



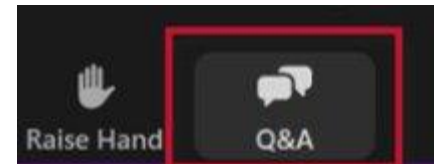
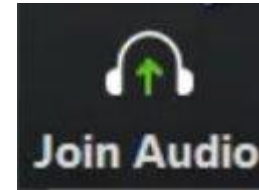
COMMIT TO  
*Connect*

# State-Level Leadership in Promoting Social Connection

June 15, 2023

# Housekeeping

- **Audio Options**
  - Use your computer speakers, OR dial in using the phone number in your registration email.
  - All participants are muted.
- **Questions and Answers (Q&A)**
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  - For any questions that we aren't able to respond to, you may follow-up at [info@committoconnect.org](mailto:info@committoconnect.org).
- **Chat Feature**
  - The Chat feature allows webinar attendees, the host, co-hosts and panelists to communicate for the duration of the webinar.



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# Presenters



## **Katie Clark**

Policy Analyst, Office of Interagency Innovation,  
Administration for Community Living

## **Nanette Relave**

Senior Director of the National I&R Support Center,  
ADvancing States



## **Brenda Lynn**

Social Isolation Program Specialist, Georgia  
Department of Human Services

## **Tim Wellens**

Regional Quality Specialist, Wisconsin Department  
of Health Services



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# Commit to Connect Overview

**Katie Clark**

Administration for Community Living

# About Commit to Connect

- Aim is to connect people living with isolation with programs and resources to build the social connections they need to thrive.
- Commit to Connect is funded primarily by the U.S. Administration for Community Living
- USAging serves as the Coordinating Center





# Welcome to a Nationwide Network of Champions

Dedicated to Ending Social Isolation and Loneliness

Become a champion!



## Connect

Connect with peers, expand your network, and make a difference.

Expand your network



## Collaborate

Join in discussions, voice your opinion, and further your knowledge.

Tell your story



## Explore

Explore, share resources, and inspire the work in your community.

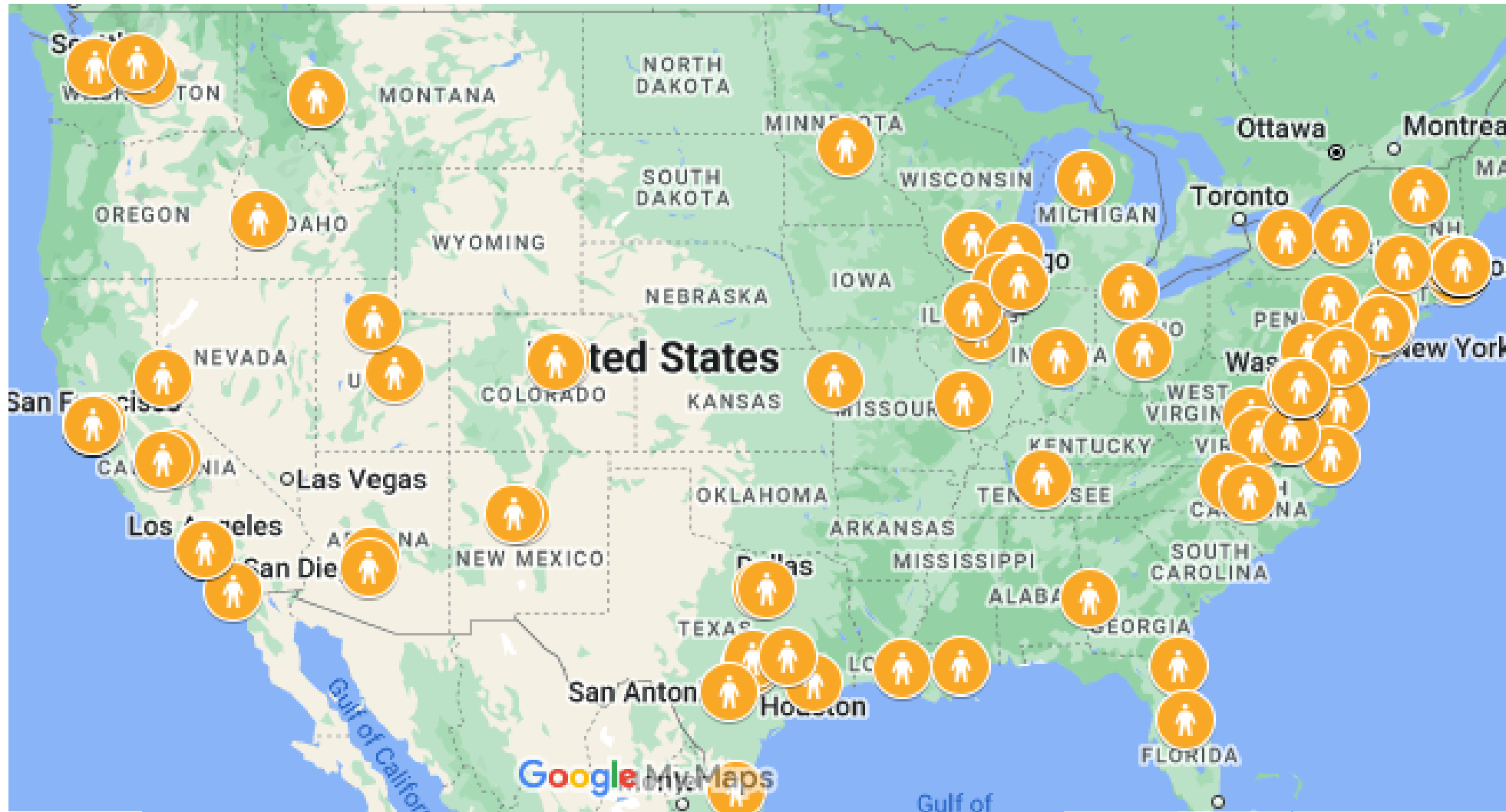
Feed your inspiration



COMMIT TO  
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NNoC includes nearly 300 members from across the U.S.





# Commit to Connect Resources

- Sign up for our monthly newsletter: <https://committoconnect.org/> to learn about upcoming:
  - Topical Guides
  - Webinars
  - Peer to Peer Exchanges
  - Communities of Practice
  - And more!



# ADVANCING STATES



Leadership, innovation,  
collaboration for state  
Aging and Disability agencies.



# ADVANCING STATES

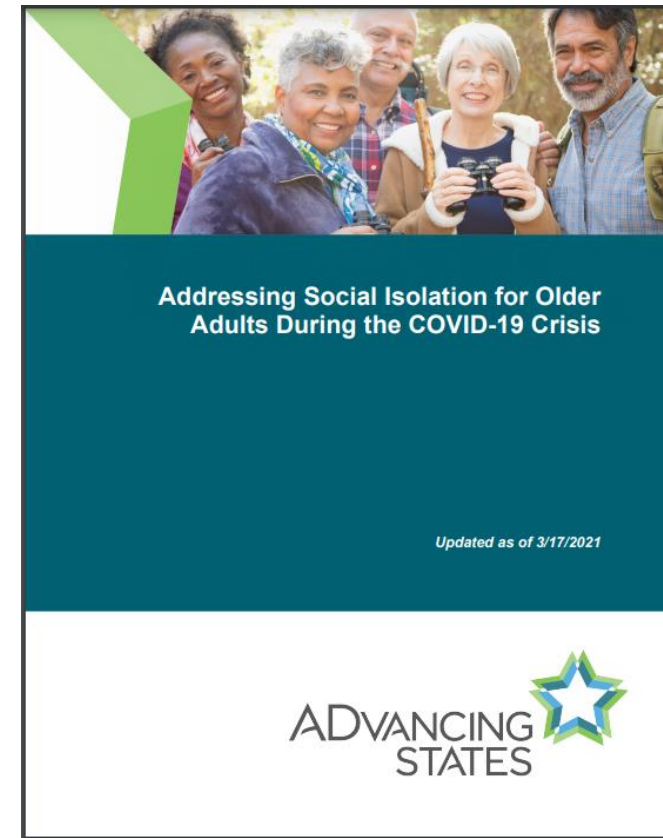


Our mission is to design, improve,  
and sustain state systems  
delivering long-term services and  
supports for older adults, people  
with disabilities, and their  
caregivers.

