Partners In Social Engagement: Collaborating With Faith Communities

March 17, 2022
Webinar Instructions

Audio Options
• Use your computer speakers, OR dial in using the phone number in your registration email.
• All participants are muted.

Questions and Answers (Q&A)
• You can submit questions for the panelists at any time during this presentation. On the Zoom module on the bottom of your screen, click the Q&A icon, type your question in the box and submit.

Chat Feature
• The Chat feature allows webinar attendees, the host, co-hosts and panelists to communicate for the duration of the webinar.
Accessibility

• Screen Reader Users: Reduce unwanted chatter
  – Request speech on demand: Insert, Spacebar, “S”

• To get our attention if you need tech assistance:
  – Raise or Lower Hand: Alt + Y
engAGED

- National effort to increase social engagement among older adults, people with disabilities and their caregivers
- Administered by USAging
- 18 Project Advisory Committee members: www.engagingolderadults.org/partnerships
- Funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging, which is part of the Administration for Community Living
Presenters

Virginia Biggar
Executive Director of Communities, USAgainstAlzheimer’s

Wendy De Leon
Caregiver and Dementia Program Specialist, AgeOptions

Sonja Mickelson
Senior Companion Program, Western ND Program Coordinator, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota
UsAgainst Alzheimer’s

Virginia Biggar
Executive Director of Communities
Dementia Overview

➢ More than 6 million Americans are living with Alzheimer’s disease
➢ Women and African Americans are 2x and Latinos 1.5x more likely to develop Alzheimer’s
➢ More than 11 million people provide unpaid care for someone with dementia
➢ Dementia caregivers more often say they feel alone, and that caregiving has made it difficult to take care of own health
➢ Dementia caregivers of color report feeling stressed, lonely or isolated, and uncertain about the future
➢ Social isolation is a risk factor for dementia

Sources: UsAgainstAlzheimer’s A-LIST; Alzheimer’s Association Facts & Figures 2021, 2017 Lancet Commission
Impact of the Pandemic

➢ 78% of current caregivers report that their stress levels were either higher or significantly higher since coronavirus restrictions were put in place (3/21)

➢ 81% of caregivers felt more isolated than before coronavirus restrictions (3/21)

➢ 57% of caregivers felt lonelier than before coronavirus restrictions (3/21)

“I hope I have a better chance of being able to visit my elderly mum who is withering from loneliness.” - A-LIST Caregiver

“I crave conversation with someone who is able to have a conversation. We are alone, the two of us, and my husband can’t hold a conversation. The loneliness scares me sometimes.” - A-LIST Caregiver
Role of Faith Communities

➢ 70% of respondents say their faith sustains them on their journey with dementia
➢ 72% of respondents indicated they wanted more support from their faith communities

“Faith-related activities, whether communal or individual, can greatly help those living with dementia [and Alzheimer’s] to promote a sense of belonging in a group and to develop their spiritual life, thus contributing to better physical and mental wellbeing—by enhancing feelings of self-worth, by piercing sentiments of loneliness, and by creating hope.”
- Rabbi Israel de la Piedra, Miami Jewish Health (ret.)
Faith United Against Alzheimer's Coalition

A diverse, interfaith national coalition of clergy, faith leaders, laity and faith-based organizations advocating for dementia friendly faith communities across the country and demanding action to stop Alzheimer’s.
Faith in Action: Alabama

Lynda Everman & Don Wendorf
Faith In Action: Meeting Community Needs

Atlanta, GA

Montgomery, AL
Building Partnerships with Faith Communities

- Identify key community faith leaders and organizations
- Identify key individuals within the organization
- Identify best messenger in your organization
- Learn about needs and capacity of faith community
- Offer tailored resources or events
- Consider donation or event sponsorship
- Allow time to build relationships
Quick overview:

➢ Background and introduction of AgeOptions
➢ Overview of the Caring Together, Living Better (CTLB) Program and Team
➢ Takeaways and lessons learned from the CTLB program
01. Our Mission
AgeOptions innovates, partners, and advocates to improve systems and services in order to strengthen communities so people thrive as they age.

02. Our Vision
People thriving as they age

03. Our Values
Commitment
Integrity
Connectedness
AgeOptions: Area Agency on Aging for Suburban Cook County

- AgeOptions is designated under the federal Older Americans Act as the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the suburban Cook County Planning Aging and Service Area (PSA), one of 13 Area Agencies in Illinois.
- The older adult population (60+) in suburban Cook County is rapidly growing and becoming increasingly diverse.
  - 568,743 older adults and 275,830 caregivers residing in suburban Cook County in 130 communities (ACS, 2019)
  - 83,899 (14.8%) of 60+ are Limited English Speaking
AgeOptions Team for CTLB

• Wendy De Leon, Caregiver & Dementia Program Specialist
• Cristina Diaz, Countywide Caregiver Programs Coordinator
• Katie Zahm, Community Programs Manager
• Rob Mapes, Director of Program and Community Support
Caring Together, Living Better (CTLB)

• CTLB is a grassroots program that was created to support African American and Latinx family caregivers.

