



## **Caregiver Resources to Address Social Isolation/Loneliness in Seniors**

### **Make Transportation Available and Accessible**

Transportation has been found as a leading cause of social isolation, as many older adults do not drive anymore. This leads to relying on others for rides impacting their social health. Offering rides and assisting them to learn to use public transportation will help them maintain independence and social connectedness.

### **Promote Sense of Purpose**

Provide seniors with the means to remain active in their regular routines to help preserve their sense of purpose. Helping seniors identify hobbies and interest that they like to engage in may be useful. At times, seniors may feel like they cannot participate in activities that they once enjoyed. Get creative and think of alternative ways to engage in these activities, even if it is in a different way. Additionally, seek out volunteering opportunities in their local community. This is a great way to maintain and express a sense of purpose.

### **Encourage Hearing and Vision Tests**

Oftentimes, older adults have undiagnosed hearing or vision problems leading them to avoid social situations. These tests can provide answers to support individuals with necessary treatment options.

### **Address Incontinence Issues**

Those with incontinence issues often fear going into public spaces. Contact a healthcare professional as they will be able to provide you options to address this issue.

### **Make Adaptive Technologies Available**

Adaptive equipment is any tool, device, or machine that is used to help with any task associated with daily living. If a senior is experiencing challenges in their daily tasks, adaptive equipment may be able to assist. For example, if one is experiencing hearing loss a hearing aid may support this deficit to continue to engage in social activities.

### **Support Loss of Spouse**

Older adults are at a heightened risk to lose their spouse. These individuals have shared their life's together for potentially decades. It is critical to provide them with extra emotional and social support while they grieve. Dedicating more time to spend with them is the best way to support them cope with their loss.

### **Seek Professional Assistance**

Mental health issues like depression and anxiety are the leading cause of social isolation and loneliness. If an individual's mental health is interfering with their daily functional, seek counseling or professional support immediately.

## References

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