



Georgia Department of Human Services
Division of Aging Services

Division of Aging Services Review

Social Isolation and Loneliness

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STRONGER FAMILIES FOR A STRONGER GEORGIA





Division of Aging Services

— VISION —

LIVING LONGER,
LIVING SAFELY,

Living Well

Social Isolation and Loneliness

Definitions

- Social isolation- refers to the objective lack of (or limited) social contact with others and is marked by a person having few social network ties, having infrequent social contact, or, potentially living alone.
- Loneliness- refers to the perception of social isolation or the subjective feeling of being lonely.

Key Takeaway

- It is incorrect to assume that all older adults are isolated or lonely or that aging, independent of other factors, causes social isolation and loneliness.

The National Academies of Sciences. Engineering. Medicine: Consensus Study Report. (2020). Social isolation and loneliness in older adults: Opportunities for the healthcare system. Retrieved April 24, 2020, from <https://www.nap.edu/read/25663/chapter/2>



Social Isolation and Loneliness

Background Information

- On March 11th, 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 as a pandemic. As a safety precaution, all individuals were advised to shelter in place, specifically, older adults and individuals with compromised immune systems.
- On March 23rd Governor Kemp issued Georgia's first Shelter in Place Order.

Whitehouse.gov. Retrieved October 2, 2020, from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/proclamation-declaring-national-emergency-concerning-novel-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-outbreak/>



Social Isolation and Loneliness

Addressing the Issue

- The Division of Aging Services (DAS) contracted with the Georgia Health Policy Center (GHPC) to identify and recommend a vetted and reliable social isolation assessment.
- Based on the scan, DAS will use GHPC's recommendation of the Lubben Social Network Scale.



Social Isolation and Loneliness

Project Assessments

- Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) staff will screen individuals living alone using the Lubben Scale.
- The Lubben scale screens for social isolation with a score range from 0-30.
- Staff will refer individuals scoring 0-6 (greatest risk for isolation) to Case Management and will refer individuals scoring 7-12 to Community Options Counseling.



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Project Assessments Cont'd

- Community Options Counselors (COC) will support the individual to develop an Action Plan and will follow up to ensure the plan mitigates risk of isolation.
- The COC will reassess each individual with the Lubben scale prior to case closure to track and compare any changes.



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Project Assessments Cont'd

- Upon referral, a case manager will conduct the Revised UCLA 3-item Loneliness scale.
- The three item scale gauges general feelings of loneliness and confirms the connection between objective and subjective measures of social isolation.
- Case Managers will support the consumer to identify appropriate interventions and will reassess individuals at 6 and 12 months to track and compare changes.

Hughes, E., Waite, L., Hawkey, L. & Cacioppo, J. A Short Scale for Measuring Loneliness in Large Survey: Results from Two Population-Based Studies. Res Aging, May 2008. Retrieved April 14, 2020, from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2394670/>



Social Isolation and Loneliness

Take Aways

- The National Academy of Science states that social isolation and loneliness may be episodic or chronic depending on an individual's circumstances and perceptions.
- Interventions will look different for those who are lonely and those that are socially isolated.

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Social Isolation and Loneliness

Most Effective Interventions

- Social isolation and loneliness:
 - Involve active participation of older adults
- Social isolation
 - Group based activities
- Loneliness
 - Interventions that address maladaptive thinking
 - Education programs focused on social networks maintenance and enhancements

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Questions



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