# COVID-19 and Social Isolation: Capturing state responses during the pandemic

- Compilation of state and community responses to social isolation
- Captured practices and initiatives at the height of the pandemic as agencies responded rapidly and in real time

<http://www.advancingstates.org/initiatives/covid-19-resources/advancing-states-resources>



# Services addressing social isolation and loneliness: current practices

Adult day programs

Community  
integration or  
participation support  
services

Assistive technology;  
technology (i.e.,  
tablets, robotic pets)

Telephone  
reassurance; friendly  
visiting

Nutrition programs  
(congregate, home-  
delivered, grab and  
go)

Virtual programming

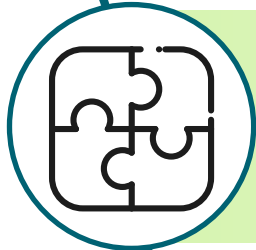
Senior center  
activities

Caregiver supports;  
respite

# Key Take-aways



Address social isolation and loneliness through person-centered approaches



Recognize that it can be difficult to disentangle social isolation, loneliness and social connection



Weave natural conversations around social isolation/loneliness into assessments, referrals, and service planning



Community partnerships and connections are essential to addressing social isolation

# Final take-away: It's important to advance understanding of how services make a difference

---

Those who have access to transportation were more likely to report they had access to the community...

- Were as active in the community as they want to be (67% v 33%)
- Were able to do things with others as much as they want (74% v 26%)
- Were less likely to often feel lonely (14% v 26%)

National Core Indicators- Aging and Disabilities. 2021-22 NCI-AD Adult Consumer Survey National Report. Human Services Research Institute and Advancing States.

Visit [nci-ad.org](https://nci-ad.org)







**Georgia Department of Human Services**  
Division of Aging Services

# **Social Isolation & Loneliness Service Integration**

**Brenda Lynn, Social Isolation & Loneliness Program Specialist**





*stronger families*

FOR A STRONGER GEORGIA





**Division of Aging Services**

— VISION —

LIVING LONGER,

LIVING SAFELY,

*living well*



# Overview

- Older Adults in Georgia
- Funding Sources
- Determine Assessments and Resources
- Program Strategies & Goals Using Person Center Approach
- Streamline Access Point Process
- Integrating Services
- Identifying Key Workgroup Partners
- Evaluation and Outcomes(Customizing Data Sets)
- Lessons Learned
- How You Can Help



# Profile of Older Adults in Georgia (2017-2021)

POPULATION	United States	Georgia
(60+) years and older population	66,956,449	1,863,154
Female (60+ and older)	54.8%	55.6%
Male (60+ and older)	45.2%	44.4%
<b>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT</b>		
Less than a high school graduate	15.5%	17.4%
Highschool graduate, GED or alternative	30.9%	31.9%
<b>DISABILITY STATUS</b>		
With any disability	31.0%	32.5%
No Disability	69.0%	67.5%
<b>EMPLOYMENT STATUS</b>		
Employed	27.4%	26.2%
Unemployed	1.2%	1.1%
<b>POVERTY STATUS</b>		
100-149% of the poverty level	9.0%	10.1%
At or above 150% poverty level	81.3%	78.9%

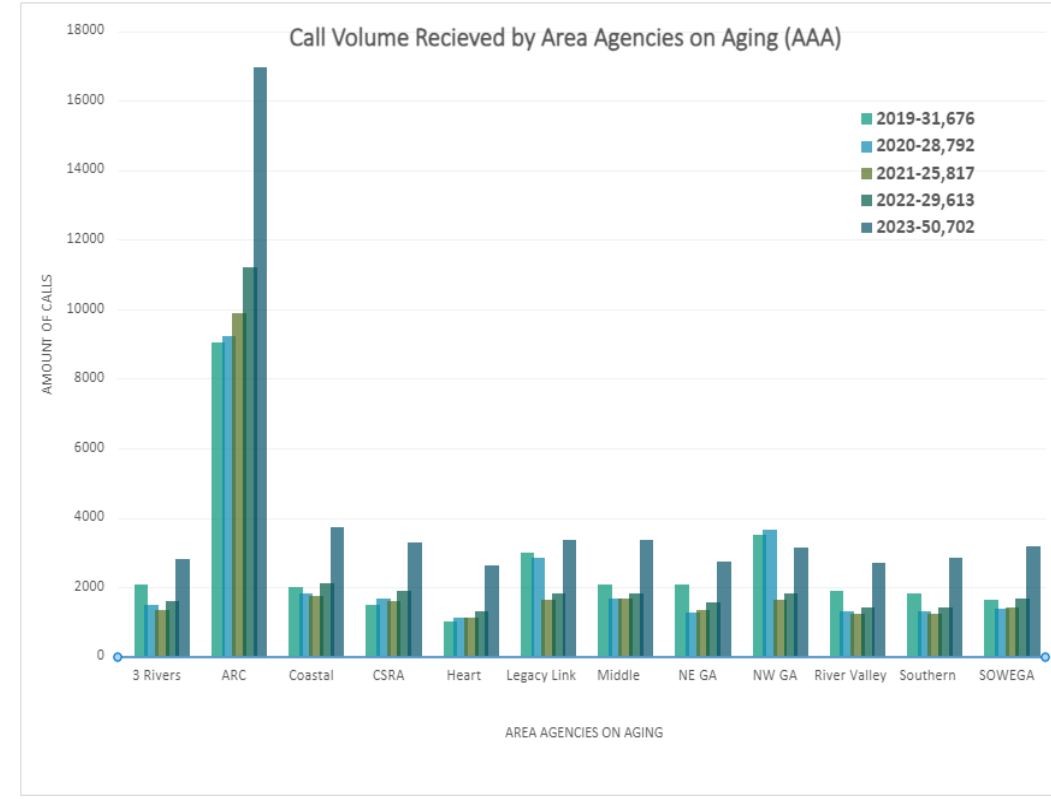
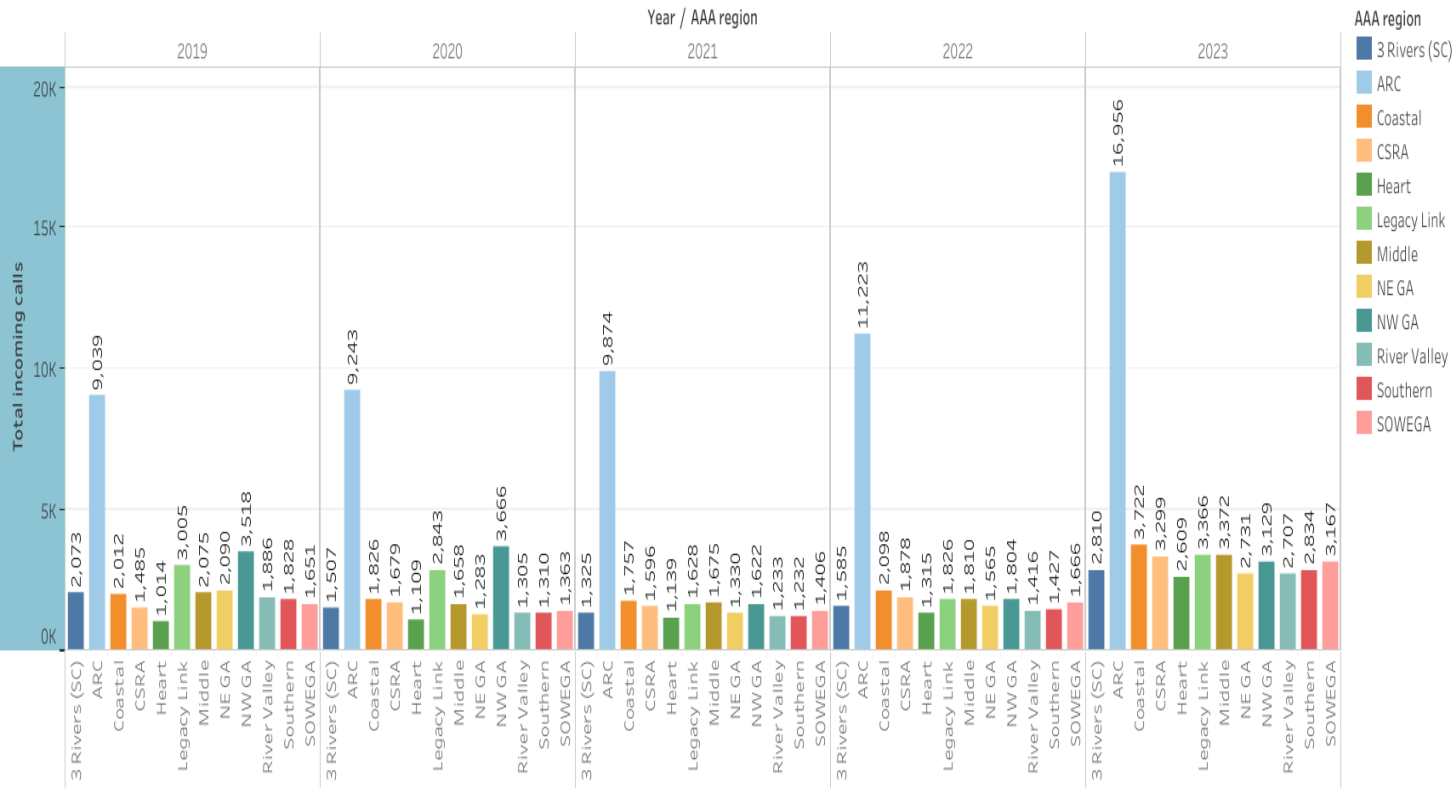
POPULATION	United States	Georgia
<b>HOUSEHOLDS</b>		
Households with social security	75.7%	76.5%
Households with retirement income	43.5%	42.5%
Households with food stamps/SNAP	9.5%	11.4%
Householder living alone	39.9%	38.3%
<b>TELEPHONE STATUS</b>		
Unavailable Telephone service	1.8%	2.0%
<b>RACE</b>		
WHITE	84.4%	71.6%
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	9.5%	24.1%
AMERICAN INDIAN	0.6%	0.2%
ASIAN	4.3%	2.7%
NATIVE HAWAIIAN & OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	0.1%	0.0%
SOME OTHER RACE	1.9%	0.6%
HISPANIC OR LATINO ORIGIN (OF ANY RACE)	8.4%	2.8%

