

## Supporting Seniors during COVID-19

**Overview:** This worksheet details the results of a collaborative brainstorming activity completed by the participants of the OMSSA Mental Health Forum’s Healthy Aging at Home session.

**Instructions:** Please participate in this exercise by filling out your own copy of this handout. After each scenario, we will invite the audience to raise their hands, take the mic, and share their ideas. We also encourage folks to share their ideas in the chat.

**Time for Each Question:** 3 minutes.

**Preamble:** It is April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020. You are part of a small phone-based outreach team responsible for connecting with seniors in local affordable housing sites. Based on the scenarios below, how could you mobilize your community partners to develop resources to support these seniors during the early stages of COVID-19 shutdowns?

<b>Supporting Seniors During COVID-19 Problem Solving Workshop</b>		
<p><b>Scenario 1:</b> A senior responds that they are running low on essential grocery items and are unable to get a ride to the grocery store.</p>	<p><b>What partnerships could you mobilize?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community Support Connections (Grocery Delivery program)</li> <li>- Food Banks</li> <li>- Reach out to different volunteer agencies</li> <li>- Caremongering Groups</li> <li>- Meals on Wheels</li> <li>- Faith Groups and Church Programs</li> <li>- Grocery stores</li> <li>- Chez Soi</li> <li>- CAREA</li> <li>- Local restaurants</li> </ul>	<p><b>What resources could be developed?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Online resources for grocery delivery (for nominal fee)</li> <li>- Volunteers for pick up, storage, and distribution of grocery items</li> <li>- Community Outreach Worker (to help systems navigation)</li> <li>- Free delivery for seniors</li> <li>- Organize volunteer drivers (safely)</li> <li>- Deliveries from soup kitchens/hot meal programs (including to seniors in rural areas)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Scenario 2:</b> A senior responds that they are confused about the physical distancing requirements. They are also concerned about becoming isolated.</p>	<p><b>What partnerships could you mobilize?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CMHA and Telehealth</li> <li>- We Care</li> <li>- March of Dimes</li> <li>- Red Cross</li> <li>- Homemakers and Nurses’ Services</li> <li>- PSWs and Volunteers (esp. Students)</li> </ul>	<p><b>What resources could be developed?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide PPE to residents,</li> <li>- Mail public health COVID recommendations (physical distancing guidelines)</li> <li>- Post notices and partners (both onsite and online)</li> <li>- Free masks delivered to their doors (to support safe in person)</li> </ul>

		interactions) - Regularly scheduled wellness checks (phone-based and in person)
<b>Scenario 3:</b> A senior responds that they are very board, lonely, and scared.	<b>What partnerships could you mobilize?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- CMHA</li> <li>- Service groups and volunteers</li> <li>- VON</li> <li>- Public Libraries</li> <li>- Access Community Mental Health</li> <li>- Lions and Optimist Clubs (especially for rural areas)</li> <li>- Public Libraries</li> <li>- Hobby/skill clubs</li> </ul>	<b>What resources could be developed?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Virtual arts and craft workshops</li> <li>- Virtual tea and coffee luncheons</li> <li>- Drop off activity kits</li> <li>- Scheduled wellness checks</li> <li>- Telephone visit program (youth calling seniors)</li> <li>- Seniors Without Walls program</li> <li>- Reach out plan to family members (if appropriate)</li> <li>- Social “Bubbles” of other residents in the building</li> <li>- Phone chain program (for neighbours to check in on each other and build friendships)</li> </ul>
<b>Scenario 4:</b> A senior sounds like they are currently in distress. They are alone, crying, and it is hard to understand what they are saying.	<b>What partnerships could you mobilize?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emergency services</li> <li>- Family members</li> <li>- Local mental health organizations</li> <li>- Doctors and Nurses</li> <li>- CAMH</li> <li>- Local crisis services and hotlines</li> </ul>	<b>What resources could be developed?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Wellness checks</li> <li>- 911 protocols</li> <li>- Mental health hotlines</li> <li>- Risk assessments</li> <li>- Taking the time to listen and provide that friendly voice</li> <li>- Transportation to appointments</li> <li>- Respite visits</li> <li>- Hallway bingo</li> <li>- Ride programs to appointments (for physical and mental health services)</li> </ul>