The Evolving Nature of Social Connections:

Promoting Well-Being in Times of Crisis

Presented by Central MN Council On Aging
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At the time of this presentation, Elinore F. McCance-Katz served as SAMHSA Assistant Secretary. The opinions expressed herein are the views of Natalie Matthewson, Rebecca Hostetler, Steve Hoover, and Darcy Rylander and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), or SAMHSA. No official support or endorsement of DHHS, SAMHSA, for the opinions described in this presentation is intended or should be inferred.
Today’s Presenters

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The Evolving Nature of Social Connections

Goal for Session Today:
*Discuss two programs designed to make connections between and among individuals and organizations to promote well-being in the aging population*

- Chisago Age Well a Silos to Circles community and
- Social Connect: Mindful Stress Management
Chisago Age Well- A Silos to Circles Community

Presenters:
- Natalie Matthewson- Community Development Supervisor with Central MN Council on Aging and
- Rebecca Hostetler- Community Connector with Chisago Age well
The Silos to Circles Age Well Initiative is designed to strengthened local connections to aging services for seniors, their families, and neighbors. Too often, community members don’t know what’s available—and sometimes providers feel like “the best-kept secret in town.”

The common goal of the four pilots was: increasing awareness of, and connectedness to, the full continuum of local supports for those aging in rural communities.
Connecting Rural Community Assets for Older Adult Independence and Health

**The Aim:** To build awareness of and connection to community assets that promote preventive and early care and support.

**The Need:** Rural communities are older and are challenged by geographical dispersion of community resources.

**The Impact:** If more aware of and connected to what already exists in community, older adults in rural Minnesota can achieve great health, independence, and vitality.
2016 Planning Process

1. **Identified needs** of older adults in our community along with **current assets and gaps**

2. Articulated and agreed upon **shared community goals**

3. **Outlined a plan** that could help us implement the shared goals

4. **Pooled rural community plans** together and approached a funder for implementation

Click to add text
Rural Pilots

Silos to Circles partners with communities to improve the experience of aging.

Pilots are active in four communities. Resources, events, and activities available in the communities coming later this year.

Learn more about Silos to Circles.

Chisago Age Well
Chisago County, MN

Clay County Age Well
Moorhead, MN

Cuyuna Area Connections
Crosby, MN

Perham: The Connection
Perham, MN
The Conversation Continues...

Ø 2016 Conversations
Ø Reconvene October 2017
Ø Establish Coalition - February 2018
Ø Implement Work Plan Goals
Ø Website and Facebook Presence
Chisago Age Well-The Plan

- Community Connectors
- Expansion of Senior LinkAge outreach sites
- Quick Look Reference Guides
- Age Well Expo
- Dine & Discovers
- Website and Facebook Presence
## Keeping It Local.

Over 40 local community members and providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Members</th>
<th>County Public Health (SHIP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Health and Human Services-Aging &amp; Disabilities</td>
<td>Community Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Systems</td>
<td>Home Care and Hospice Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Services and Assistance</td>
<td>Local Businesses</td>
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<td>Regional Area Agency on Aging-Senior LinkAge Line</td>
<td>Regional Libraries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Senior Living Communities</td>
<td>Senior Service Agencies</td>
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</tbody>
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Chisago Age Well- Mission

Increase **awareness** of, **access** to, and **satisfaction** with existing services and health resources in the community.

To **strengthen** the **relationships** between senior community members, service providers, and health systems to benefit older adults and their caregivers.
Role of Volunteer Community Connector

- Outreach
- Education
- Connection
**Dine & Discovers**- educational events offered quarterly beginning in June 2018. There was one topic, offered three times within one day. Through June 2020 topics eight topics with 650 in attendance.
Quick Reference Guide

- **Primary providers/ Connections to get started when one may need community-based services.**

- **Distributed- over 5000 through 2019**
Find what you need to live and age well in the Chisago area

Information about activities, transportation, housing, and support in our communities
What Does the Community Think

What have you learned from the Chisago Age well?
That there are so many programs out there, so much information and resources available. Everyone works together as a team, one united front, to assist in any way possible, which I find so refreshing!

I have picked up something new at every single meeting. Knowledge is power!

How would you describe the benefits of the project for the local communities?
Absolutely wonderful! One realizes they are not alone with an aging parent, an aging spouse, becoming a senior citizen yourself. One is not judged.

Thanks for all you do for Seniors, we are all better for your kindness.
Community Guide for Creating an Age Well Initiative

- 3 project success elements
- Short videos of pilot projects
- Action steps, best practices
- Tools that can be downloaded

https://stcmnguide.org/
Video
Taking the next step

“Aging is an adventure.” Connie Goldman

- Learn
- Connect
- Participate
- Support
- Adjustments/Lessons Learned during Physical Distancing
Social Connect: Mindful Stress Management

Steve Hoover, PhD
Darcy Rylander, B.S., RYT, NBC-HWC
Central Minnesota Council on Aging
Impetus for Development

• Consequences of Social Isolation and Loneliness

• *Social Isolation and Loneliness in Older Adults: Opportunities for the Health Care System*
  
  Report of the National Academies of Sciences and Engineering and Medicine, 2020

• Realities of Social Isolation and Loneliness during the pandemic
Conceptual Foundation
Program Elements

Remotely Delivered

Six 45-minute sessions, twice/week.

Three equal elements
Gentle Seated Movements

• Loosen muscles and joints

• Increase circulation

• Reduce stress and tension

• Calm the nervous system
Mindful Stress Management

- Awareness of Body Sensations
- Awareness of Emotions
- Awareness of Thoughts

“You can't stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.”
Jon Kabat-Zinn
Sharing and Connecting

• Opportunities to share practices of movement and mindfulness.

• Forum for discussing events and sharing.

• Place to connect with others.
Lessons Learned

• Expand to one hour.

• Share mindful activities post classes for practice

• Once weekly for six weeks.
Sample Activities
Thank you to our presenters!

Questions?