United States Data Census



# Pre/Post Pandemic Service Call Volume

Volume of incoming calls received by Area Agencies on Aging (AAA)



Sum of Total calls for each AAA region broken down by the year  
 \*FY23 is through 06/23



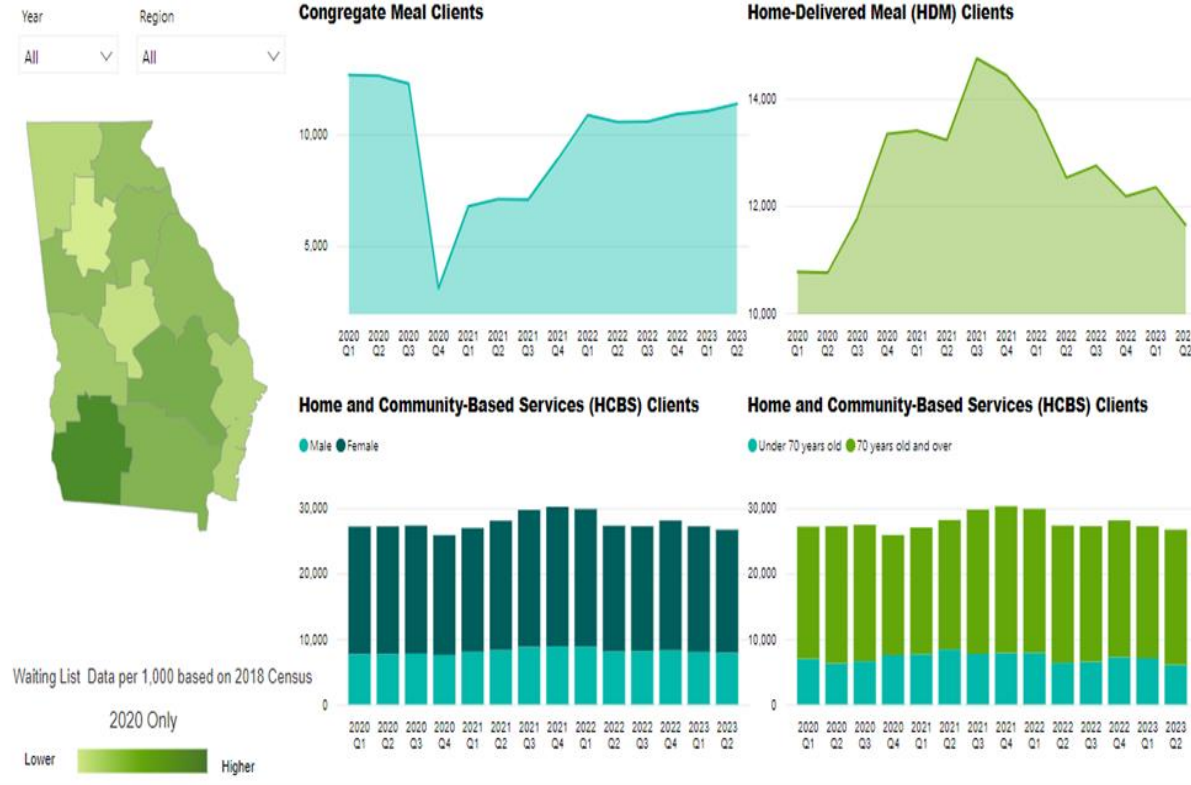


# Mapping of Social Isolation in Older Adults

## Division of Aging Service Data

Non-Medicaid Home and Community Based Services include a range of solutions to help older Georgians live safely, healthily and independently in their homes and communities. The Home and Community Based Services program is mandated through the Older Americans Act. It assists individuals age 60 and older and their caregivers.

State Fiscal Year (July 1 - June 30) Data updated as of 2023 Q2



## Connect2Affect Isolation MAP

Filter by data value:

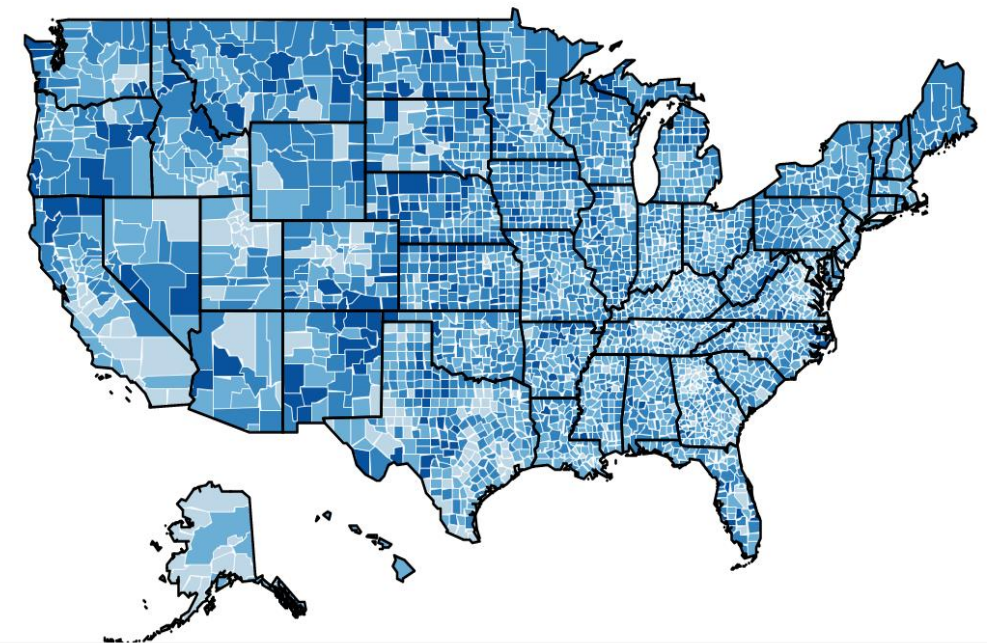
All data ▼

Filter by state:

