



Directions for CONNECTIONS

A Social Isolation Symposium



PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF AGING
COUNCIL ON AGING



Dr. Patrick Arbore

March 23 | 3:20-4:00

Loneliness and Social Isolation and Urban Minority Elderly



Im Ja Choi

March 24 | 11:35-12:00

Addressing Isolation Issues in Asian Pacific American Older Adults



Dr. Barry Jacobs

March 24 | 2:25-3:25

How to Engage, Support, and Empower Family Caregivers

Session Menu

Choose to attend all sessions or create an à la carte session schedule to match your needs and interests.

March 23

Register for All Day 1 Sessions

9:00-9:30 | Opening Remarks | Gov. Tom Wolf, Sec. Robert Torres, PCoA Chair Gary Duncan

9:35-10:00 | Myth Busting: Getting the Facts about Social Isolation | Faith Haeussler, Janice Cameron

10:05-10:30 | Penn's Village Confronts Loneliness During the Pandemic | Molly Clifford

10:35-11:30 | Senior Connect Program, Bucks County | Kathy Bennett, Deirdre Blackburn

11:35-12:15 | Getting Older Generations Online - More Important Than Ever! | Kim Singleton, Tobey Dichter, Katie Burke

Break: 12:15-1:00

1:00-1:30 | SOLO: Strengthening Older Lives Online | Faith Haeussler, Janice Cameron

1:35-2:15 | Second Story Collective: A Creative Concept for Intergenerational Co-living | Lauren Lowe, Rachel Wenrick

2:20-3:15 | How to Counter Older LGBT Adults' Isolation and Loneliness - Beyond the 101 | Liz Bradbury

3:20-4:00 | Loneliness and Social Isolation and Urban Minority Elderly | Dr. Patrick Arbore

March 24

Register for All Day 2 Sessions

9:00-9:30 | Senior 2 Seniors: Closing the Digital Divide with Seniors in Rural Areas | Charles R. Wicker, Michele M. Moore, Ph.D., James G. Kockler, Isaac D. Musser

9:35-10:35 | Lifelong Learning Panel: Lessons in Academia with Older Adults | Adam Brunner, Maddie Barnes, Beth Ison

11:00-11:30 | How to Use Partnerships and Collaborations to Reduce Senior Isolation | Jason Kavulich, Peg Kopko

11:35-12:00 | Addressing Isolation Issues in Asian Pacific American Older Adults | Im Ja Choi, Ken Yang, Clayton Fitch

Break: 12:00-12:45

12:45-1:15 | Addressing Social Isolation During COVID-19: Resources from engAGED | Meredith Hanley, Rebecca Levine

1:20-2:20 | Staying Social in a Socially Distanced World | Tammy Miller, Bill Pierce, Melissa Weigle

2:25-3:25 | How to Engage, Support, and Empower Family Caregivers | Dr. Barry Jacobs

Expanded Session Menu

Learn more about each session in the descriptions below and/or create an à la carte session schedule by registering for individual sessions to match your needs and interests.



Day 1 ♦ March 23

[Register for All Day 1 Sessions](#)

9:00-9:30 | [Opening Remarks](#)

Presented by: Gov. Tom Wolf, Sec. Robert Torres, PCoA Chair Gary Duncan

[Register](#)

9:35-10:00 | [Myth Busting: Getting the Facts about Social Isolation](#)

Presented by: Faith Haeussler, Janice Cameron

Social isolation is a hot topic right now, but what is it really? What is the difference between social isolation and depression? Who is most at-risk for social isolation and how do we find them? We will talk about the basic facts around social isolation and bust some common myths. Participants will walk away with a deeper understanding of this critically important issue.

10:05-10:30 | [Penn's Village Confronts Loneliness During the Pandemic](#)

Presented by: Molly Clifford

[Register](#)

Molly Clifford will talk about the innovative Village to Village community approach to connection for older adults. She will also talk about the ways Penn's Village pivoted from its largely in-person services and programs during the pandemic, with particular emphasis on personal check-ins, small group interactions, and more than doubling its program offering with the help of technology!

