



**Serving Seniors** is the leading non-profit in San Diego providing a network of comprehensive, integrated programs and services to support low-income older adults aged 60 and above. Services include:

### Meals:

We serve breakfast and lunch daily at multiple sites across San Diego County and via home-delivery to homebound seniors. Our nutritious meals help reduce food insecurity, improve health, and provide opportunities for life-affirming socialization.

### Housing:

We provide transitional housing for homeless seniors and over 400 units of permanent affordable housing with on-site meals and supportive services to help older adults thrive in independent living.

### Health & Social Services:

Our integrated team of nurses, social service case managers, and care navigators provides over 15,000 direct service visits a year, including assessments, care coordination, health education, and referrals to address our seniors' wraparound wellness needs through the Gary and Mary West Wellness Center.

### Enrichment and Activities:

We provide daily activities including fitness classes, arts and crafts, culture and travel classes, talent competitions, social events, and more. Our activities keep seniors active and engaged and provide isolated seniors an opportunity to build social connections that promote wellness and enrich their lives.





## Serving Seniors Efforts in Response to COVID-19

May 18, 2020

### **Nutrition**

This month we received grant funding to expand our kitchen capacity. We appreciate [San Diego County's support](#) in helping us secure funding for this critical improvement.

### **To-Go Meals:**

We continue to offer daily to-go meals to seniors at the Gary and Mary West Senior Wellness Center and at our Oceanside location. For hours of operation, [click here](#).

### **Home-Delivered Meals (HDM):**

This program delivers two hot meals per day to over 1,700 seniors (24,000+ meals weekly) throughout San Diego County. This week our team successfully implemented new operating procedures to streamline client intakes and reassessments during the pandemic. In the coming weeks, our drivers will begin using new technology to improve efficiencies in the tracking and routing of deliveries.

### **Shelf-Stable Meals:**

This meal program provides a week's supply of food (breakfast, lunch and dinner) to seniors 65+ and others quarantined in hotels/motels referred to us by the County's Public Health Department. We also began providing meals to [Hope through Housing](#) clients at Talmage and San Ysidro Senior Village. Since the program began in mid-April, our staff and volunteers have assembled over 3,500 meal boxes and our drivers have delivered over 16,000 meals.

### **Health + Wellness**

#### **Telephonic Support and Case Management:**

Our Health and Social Services Team continues to provide telephonic case management for our clients.

The team has also been able to reinstate two pre-COVID-19 programs:

- ***Transitional Housing Program (THP) Assessments***: Assessments for THP were put on hold for the last 9 weeks. This week, we reinstated the program using an interest list/sign-up sheet at our downtown Wellness Center coinciding with our To Go Meal program. Interested seniors are then contacted telephonically for an assessment. When a spot opens up, face-to-face enrollment with our HSS team will occur outside the Wellness Center using social distancing guidelines.



- [Access to Pet Supplies](#): Prior to the pandemic, pet supplies were distributed monthly at our Wellness Center. Monthly distribution will now resume at this site and will also be expanded to our housing sites (Potiker Downtown, Potiker City Heights, and Schmale Family Senior Residence in Ramona). We are grateful to the [San Diego Humane Society](#) for supporting our clients in this way.

### **Telehealth Screenings with West Health:**

Our telehealth project with West Health and UCSD continues to evolve in response to COVID-19. The project was originally conceived as an opportunity to provide our Wellness Center clients with real time access to emergency room physicians to assess and guide clients experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or other acute symptoms to reduce ER visits and exposure. Since then, leveraging the Wellness Center as a COVID-19 testing site has become a priority. Testing protocols, privacy, and follow-up support for seniors testing positive are currently under discussion.

### **Combatting Social Isolation**

Serving Seniors' new Connections Program is up and running. Recently featured on [KPBS](#), the Connections Program is designed to connect seniors with friendly conversation and additional support should they need it. In our first two weeks, we have successfully:

- Expanded the program to offer connections for Spanish and Mandarin speaking seniors;
- Completed an outreach plan to introduce our Home-Delivered Meal clients to the program;
- Enrolled nearly 20 clients and recruited over 30 volunteers;
- Revised protocols to allow seniors, who are not Serving Seniors' clients, to enroll.

If you know of a senior who would like to “get connected”, please refer them to Chania Mitchell at (619) 246-4461 or [chania.mitchell@servingseiors.org](mailto:chania.mitchell@servingseiors.org). If you know of someone who would like to volunteer, please contact Elle Leidy at [elle.leidy@servingseiors.org](mailto:elle.leidy@servingseiors.org).

### **Staff**

Our staff continues to follow all COVID-19 health and safety protocols recommended by leading Public Health Service agencies to ensure their safety, as well as our clients'.

Due to the increased threat of “Zoom bombing”, our IT Department has supported all staff in implementing safety techniques, such as waiting rooms and multi-factor authentication, to ensure all communications are safe and secure.

*If your office has questions about our services during COVID-19, please contact our Government + Community Relations Manager at [christina.selder@servingseiors.org](mailto:christina.selder@servingseiors.org) or (619) 838-9133.*