All states ▼

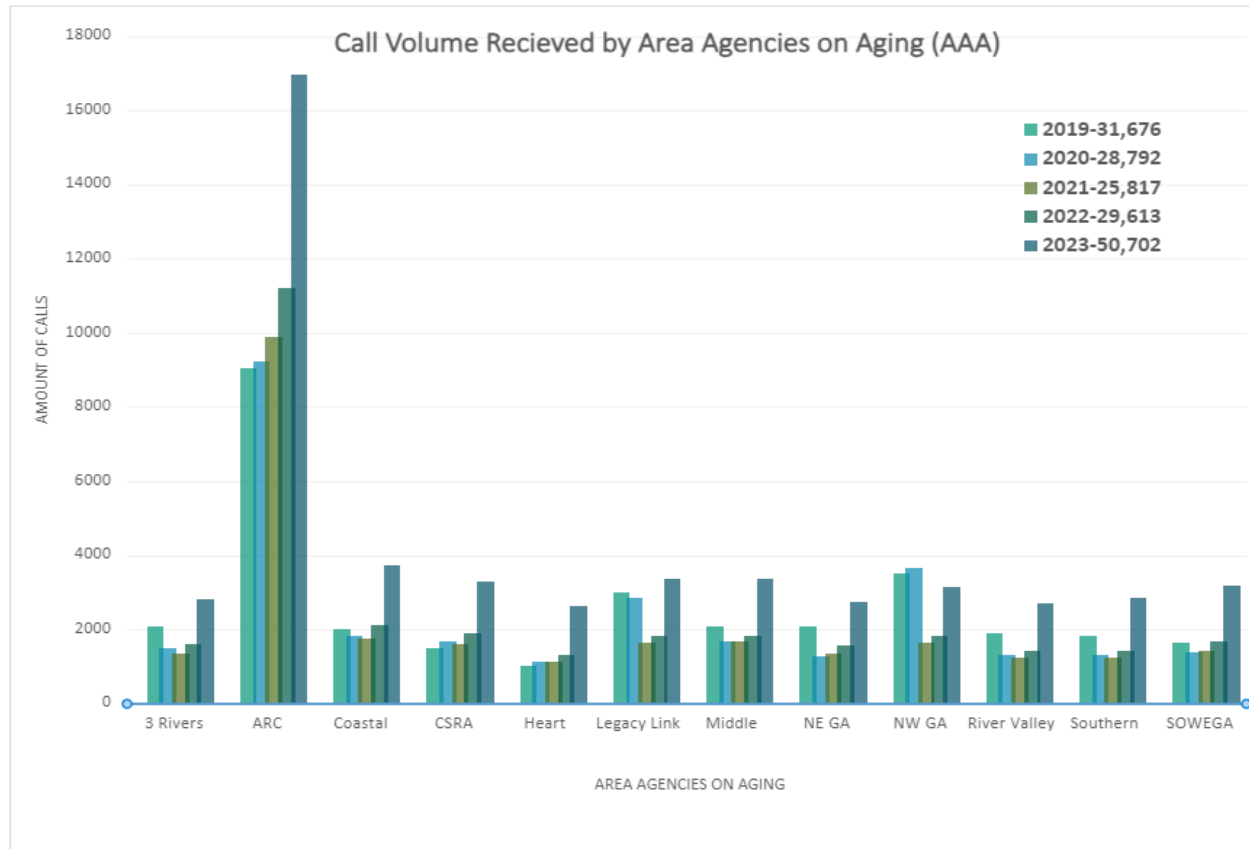
Percent of population who live alone aged 65+ (quantiles)

- 9.0% +
- 6.0% – 9.0%
- 4.0% – 6.0%
- < 4.0%



# Funding and Sustainability Planning

- CARES Act 2020 Older Americans Act (OAA)
- Current and Future Funding Resources (In-kind services)
- Georgia Health Policy Center in 2020
- Area Agencies on Aging and Community Partner Program Status
- System Structures (Internal, External Referral, Services Requirements, Training needs and supports)
- Reassessing current processes, resource options and accessibility
- Building & Strengthening Partnerships (Sustainability planning)
  - Clients (60+ and their caregivers).
  - Community (Senior Centers, Rec Centers, Community-based Agencies, Faith-based Services, Neighborhood Groups, Virtual)
  - Intergenerational Collaborations
  - Volunteer Programs
  - Community Business Owners
  - Foundations & Corporate Entities
  - Flexible Alternative Activity Options





# Program Assessments

## Assessing Social Isolation: The Lubben Social Network Scale 6-item

FAMILY: Considering the people to whom you are related by birth, marriage, adoption, etc...	
How many relatives do you see or hear from at least once a month?	0 = none 1 = one 2 = two 3 = three or four 4 = five thru eight 5 = nine or more
How many relatives do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?	0 = none 1 = one 2 = two 3 = three or four 4 = five thru eight 5 = nine or more
How many relatives do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help?	0 = none 1 = one 2 = two 3 = three or four 4 = five thru eight 5 = nine or more
FRIENDSHIPS: Considering all of your friends including those who live in your neighborhood	
How many of your friends do you see or hear from at least once a month?	0 = none 1 = one 2 = two 3 = three or four 4 = five thru eight 5 = nine or more
How many friends do you feel at ease with that you can talk about private matters?	0 = none 1 = one 2 = two 3 = three or four 4 = five thru eight 5 = nine or more
How many friends do you feel close to such that you could call on them for help?	0 = none 1 = one 2 = two 3 = three or four 4 = five thru eight 5 = nine or more

- Scoring: LSNS-6 total score is an equally weighted sum of these six items. Scores range from 0 to 30, and higher scores indicate more social engagement.
- Cut point: 12 = “at risk for social isolation”

## Assessing Loneliness: UCLA Loneliness Scale 3-item

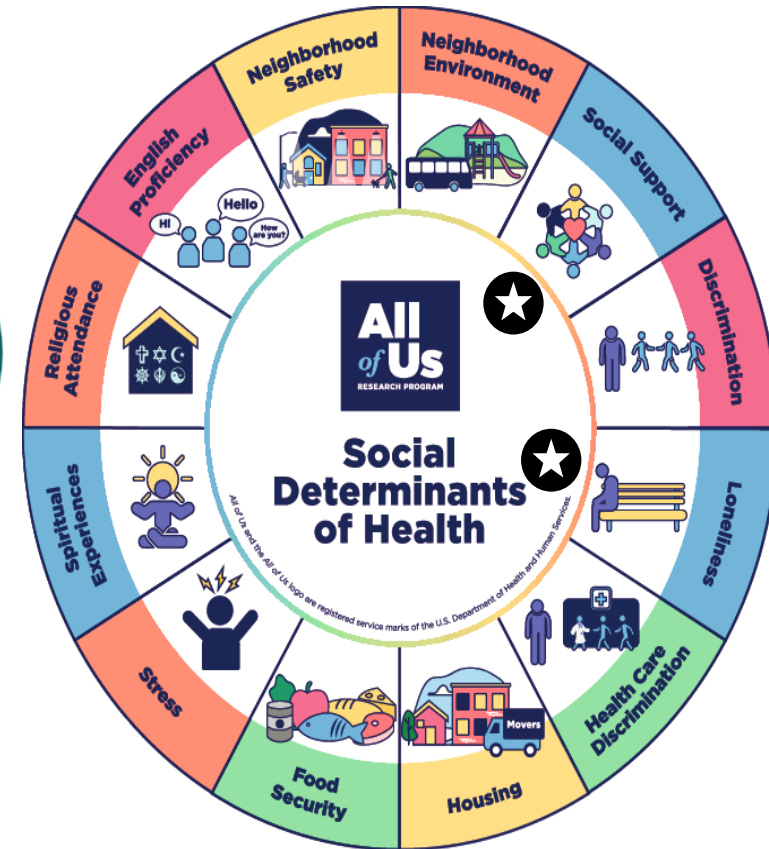
First, how often do you feel that you lack companionship: Hardly ever, some of the time, or often?	Hardly ever	Some of the time	Often
How often do you feel left out: Hardly ever, some of the time, or often?	Hardly ever	Some of the time	Often
How often do you feel isolated from others? (Is it hardly ever, some of the time, or often?)	Hardly ever	Some of the time	Often

- Scoring instructions: The scores for each individual question can be added together to give a possible range of score from 3-9. 3-5 "not lonely" and scores 6-9 "lonely". Higher scores indicate greater degrees of loneliness.





# Person-Center Approach

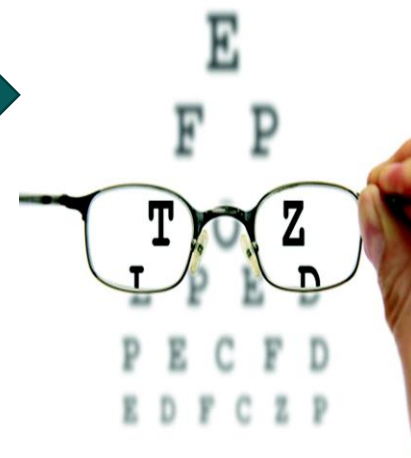


# Goals of Social Isolation and Loneliness

Social Isolation is a lack of social connections (objective)

Loneliness is the feeling of being alone, regardless of the amount of social contact. (subjective)

## Lenses of Change



Visualize ways to enhance, expand or tweak current service options to allow for access/flexibility/utilization.

Strategies: Understanding current internal systems and point of access service structure.

Training: Integrate efforts within DAS Services to address Social Isolation and Loneliness and align access to service delivery.