10:35-11:30 | [Senior Connect Program, Bucks County](#)

Presented by Kathy Bennett, Deirdre Blackburn

[Register](#)

The pandemic left many older adults unable to physically reach others. The importance of technology became more pronounced and more dire. In response to this, the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging started the Senior Connect Program in May of 2020. This program connected older adults to hardware, education, and access to enable them to utilize technology and connect with others again!

11:35-12:15 | [Getting Older Generations Online - More Important Than Ever!](#)

Presented by Kim Singleton, Tobey Dichter, Katie Burke

[Register](#)

What is community in a time of isolation? What does that new definition look like? We will share our work for getting older adults online, often for the first time ever. We will also go over what needed to change during the pandemic, and the opportunities for partnerships. We will demonstrate no cost programs and services for digital access and literacy that are geared to helping those most in need.

Expanded Session Menu

Learn more about each session in the descriptions below and/or create an à la carte session schedule by registering for individual sessions to match your needs and interests.



Day 1 ♦ March 23

[Register for All Day 1 Sessions](#)

1:00-1:30 | [SOLO: Strengthening Older Lives Online](#)

Presented by: Faith Haeussler, Janice Cameron

[Register](#)

SOLO was created for older adults by older adults who needed more supports to stay healthy during the pandemic. This resource guides seniors through taking charge of their physical, mental, and spiritual health. The grassroots, community sessions have reached hundreds of older adults, connecting them to each other in new ways. We will go over the guide and offer ways to help the older adults in your community to stay connected.

1:35-2:15 | [Second Story Collective: A Creative Concept for Intergenerational Co-living](#)

Presented by: Lauren Lowe, Rachel Wenrick

[Register](#)

Writers Room is a university-community literary arts program at Drexel University. Since 2014, we have worked to bring Drexel students, alumni, and West Philadelphia residents into productive conversation, using story to encourage honest dialogue and spur the actions required to create a more equitable world. Together with neighborhood and university partners, Writers Room is creating Second Story Collective, an intergenerational co-housing network that will contribute an alternative anti-displacement strategy for our community's most pressing issues—the need for affordable housing and aging-in-place options.

2:20-3:15 | [How to Counter Older LGBT Adults' Isolation and Loneliness - Beyond the 101](#)

Presented by: Liz Bradbury

[Register](#)

Liz Bradbury will uncover the unique circumstances of older LGBT adults regarding isolation and loneliness. She'll be covering why LGBT people may be more likely to seek your services compared to those who are not LGBT, she'll present why some providers aren't focusing on the key issues for this demographic, and she'll explain why "just treating everyone the same" may not be meeting the needs of the older LGBT population.

3:20-4:00 | [Loneliness and Social Isolation and Urban Minority Elderly](#)

Presented by: Dr. Patrick Arbore

[Register](#)

During this presentation, Dr. Arbore will discuss the reasons that urban minority older adults are at risk for loneliness and social isolation. As a result of this training, participants will: Learn about the scope of the problem of loneliness in older adults, recognize the negative consequences of loneliness, especially mental and physical health problems for urban minority older adults and identify ways a community can help decrease loneliness in the minority older adult urban population.

[CLICK HERE TO VIEW PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES](#)

Expanded Session Menu

Learn more about each session in the descriptions below and/or create an à la carte session schedule by registering for individual sessions to match your needs and interests.



Day 2 ♦ March 24

[Register for All Day 2 Sessions](#)

9:00-9:30 | [Senior 2 Seniors: Closing the Digital Divide with Seniors in Rural Areas](#)

[Register](#)

Presented by: Charles R. Wicker, Michele M. Moore, Ph.D., James G. Kockler, Isaac D. Musser

How do you solve the monumental issue of access when it comes to the internet? Once there is access, how do you ensure that older adults can use their new service? In this presentation, we outline how we were able to bring broadband to a rural community and teach the older adults how to enrich their lives with it.

