

To Zoom or Not To Zoom

Senior Community Services Presenters

Jon Burkhaw, HOME and Medicare Partners Director
 Joe Kaul, Wright & Sherburne Counties HOME Coordinator
 Pam Loidolt, Monticello Senior Center Director
 Vonnie Waters, Crow River Senior Center Director



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TO ZOOM OR NOT TO ZOOM...



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Your Presenters

Our Funding Partners



Jon Burkhaw
HOME and
Medicare
Partners
Director



Joe Kaul
Wright County
HOME Program
Coordinator



Pam Loidolt
Monticello
Senior Center
Director



Vonnie Waters
Crow River
Senior Center
Director



Our Tech Pilot was made possible by the MN
DHS through a Live Well at HOME grant.



These initiatives were made possible with a
generous donation from Allianz Life:

- mnseniorcenters.org web site design
- Donation of 45 iPad tablets for Senior Centers
- Re-development of the carenextion.org website
- Create the new CareNextion app.

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...WE SAY ZOOM!



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What are We Talking About Today?

- Share our Survey Results from MASS group
- Participant Poll Exercise
- Background of our Tech Support Pilot Initiative
- Our Response to the Pandemic
 - 1) Tech pilot to help Seniors Connect Online
 - 2) Website creation for Senior Centers and Virtual Programs
 - 3) Purchase of 45 iPads for use in our Senior Centers
 - 4) Add Virtual Programming to the mnseniorcenters.org website
 - 5) Offering Monthly “Zoom 101” Classes
- What does the future look like? Q & A

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HOW HAVE OTHERS HANDLED EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT USING TECHNOLOGY?



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MASS Group Survey and Results

We sent a survey to MASS (MN Association of Senior Services) to find out their experiences with using technology during the pandemic.

We had 53 responses and here are some of the results!

Thanks to all who participated!

*Prior to the pandemic, 17% offered virtual programming. That climbed to 87% during the pandemic! Hybrid programming is offered by 70% that are currently open!

*Forty-five percent of surveyed organizations consider their virtual programming successful and 40% plan to continue to offer hybrid programming in the future.

Let's see some of the comments that responders to the survey shared...



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HOW HAVE OTHERS HANDLED EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT USING TECHNOLOGY?



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MASS Group Survey Comments

"Virtual programming offers flexibility and a choice of how people want and can participate."

"It does promote the senior center as an option for people who have never attended activities at the center in the past."

"Varies greatly from appreciate the stay at home and virtual options to won't do anything until they can do it in person."

"Once they understand zoom, they like it. The challenge is to get them trained."

"They either love it or they hate it."

"There is a need for virtual programming for all individuals."

"The younger seniors are open to virtual activities but the older seniors want the community fellowship more."

"If they have been given patient instructions, they are thrilled to have this option. They feel it has been a LIFESAVER!"



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PLEASE SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCES!



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Your Turn to Share YOUR Experiences With Us!

Polling questions:

- 1) Did you use virtual programming prior to the pandemic?
- 2) Do you offer virtual programming now?
- 3) Do you anticipate offering, or continuing to offer hybrid programming after COVID restrictions are lifted?
- 4) What do you feel are the biggest obstacles to offering hybrid programming? (Check all that apply.)
 - a. Lack of access for participants
 - b. Lack of resources for staff to offer
 - c. Lack of interest from participants
 - d. Don't feel that it is needed in the future



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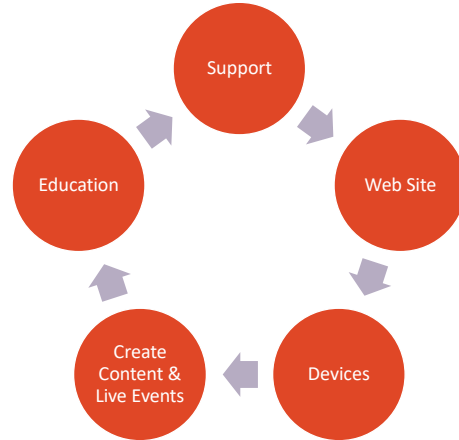
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FIVE POINTS TO OUR PLAN AND SUCCESS