Education and Awareness: Collaborate with Social Isolation and Telephone Reassurance program experts to guide best practices and identify service barriers. (Create Social Isolation Workgroup Committee)

Community Engagement: Engage new partnerships to promote program awareness, evaluation of service efforts and program data.

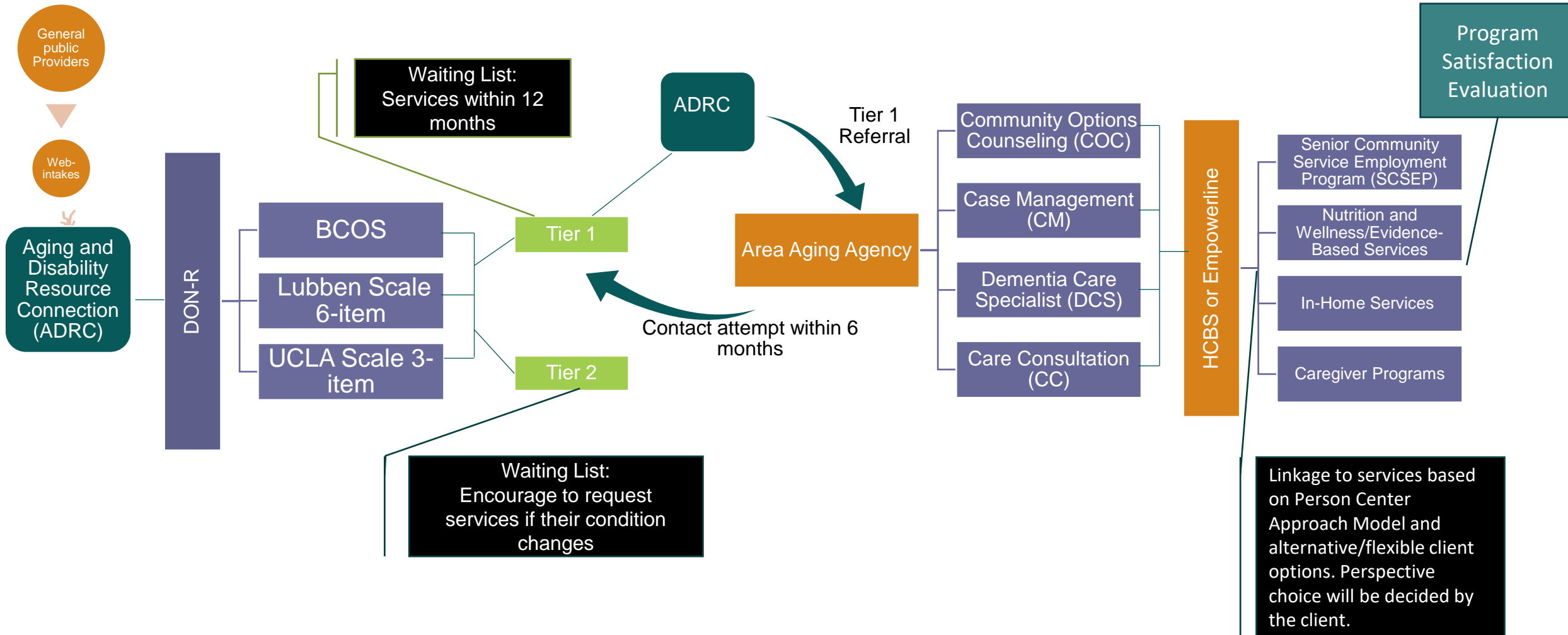
\* note that social isolation and loneliness are two distinct aspects of social relationships, and they are not significantly linked. Both are public health risks\*



# Access Point and Service Delivery Process



# Service Delivery Integration





# Home & Community Based Services(HCBS)

## Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) Supportive services

- Employment Orientation
- Community service assignments
- Orientation opportunities
- Free physical examination
- Supportive Service



## Nutrition and Wellness

- Congregate (group) Meals at Senior Centers
- Home-Delivered Meals
- Nutrition and Wellness Education
- Counseling
- Physical Fitness Classes
- Senior Recreation



## In-Home Services

- Emergency Response Services
- Friendly Visiting
- Telephone Reassurance
- Homemaker Services
- Chore Services
- Personal Care Assistance
- Assistive Technology



## Caregiver Programs

- Education and support groups
- Adult Day Services
- Mobile Day Care
- Kinship Care Programs
- Respite Care



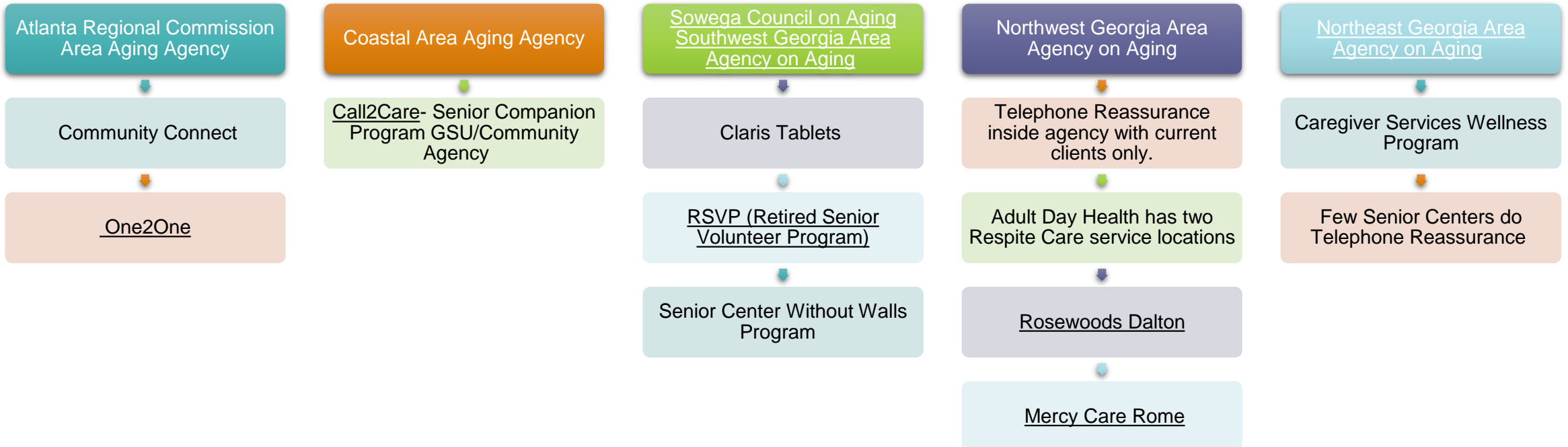
## Extra Caregiver Resources

- [Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregiving](#)
- [National Alliance for Caregiving](#)
- [National Institute on Aging - Caregiving](#)
- [AARP - Home and Family Caregiving](#)
- [Caregivers Action Network](#)
- [Dementia Resources](#)
- [Mental Health Resources](#)
- [Aging and Disability Resource Connection \(ADRC\)](#)





# Area Agencies on Aging Partners



# How can you make an impact in your community?



- Visualize ways to enhance, expand or tweak current service options to allow for service integration (access/flexibility/utilization).
- Partner to promote Social Connection & Education Awareness.
- Meet and get to know those who are administering and offering Social Connection programs within your Community.
- Join a Social Connection Collaborative workgroup to help guide and align service access and delivery processes.
- Integrate Evidence-based Programs and alternative service options to address Social Connections needs.





