**Aging and Disability Network Regional Meetings, 12/8/2020**

The changes in operations needed to support staff, programs, customers, and the community during the pandemic created new opportunities and realized efficiencies related to increased collaborations, new partnerships, internal processes, and technologies. Below are specific examples shared by partners within the Wisconsin Aging and Disability Network.

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| **Strategies and Partnerships to reduce staffing shortages:** | * Encourage staff to work remotely as much as possible/allowable
* Minimize in-person interactions between staff in the office or home visits (APS related – drive in separate vehicles)
* If working in the office to minimize exposure:
	+ - Staff complete online health survey before, approval by supervisor, staff sign-in/sign-out, no interaction with other staff in the building.
		- Split staff into teams – rotating schedule of teams to be in office to reduce potential close contacts if a staff would have a positive COVID test result
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|  | * New technology that promote efficiency with Remote Work:
	+ - Softphones – for remote work/phone calls – allows staff to answer office phone at home through computer, calls out show up as the county calling (no “unknown” caller that customers won’t answer). e.g. Grasshopper, Jabber, Avaya
		- Incoming faxes are delivered to a central email address, then forwarded to receiving staff. e.g. E-Fax Gold.
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|  | * + Collaboration within county DHS to utilize support staff for clerical duties when ADRC/Aging staff are working remotely
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| **Strategies and Partnerships to support Nutrition programs:** | * + With closure of congregate sites and need to transition to curbside, shelf stable meals, and home delivery provided opportunities to expand program with significant increases in participant numbers.
	+ Utilization of transportation providers to complete home delivery of meals and groceries.
	+ Grab and Go partnership with a local grocery store who prepares at no cost, then volunteer drivers pick up to deliver to participants.
	+ Utilization of staff from other county departments to deliver meals when program is “short staffed”
		- * Pool of county employees and board members that can be pulled from to assist when needed
			* Provides new opportunity for other county employees to see what the ADRC does for this core service, opens opportunity to discuss further the needs of the program and the population served – creates an “eye opener” for some who would never otherwise have the opportunity.
* Created “back up” plan with other providers if caterer for nutrition program would be unable to maintain service due to COVID; partnerships include grocery stores, restaurants, nursing home, and commercial food distributor.
* Partnership with Housing Division for utilization of Community Development Block Grant funding to enhance funding availability for Nutrition programs into 2021
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| **Strategies to meet Socialization needs** | * + - “Calling tree” with customer agreement for congregate participants, where the participants utilize the calling tree to contact each other to create socialization opportunities and reduce social isolation. Participants also agreed to “extra” calls from participants above and beyond the calling tree model.
		- Meal site managers making weekly phone calls to participants, weekly Zoom calls,
		- Collaboration with community groups - Friendly Visitor and local nursing school program - to make phone calls to participants to decrease social isolation
		- Tablet loan program and tech assistance provided to increase socialization for participants.
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| **Strategies and Partnerships to support Transportation:** | * Increased the number of paid staff to drive, due to a loss of volunteer availability.
	+ Providing transportation to a single customer (no ride share) and utilizing bigger vehicle to increase distancing (vans, buses).
	+ Ensuring Rider Safety – COVID/CARES funding allowed for sufficient PPE and sanitation supplies for contracted transportation providers.
	+ Utilization of Nick Musson, GWAAR, when having difficulty finding transportation for customers who are COVID+ or have symptoms and need transportation to testing. He is a member of the Wisconsin Association of Mobility Managers.
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| **Partnerships with Community Agencies:** | * Establishing email referral processes with partner agencies – for ADRC/Tribal ADRS to submit a referral to partner agency on customer’s behalf to allow “warm transfer” but eliminate long wait times on the phone for customer and staff assisting with referral.
* Partnerships and collaboration with the police department and crisis team due to increases in suicide attempts and crisis situations.
* Partnership with Girl Scouts and youth programs to purchase, assemble and deliver shelf-stable meals to home delivered meal participants.
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| **Health and Wellness and Prevention Programs:** | * Offering virtual Health and Wellness programs, as well as caregiver support programs – some counties have seen large numbers participating.
	+ - * Partnerships between counties to allow customers (caregivers) from other counties to attend programs offered by the agency to increase participation/keep classes full and offerings available in all counties involved.
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| **Caregiver Support:** | * [Echo Show](https://www.imore.com/amazon-echo-show-everything-you-need-know#:~:text=The%20Echo%20Show%20is%20a%20screen%20and%20speaker,friends%20and%20family%2C%20and%20a%20whole%20lot%20more.) for caregivers to stay connected with video calling with care recipients
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| **Outreach and Marketing:** | * Utilizing virtual programs/groups to market other ADRC programs/services
* Increased utilization social media campaigns and Facebook lives to market programs/services
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| **Specific Resources Shared:** | * Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging: [Safety Protocols for WIHA-administered in-person programs](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Ctrusesj1%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CMicrosoft%5CWindows%5CINetCache%5CContent.Outlook%5C1M11DQNU%5C%E2%80%A2%09https%3A%5Cwihealthyaging.org%5C_data%5Ccms_files%5CCOVID%20Response%5CWIHA%20workshop%20COVID-19%20Safety%20Plan%20-%20Required%20Protocols%20-%20FINAL%2007-20%20%281%29.pdf%3Fu%3D1V3PNN)
* Nick Musson, GWAAR Transportation Specialist – nick.musson@gwaar.org or 608-228-8092
* Feeding America: <https://www.feedingamerica.org/>
* HEAR Wisconsin – clear face masks to assist with communication for those who are deaf or hard of hearing: <https://hearwi.org/our-store>
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