• CTLB’s mission is to support and empower caregivers by partnering with faith and community-based organizations to provide resources, education and community.
We knew that people were not self-identifying as family caregivers

The need for respite was very high in south suburbs

We understood the importance of faith institutions for many African Americans
Transition of CTLB to West Suburban Cook County

- Belief that a version of the CTLB South model would work in other communities
- Recognition of caregiver needs in the west suburbs
- Importance of faith to many in west suburbs
- Lack of Spanish language caregiver support
CTLB Belief Statements

• CTLB sites know what their caregivers need and how to best serve them in a culturally appropriate way
• Each community and CTLB partner has existing assets that can address key caregiver needs
  • Top asset = volunteer leaders
CTLB Belief Statements cont.

• Caregivers are best served when:
  • CTLB sites are connected with the Caregiver Resource Center (CRC)
  • CTLB sites collaborate to support each other and their caregivers

• CTLB should be owned and led by the community where it operates
Our CTLB partners

• Rock of Ages Baptist Church
• Community Development Corporation of Bellwood
• Neighborhood United Methodist Church
• Quinn Center of St. Eulalia
• Cicero Area Project
• New partner soon
CTLB fiscal year process

• CTLB partners submit an application with a workplan (menu of options provided).
• Meet with CTLB partners to go over the contract and answer questions.
• Monthly meeting with partners for technical assistance and quarterly calls to collect report.
Menu of options:

1. Host or Co-Host and Recruit for an Evidenced-Based Workshop (Required for All Partners)
2. Start a Volunteer Friendly Visitor Phone Program
3. Create a Technology Lending Program
4. Organize a Nutrition Program
5. Coordinate an Economic Security Program
6. Host a Book Nook Club
7. COVID Testing
8. Coordinate a Fun Club for older adults
9. Address Mental Health
10. Organize a community based sing-a-long
Our interactions

• Caregiver Programs Specialist interacts with CTLB partners most often.
• It is necessary to talk to partners and get their input on events, projects etc.
Leadership Council Meetings

• The goals of these monthly meetings are:
  • Shared ownership
  • Increase collaboration between sites
  • Connections with CRC
  • Best practices and challenges
  • Community investment
Impact of CTLB in the community

• Many individuals do not self-identify as caregivers.
• Individuals are not aware of the programs available to them.
• Individuals are unaware of the Aging Network.
• Individuals learn that they are unpaid family caregivers.
• Individuals are referred to programs and to CRCs.
• Individuals become aware of the Aging Network.
Our partners reach caregivers, older adults, and family members in their communities and congregations by providing:

- Outlets for social & emotional support and connection
- Connection to vital resources (i.e., food, PPE, etc.)
- Referrals to other aging network organizations (i.e., Caregiver Resource Centers, Aging and Disability Resource Centers)
Senior Virtual Programming by Quinn Center

SENIORS VIRTUAL PROGRAMS
February Weekly Class Schedule

Thursday, February 3, 5:00 - 6:00 PM
Creative Conversations

Thursday, February 10, 5:00 - 6:00 PM
Zumba with LaToya

Thursday, February 17, 5:00 - 6:00 PM
Gentle Yoga and Meditation with Sarah

Thursday, February 24, 5:00 - 6:00 PM
Chair Fitness with Lisette

Join by calling: (312) 626-6799 Meeting ID: 835 1322 3421
or visit web.zoom.us/j/83513223421

Have questions? contact us at 708-397-6951 or seniors@quinncenter.org
Tips and Strategies
Tips and Strategies

• When working with African American and Latinx communities it is important to collaborate with community partners.
• They know the needs of the caregivers and community.
• Building partner trust and buy-in is crucial!
• Always listen to the partners feedback and make changes accordingly.
How to maintain the collaboration

- Be patient
- Share resources
- Plan to engage for the long-haul
- Build on success
Thank you and stay in touch!

Questions about this presentation can be directed to Wendy.DeLeon@AgeOptions.org

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Senior Companion Program

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

AmeriCorps Seniors
engAGED Resources

- Innovations Hub
- Toolkits and template materials
- Videos
- Consumer brochures
- Newsletter and blog
- Resources and research links
- Information on upcoming events
Connect With Us!

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• Facebook: @engAGEDCenter
• Twitter: @engAGEDCenter
• [info@engagingolderadults.org](mailto:info@engagingolderadults.org)
Commit to Connect

• ACL campaign working to combat social isolation through:
  – Network of champions
  – Connection to resources
  – Establishment of partnerships
  – Sharing of successful initiatives

https://committocconnect.org/
Questions and Discussion

Please submit your questions or comments through the Q&A.
Thank You!

• Please complete the survey which will be displayed in your browser after Zoom closes. There is also a brief 3-month survey.

• The recording will be available on www.engagingolderadults.org.

• Thank you for attending today’s webinar!