*Thank  
you!*

**Brenda Lynn**

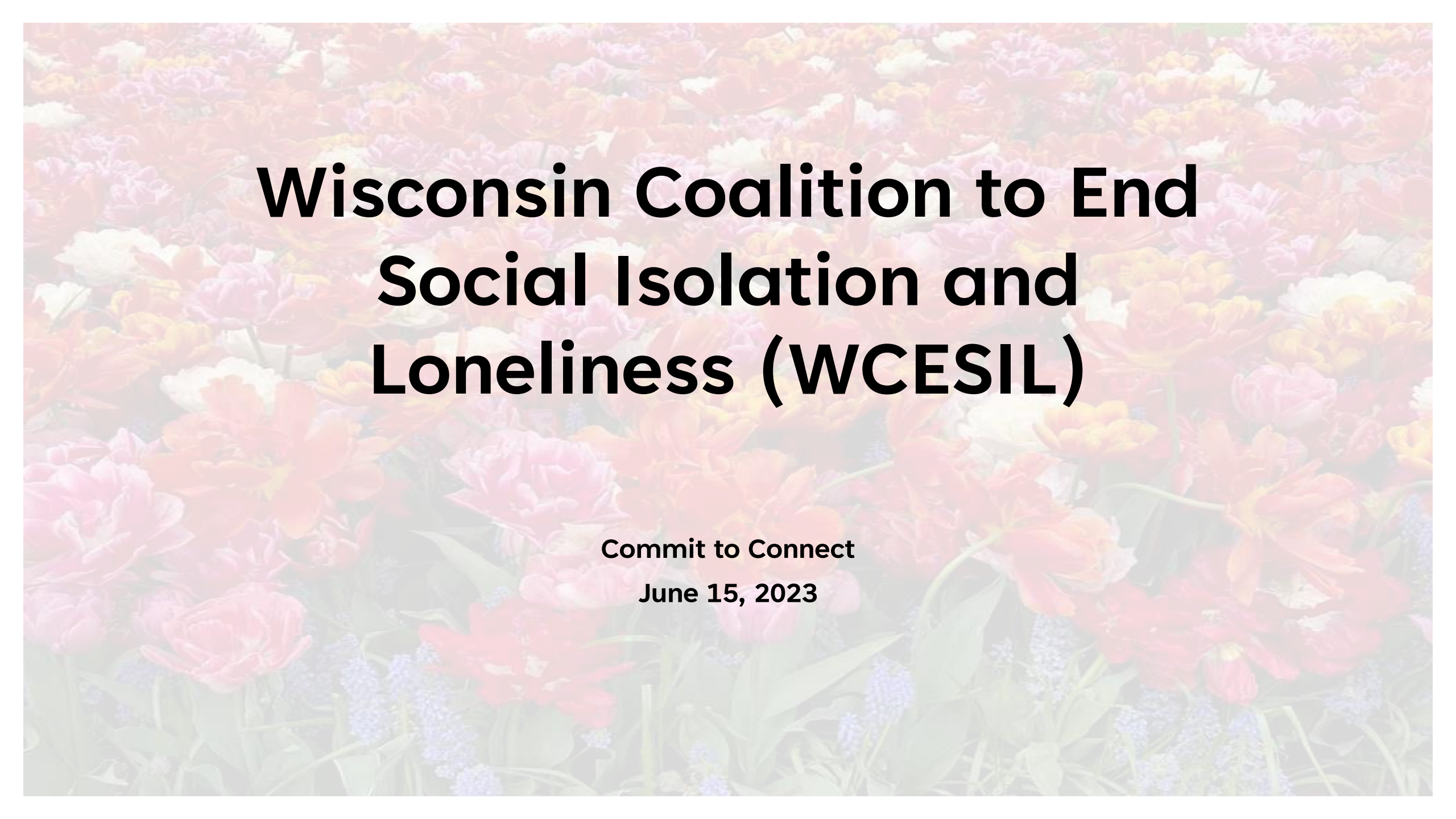
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**Yulisa Hernandez**

Social Isolation Advocate (Bilingual)  
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# **Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation and Loneliness (WCESIL)**

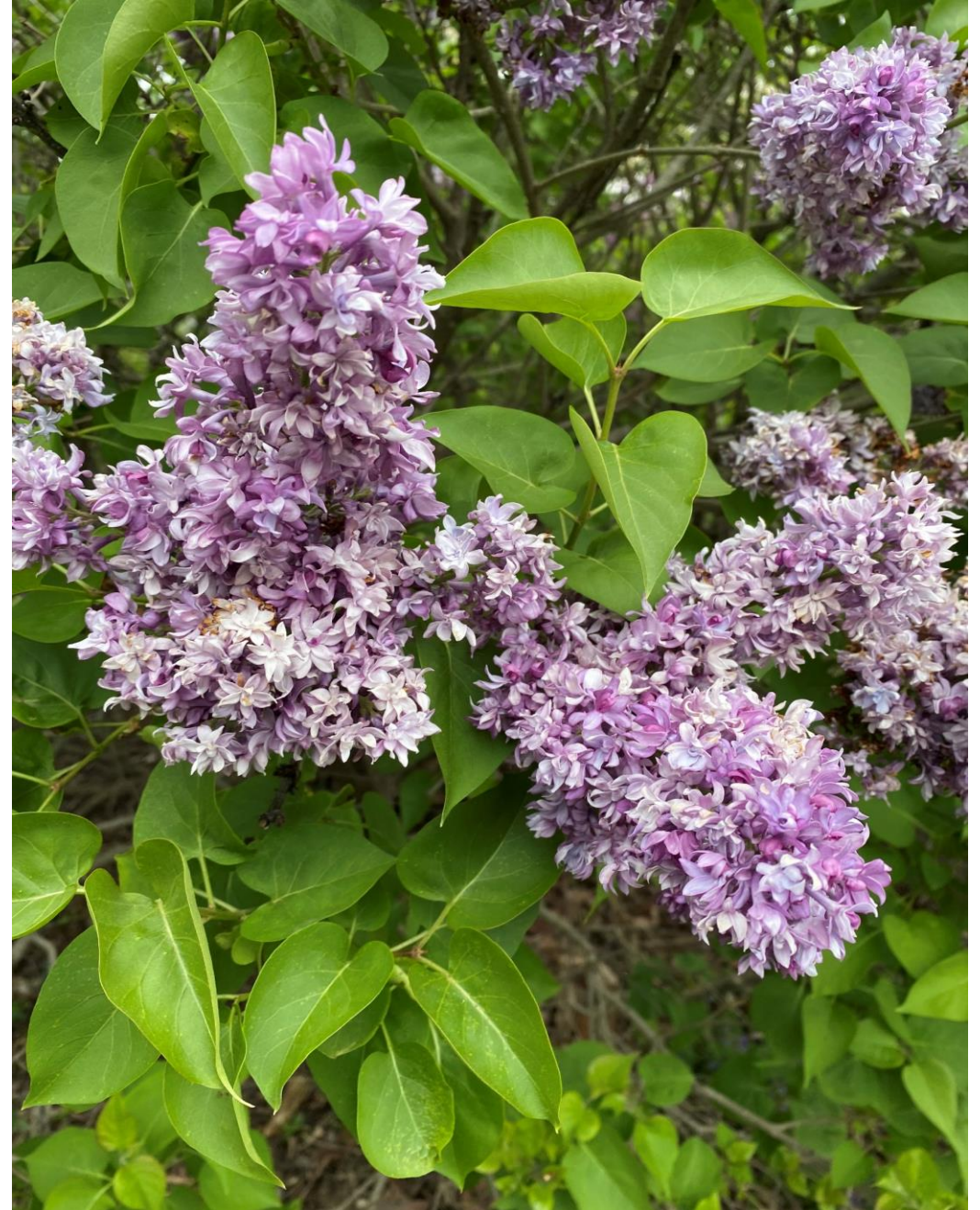
**Commit to Connect**

**June 15, 2023**

# Tim Wellens

Regional Quality Specialist

Wisconsin Department of Health Services







## Overview

- Why did WI start WCESIL?
- What is the Coalition?
- Who We Are
- Coalition Workgroups
- Impact, Lessons Learned, & Takeaways

# Isolation And Loneliness: Related But Different

- **Social isolation** is commonly defined as an objective measure of the number of contacts that people have.
  - **Being** isolated—physically separate from other people
  - May not be unpleasant for the person; he/she may choose to isolate
- **Loneliness** is a subjective feeling about the gap between a person's desired levels of social contact and their actual level of social contact.
  - **Feeling** isolated
  - Distressing for the person
  - Can be felt regardless of social contact
- **Social Connectedness**
  - Social Connection and connectedness refer to the ways that people can be physically, emotionally and culturally connected to others, and the impact that connection has on health and well-being.