5 Points To Our Action Plan

- SUPPORT:** Created a tech support program to help get connected online.
- CREATE ONE STOP ONLINE RESOURCE CENTER:** Creation of the mnseniorcenters.org website for Sr. Centers & Virtual Programs.
- PROVIDE DEVICES:** Purchase of 45 iPads for use in our Senior Centers.
- CREATE CONTENT & LIVE EVENTS:** Post recorded programs & offer group activities virtually using Zoom only & a hybrid model (in-person & virtual simultaneously).
- EDUCATION:** Offering Monthly "Zoom 101" Classes to anyone interested in learning.



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ORIGINS OF OUR TECH SUPPORT PILOT SERVICE



An Idea Built on a Growing Need to Communicate in a Digital World



- Technology requests were being made at the HOME program office before the pandemic closures were put in place.
- Idea was conceptualized for tech support to be a service that could be offered more broadly by the HOME Program.
- Goals for providing this service are to reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness, and being able to interact more effectively with friends and family (bridging the generation gap that exists with technology).
- Proposal was submitted in early February and approved by the end of the month.
- Joe quipped "Be careful what you wish for." and started working on a plan for how these services would be provided.
- Once the parameters were in place, SCS applied for and received a grant from the MN DHS to Pilot the Technology Assistance service within the Wright County HOME Program service area.



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PUTTING THE PLAN INTO ACTION



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Providing In-Home & Phone Support

Support

Discovery of Additional Needs

- Immediately offered phone support using Volunteers.
- SCS returned to in-home service in early May of 2020.
- Funded to start officially on July 1st, 2020 Offered in-home services using layers of precautions and only by Joe.
- All services were offered FREE of charge through Jan. 1st, 2021.
- We discovered that many of the issues were specific to the home or persons location.
- Some solutions were simple, some were complex.
- We helped select computer solutions based on needs and budget (helped prevent people being taken advantage of when buying PC's).
- Formed loose partnership with a computer store for more advanced needs (**TechMate** – offices in St. Michael, Buffalo & Monticello).



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BRINGING SUPPORT TO OUR SENIOR CENTERS



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Adding FREE in-person support at our Senior Centers

Support

- Demand for in-person support quickly outpaced ability of Joe to provide.
- Discussed charging a flat fee for in-home support services in 2021.
- Identified the need to continue to offer FREE services.
- Engaged in actively finding a suitable solution for offering no-cost services.
- Low-income participants served for FREE regardless of support location.
- Engaged our Volunteer Coordinator to assist with providing support services using volunteers.
- Identified one committed Volunteer to provide in-person support at the Monticello Senior Center.
- Identified another committed Volunteer to provide in-person support at the Crow River Senior Center.
- Senior Center directors work with our Volunteer Coordinator for scheduling of volunteers.
- Continue to offer phone support for FREE.



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STILL LEARNING AND PLANNING ON HOW BEST TO MOVE FORWARD BASED ON EXPERIENCES



Learning from our Experiences about the Needs of Seniors we Serve

Support

- Several requests for service were from widowers that didn't understand the complex sound / TV / computer systems placed in their homes by their spouse.
- "Smart Phone" support was extremely popular – high usage with minimal understanding of operation.
- Discovered the need to find content that was safe and easy to access.
- Identified that many program participants owned outdated computers, tablets and phones.
- Consulting on hardware purchases important.
- Identified need for seniors to be able to use Zoom, FaceTime and Duo comfortably.
- Encouraged participants to attend virtual programs provided by our own Senior Centers and other organizations.



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CREATE NEW WEB SITE FOR SENIOR CENTERS & VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING



Before and After Developing a New Site for all FOUR Senior Centers

Web Site

- Monticello Senior Center did not have a web site – only a single page on the City of Monticello web site.
- Crow River Senior Center had their own web site, but no support to help expand or create content.