9:35-10:35 | [Lifelong Learning Panel: Lessons in Academia with Older Adults](#)

[Register](#)

Presented by: Adam Brunner, Maddie Barnes, Beth Ison

Learning doesn't end when the graduation caps fly. So many people crave knowledge their entire lives and older adults are no exception. Come join this dynamic panel as they discuss the programs that they have developed and conducted specifically with older adults so that they can keep learning and growing. There are surprising lessons learned when teaching seniors!

11:00-11:30 | [How to Use Partnerships and Collaborations to Reduce Senior Isolation](#)

[Register](#)

Presented by: Jason Kavulich, Peg Kopko

In the fall of 2019, United Way was the recipient of an Older Adult Isolation planning Grant from one of our local funders the Moses Taylor Foundation. We put together a collaborative partnership with aging providers, healthcare, education and local government such as the Lackawanna County AAA. We identified a community-accepted isolation screening tool, completed an Aging Resource Guide, planned on how navigators could assist the older adult in receiving services for isolation and provided a plan for public awareness of the issue. We'll go over the many lessons we've learned to build social isolation-reducing programming.

11:35-12:00 | [Addressing Isolation Issues in Asian Pacific American Older Adults](#)

[Register](#)

Presented by: Im Ja Choi, Ken Yang, Clayton Fitch

Founded in 2004 to address the need for culturally and linguistically-attuned services for Asian American older adults, PASSi is the leading provider of linguistically-attuned senior services for Asian and other limited English proficient (LEP) older adults in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged all providers to develop new strategies to support seniors utilizing technology. However, in a technology environment that was designed for English speaking users, LEP Asian seniors face significant barriers. PASSi's leaders will discuss the importance of providing culturally and linguistically attuned services for Asian seniors and how PASSi is meeting seniors where they are to ensure they remain connected during the pandemic and beyond.

Expanded Session Menu

Learn more about each session in the descriptions below and/or create an à la carte session schedule by registering for individual sessions to match your needs and interests.



Day 2 ♦ March 24

[Register for All Day 2 Sessions](#)

12:45-1:15 | [Addressing Social Isolation During COVID-19: Resources from engAGED](#)

Presented by: Meredith Hanley, Rebecca Levine

[Register](#)

This presentation will focus on engAGED resources developed specifically to support the social engagement efforts of Area Agencies on Aging and other Aging Network organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. Attendees will learn how they can incorporate engAGED resources to help reduce social isolation and loneliness of older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers. engAGED: The National Resource Center for Engaging Older Adults is a national effort administered by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and funded by the Administration for Community Living.

1:20-2:20 | [Staying Social in a Socially Distanced World](#)

Presented by: Tammy Miller, Bill Pierce, Melissa Weigle

[Register](#)

Tammy Miller, Bill Pierce and Melissa Weigle all serve on the PA Association of Senior Centers Board of Directors and each serve as Executive Director of senior centers in the counties of York, Montgomery and Dauphin. Since March 2020, these three leaders have worked diligently to transition their programming and services to accommodate the COVID-19 environment. Come hear how these three innovators stepped up to keep programming running to help older adults.

2:25-3:25 | [How to Engage, Support, and Empower Family Caregivers](#)

Presented by: Dr. Barry Jacobs

[Register](#)

Multiple research studies in the past year have found that the pandemic's increased social isolation has had severe negative psychological and physical effects - including depression, anxiety, sleep disturbance, and fatigue - on the family caregivers of older adults. Many of these caregivers have been worried they would not be able to protect their loved ones from becoming infected with COVID-19. They gave up caregiving supports, such as respite care and the services of home health aides, to prevent others from coming into their homes. At the same time, they cut themselves off from sources of replenishment, such as physical exercise and visiting friends, that had previously kept them going. Clinical psychologist Barry J. Jacobs, Psy.D has specialized as a clinician, writer, healthcare consultant, and speaker on family caregiving for over 25 years. In his two self-help books for family caregivers and in his monthly column on caregiving for AARP.org, he has written extensively about ways of increasing social connectedness and positive meaning to help family caregivers continue their mission of serving family members. He'll share some ideas now for helping family caregivers reduce social isolation and increase coping during the pandemic and afterwards.