# Public Health Impacts

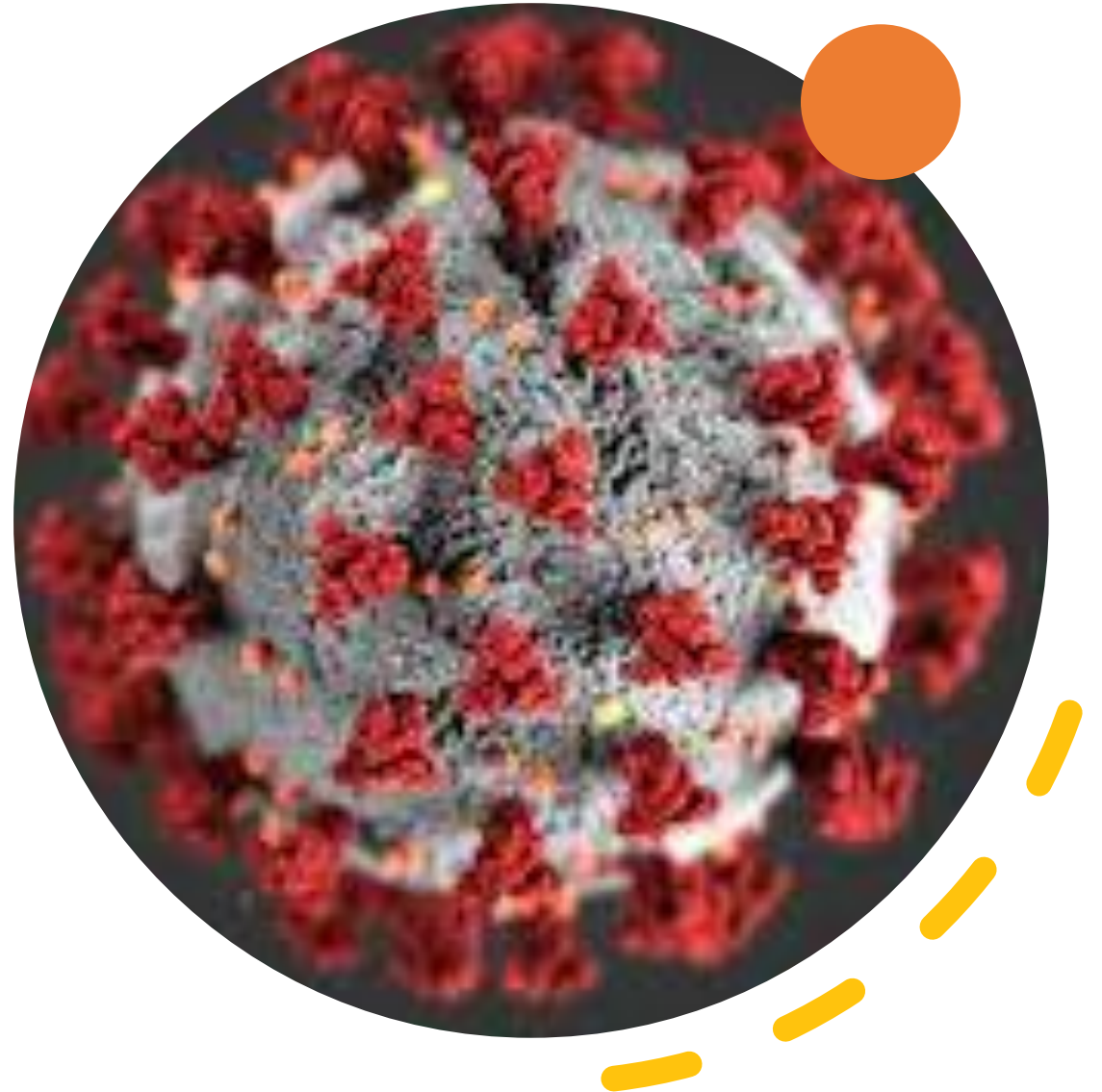
- 29% increased risk of heart disease
- 32% increased risk of stroke
- Higher risk for: high blood pressure, obesity, weakened immune system, anxiety, depression, cognitive decline, Alzheimer's disease, death

# Loneliness is Not New

- US loneliness prevalence ranges from 40%-69%.
- 80% of people under age 18 and 40% of adults over age 65 report being lonely sometimes.
- Rates greater among immigrants, LGBTQ, minorities, elder abuse victims

# The Pandemic Effect

- Two-thirds of U.S. adults report experiencing social isolation
- 66% agree that the COVID-19 pandemic caused their anxiety level to increase
- Only 11% turned to a medical professional when feeling down or sad, and almost 1/3 of adults age 50+ reported they did not look to anyone for support
- Since the pandemic began, women age 50+ are twice as likely to report feeling overwhelmed (32% vs 15% of men 50+)



# Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness

## Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness

Thriving with purpose and belonging

Loneliness and social isolation are on the rise in the U.S. and are responsible for very real physical, emotional and psychological impacts — especially in older adults and people with disabilities. While the pandemic has exacerbated the issue and heightened awareness, it has long been recognized as a serious public health problem.

### The Wisconsin Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness wants to do something about that — and you can help.

Using a collective impact approach that brings together public and private entities, service providers, and individuals, we're organizing to identify and deploy meaningful responses to the negative health impacts of social isolation and loneliness among older adults and people with disabilities in Wisconsin. Join us as we work to tackle the challenges, with a focus on breaking down disparities in communities of color, rural communities and tribal nations, by addressing these areas:



#### Public Awareness

We will raise awareness of loneliness as a public health issue and share strategies to improve connections and create a feeling of purpose.



#### Research & Share

We will create a research-driven knowledge base to support and inform coalition activities and interventions to be deployed locally.



#### Detect & Respond

We will share methods for identifying loneliness and provide access to meaningful and culturally-relevant resources and services.



#### Advocate

We will seek public policy solutions that combat the root causes and adverse consequences of isolation and loneliness.



### Social Isolation & Loneliness: What's the Difference?

Social isolation is the **objective** experience of having little or no contact with other people.

Loneliness is **subjective**. People who are sad and/or distressed by a lack of connection with others in a social network are lonely — even if not physically alone.

**40%**

Of adults with a disability report feeling lonely.



**43%**

Of older adults feel lonely on a regular basis.

**\$6.7 B**

Estimated annual federal spending attributable to social isolation among older adults.



## The Coalition Mission

*“Engage diverse partners in reimagining how we can combat the root causes and adverse consequences of social isolation and loneliness among older adults and people with disabilities in our state.”*

Wisconsin  
Coalition to  
End Social  
Isolation &  
Loneliness

## **Collective Impact: Utilizing our Spheres of Influence and Expertise**

- Common Agenda
- Shared Measurement System
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Continuous Communication
- Backbone Support Organization

*“We can’t end social isolation in isolation”*



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Loneliness

# Coalition Work Groups

- Advocacy and Public Policy
- Detection and Access
- Research and Shared Measurement
- Raising Awareness



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Isolation &  
Loneliness

# Advocacy and Public Policy

*Advocate for public policy solutions that combat the root causes and adverse consequences of isolation and loneliness*

- Current Goals
  - Improve connectivity
  - Increase inclusion
  - Expand multigenerational opportunities
  - Strengthen prevention and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation and fraud
  - Lead efforts for adults and people with disabilities to be economically, civically, and socially engaged

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Isolation &  
Loneliness

# Detection and Access

*Improve detection and access to meaningful and culturally relevant resources and services*

- Share methods for identifying loneliness
- UCLA 3-Item Loneliness Scale
  - Pilot program with eight organizations
  - Creating report summary for distribution
  - Presenting at [USAging Conference](#) in July
  - Provide resources to people identified as lonely
    - Follow-up
- Resource gathering and distribution

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Loneliness

# Research and Measurement

*Create a research-driven knowledge base to support and inform the coalition to end social isolation and loneliness*

- Leading efforts around shared measurement
- Developing framework to understand causes, risk factors, and interventions
- Review population health indicators of social connectedness, loneliness, and social isolation
- Recent publication: [Social and Emotional Support Data in Wisconsin](#)

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End Social  
Isolation &  
Loneliness

# Raising Awareness

*Raise awareness of loneliness as a public health issue and share strategies to improve connections and create a sense of purpose*

- Messaging and Delivery
  - One-page info sheets
- Initiatives and Events
  - Social Isolation and Loneliness Awareness Week
  - Letter to the Editor
  - Calls to Action
- Website
  - <https://wihealthyaging.org/initiatives/isolation-and-loneliness/>

Wisconsin  
Coalition to  
End Social  
Isolation &  
Loneliness

# Impact, Lessons Learned, & Takeaways

- 300+ members from public, private, and nonprofit organizations, including concerned community members
  - Ongoing efforts to expand Coalition
  - Membership survey available in multiple languages
  - Membership agreement (active; advice; info only)
- Governor's Proclamation
  - [Social Isolation and Loneliness Awareness Week](#)
- Social Isolation and Loneliness Toolkit



## Coalition Impact

# How can the Coalition Have an Impact?

- Lead initiatives identified by the Coalition
- Provide avenues to engage
- Share resources from local, state, and national partners
- Serve as clearinghouse for best practices and tools for outreach, communication, and advocacy



Wisconsin  
Coalition to  
End Social  
Isolation &  
Loneliness

# Impact, Lessons Learned, & Takeaways

- Webinars on engaging communities, volunteering, promoting purpose & connection
- [Social Isolation Resource Guide](#)
- 3-year Aging Plans in WI
  - Over 40% of Aging Plans include social connectedness goals
- Partnering with other states
  - IL: Northwestern Music and Medicine Program
  - GA: Art Pharmacy