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CREATE NEW WEB SITE FOR SENIOR CENTERS & VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING



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mnseniorcenters.org Site Demonstration

Web
Site

Questions for Pam & Vonnie

- New web site now provides an online home for the four Senior Centers affiliated with SCS.
- Site is designed to be user friendly.
- Each Senior Center site contains pages relevant to activities & information for just their facility.
- Our Virtual Programs page offers a wide variety of safe links and videos (ranks high within Google Analytics).
- We have been able to manage hybrid presentations by posting information from many organizations on each calendar within the web site. (We're still expanding this!)
- <https://mnseniorcenters.org>
- What has been your experience – rewards and challenges - with being a “webmaster” in addition to your regular tasks?
- How do you envision the Virtual Programs section of the site helping you connect your Senior Center patrons post-pandemic?



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GENEROUS DONATION OF 15 IPADS FROM ALLIANZ FOR EACH SENIOR CENTER



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Devices

Allianz provided funding for a total of 45 iPads

iPads have been used for a wide variety of applications both in the senior centers and as loaners for individuals that did not own adequate devices.



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USING ZOOM TO CONTINUE SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES & CREATE NEW CONTENT



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Create
Content
& Live
Events

Zoom is being used to continue Senior Center Activities

Zoom has allowed us to do in-person meetings for groups, create readers group stories, and create other content that we then post to our web site.



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CONTINUING EDUCATION (ZOOM 101)



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Monthly Training Sessions on how to use Zoom in a low-key environment

Education

- Covering the basics of audio and video muting and different views.
- Talk through differences of having a user account or just attending meetings without an account.
- Cover fun extras like background images and filters.
- Offer instruction using a wide variety of devices to try and cover all the different versions of Zoom.



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FIVE POINTS TO OUR PLAN AND SUCCESS

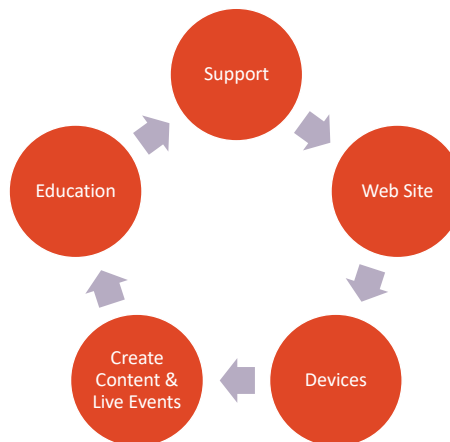


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5 Points To Our Action Plan

Providing a full circle of solutions:

- Tech support by phone, in the Senior Centers, and in the home.
- Offer a comprehensive web site showing all senior centers and virtual programs in one place.
- Offer devices for people to use for Zoom and web sites.
- Offer Senior Center Activities and Create Content using iPads.
- Provide education for Zoom & other technology using support resources.



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WHAT DOES THE FUTURE LOOK LIKE?



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Adding Technology to the Repertoire of Communication Tools for the Seniors We Serve!

- Return to the post-pandemic “new normal” is on the horizon.
- In-person contact can not be bested by technology.
- Interactions with friends and family can now be in-person or by using technology - providing a hybrid approach.
- More training and familiarity with technology is necessary regardless of status of the pandemic.
- Proving that using Technology can be a positive and rewarding experience.
- Geographic limits for seeing friends and relatives are lifted by using technology.
- Hybrid presentations and interactions are here to stay, but we’re still learning how to do it better.
- Advanced technology doesn’t have to break your budget in order to be effective.



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Q & A



Questions and Comments are Welcome!

Thank you for your time and participation!

Share your own experiences with us or ask more about details within our presentation.

To get a copy of our presentation and other presentations from this conference, please visit the Minnesota Gerontological Web Site:

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

We hope we've helped you to think about your own plan of action moving forward.

We feel that virtual engagements are here to stay and will be a great augmentation for seniors trying to connect with others that don't live nearby.



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