **Zoom Support Groups** help caregivers discuss and resolve problems, and determine needs in caring for special need seniors, and one-on-one phone counseling with **Carie, our Care Manager**, provides referrals, respite and home modification grants, and residential placement referrals.

Home Delivered Meals/Nutrition

The need for home delivered meals continues to grow. At this point, we have **expanded from providing 800 meals per week to over 5,000**, with three separate programs - our traditional 7 day a week Meals On Wheels program, one or two restaurant meals delivered 5 days a week, and the Governor's Great Plates Program delivered 7 days a week from two different restaurants.



Community support for home delivered meals continues to be strong. In the past three months we have had 26 individual **Sponsors of the Day for Meals on Wheels** from public figures like Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin and Westlake Mayor Kelly Honig, to corporations, private citizens, credit unions and service groups. If you would like to become a Meals On Wheels Sponsor of the Day go to

<https://www.seniorconcerns.org/product/meals-on-wheels-sponsor-of-the-day/> or contact Janet Young at jyoung@seniorconcerns.org

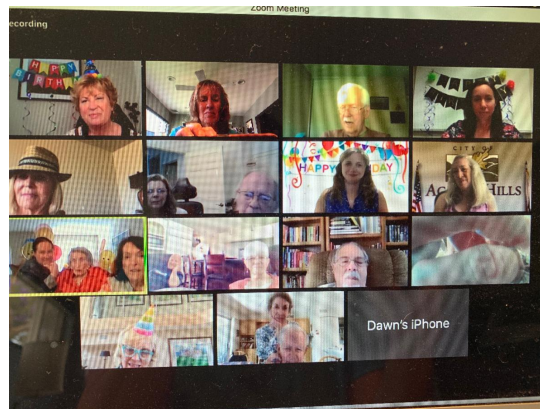
From **our pantry** we are now providing over 100 deliveries per month of free food, toiletries, and household goods to low income homebound seniors. And we continue to provide **free grocery shopping** and pharmacy pickup for any senior who requests it.

In each of these programs we are **"Creating Connections,"** as each meal or delivery comes with the personal link to a volunteer partner. So many of our volunteers come back with stories of the personal gratification they receive by helping a thankful senior. The friendliness and warmth goes both ways.

Combatting Social Isolation and Loneliness

In response to a friend who was celebrating her 77th birthday alone, we began the first **monthly Zoom Birthday Party** for those age 65 and older, who are celebrating a birthday or wanting to help others celebrate.

Nothing Bundt Cakes in Thousand Oaks, sponsors this program by providing a Bundlet® for each birthday senior that a volunteer delivers prior to "the party." Who knew our first celebration would include a lovely Agoura Hills resident, Suzanne, who was turning 100? Agoura Hills Mayor Illece Buckley Weber was on hand to wish her a Happy Birthday. Zoom Birthday Parties are held on the third Thursday of every month at 2pm. To register send email to info@seniorconcerns.org and be sure to tell us if it is your birthday that month.



Local community members young and old have provided us **written messages** of hope, love, and friendship that we deliver with all our pantry orders. We also offer a **Friendship Line**, pairing volunteers with seniors who enjoy a weekly telephone chat.

Health/Wellbeing/Planning

Through our long-term partnership with **CareRinger**, we offer seniors a **daily automated check in call**. The system alerts a designated contact when the senior misses the call. There is no equipment to purchase and the service is free. To learn more go to <https://careringer.com/> and email us at info@seniorconcerns.org.

We offer **handmade cloth masks** for seniors. They can be picked up, mailed or a volunteer can drop one off if needed. They are hand washable and reusable.



Senior Concerns strives to ensure our most vulnerable seniors have the supplies and resources needed to stay safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of our **COVID-19 Tool Kit** is to empower, educate and provide the tools needed to the homebound seniors so they can reduce their risk of contracting the virus. The Tool Kit Includes:

- Single-Use Temperature Strips or a Thermometer with Alcohol Wipes
- Pulse Oximeter with Batteries
- Hand Sanitizer
- Antiseptic Wipes
- Disposable Face Masks
- Disposable Nitrile Gloves
- File of Life - to maintain important medical information
- California Department of Aging "Feeling Good & Staying Connected, An Activity Guide"

- COVID Toolkit Booklet

Please contact Senior Concerns at 805-497-0189 to apply for a kit if you are:

1. Homebound
2. Age 75 or older
3. Live in your own home or the home of a family member, not in a care facility or assisted living
4. Live in Newbury Park, Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village, Simi Valley, Moorpark, Oak Park or Agoura.

Supplies are limited and available until they run out. Limit of one per household.

Many thanks to our **community sponsors who helped make these kits a reality**: Assisted Living Connections - A Senior Placement and Referral Agency, Oakmont of Camarillo and Oakmont of Riverpark, All Med Drugs Compounding Pharmacy, Kiwanis Club of Thousand Oaks, Buena Vista Home Health, Palliative Care & Hospice, CopperPoint Insurance Companies, Home Helpers Home Care, Simi Adventist Health, Bocchi Laboratories, and Advantek Pet.

We have recently entered a **partnership with Table-Mate®** to offer homebound residents a free Table-Mate® adjustable tray table. If you know of senior who would benefit from receiving a Table-Mate® contact mshapiro@seniorconcerns.org



We have expanded our **monthly education series to provide experts on topics related to COVID-19**. Go to <https://www.seniorconcerns.org/seminars/> to listen to Carlo Reyes, MD, JD, FACEP, Assistant Medical Director of Los Robles Hospital and Medical Center Department of Emergency Medicine, speak about COVID-19 in our community, or sign up for Terri Hillard Olson, Esq and Teri Helton, RN, MSN, FCN, speaking about **Planning in a Time of COVID on July 9th**.

As always, our **Senior Advocates** are here to help via phone consultations on health insurance, housing, legal and financial concerns, Social Security, and other related topics.

And lastly, to get timely information on topics of interest, you can read **Martha Shapiro's weekly column** in the Ventura County Star and **Andrea Gallagher's bi-weekly column**, Other Side of Fifty, in The Acorn.

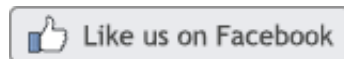
Thank you for reading all the way to the end. You are a trooper! We invite ideas, comments and of course donations to help us continue to the seniors and caregivers in our community. Donations can be made by clicking the button below.

Stay safe, stay well.

Andrea Gallagher, CSA, President, Senior Concerns

DONATE ***HERE!***

Stay connected for all of the latest updates!



Senior Concerns

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Life with dignity for aging seniors

*Learn more about
Senior Concerns'
programs here.*

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