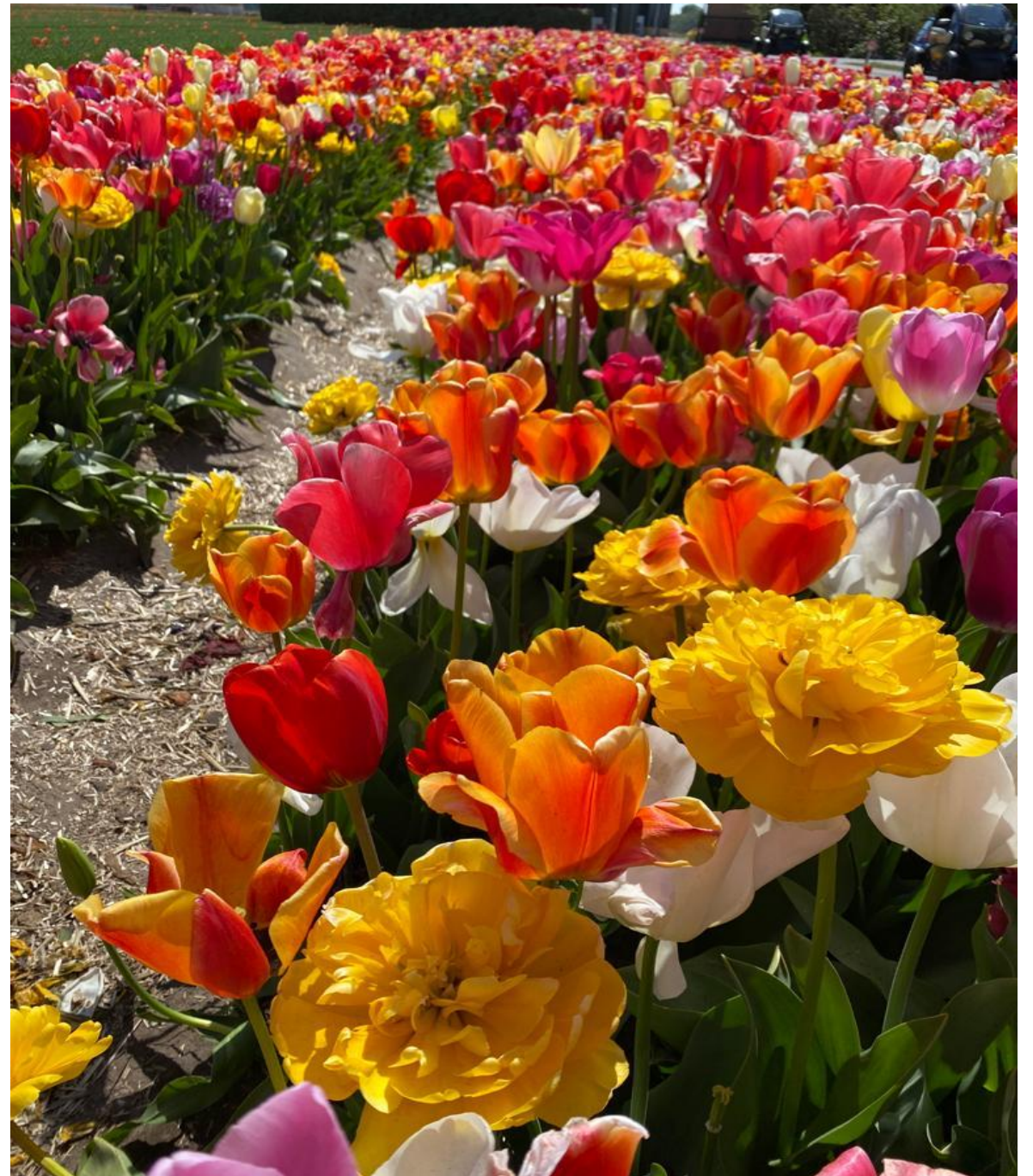
# ***Thank You!***

**Tim Wellens**

Regional Quality Specialist

Wisconsin Department of Health Services

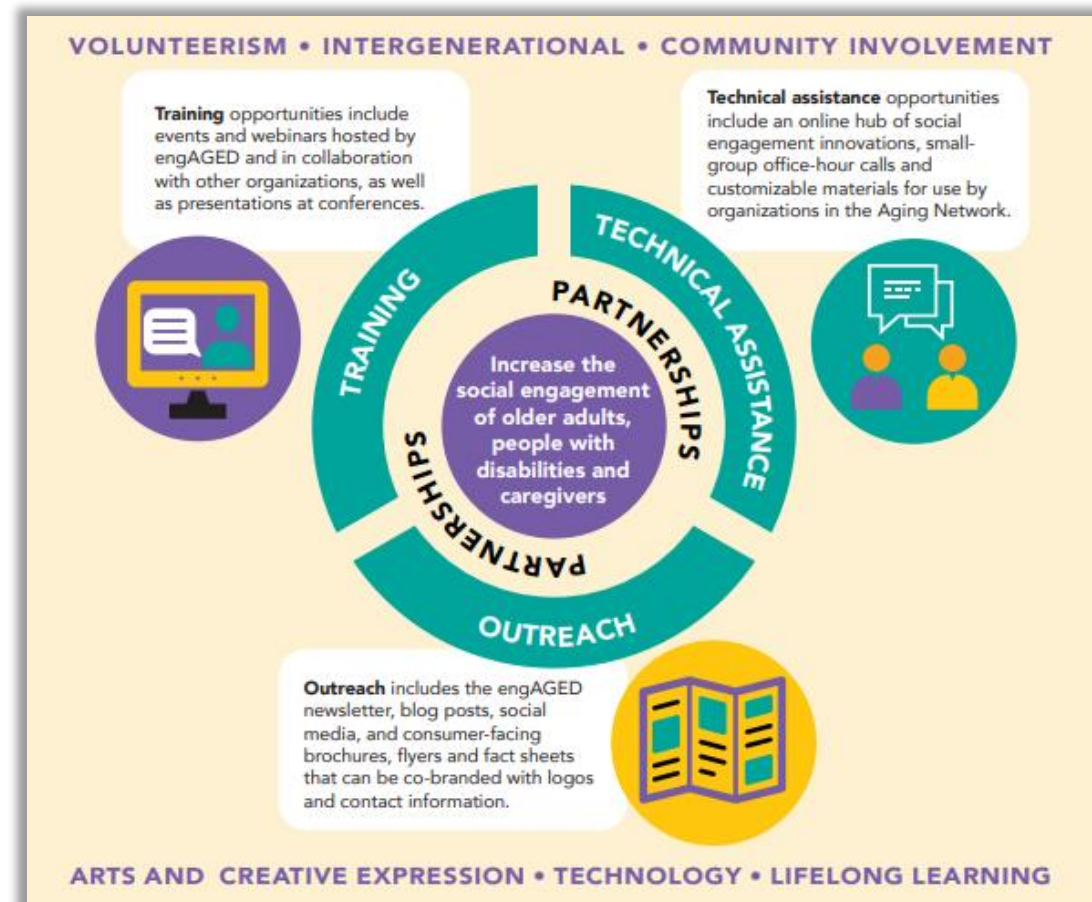
[timothy.wellens@dhs.wisconsin.gov](mailto:timothy.wellens@dhs.wisconsin.gov)



# Overview of engAGED

- National effort to increase social engagement of older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers
- Administered by USAging
- Funded by the U.S. Administration for Community Living

[www.engagingolderadults.org](http://www.engagingolderadults.org)





# engAGED Resources

- New! 2023 What Works: Social Engagement Innovations and Best Practices
- Updated! A re-launched and updated Other resources:
  - Social Engagement Innovations Hub continues to grow
  - Community Awareness Toolkit
  - Tips for holding virtual events manual
  - Tips for hybrid events manual
  - Videos
  - Consumer brochures
- Monthly newsletter and blog
- [www.engagingolderadults.org](http://www.engagingolderadults.org)



## WHAT WORKS: Social Engagement Innovations and Best Practices







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# Questions and Discussion

Please submit your questions or  
comments through the Q&A.

# Thank you!

- Please complete the survey which will be displayed in your browser after Zoom closes.
- The recording will be available on [www.committtoconnect.org](http://www.committtoconnect.org)

For further questions, contact us at:  
[info@committtoconnect.org](mailto:info@committtoconnect.org)

