



October 2020

Dear Friend,

SENIORS IN YOUR COMMUNITY DESPERATELY NEED YOUR HELP! The horrific COVID pandemic and the raging fires are having a dramatic and sustained impact on their lives. In the midst of all this, Alliance on Aging is experiencing reductions in funding from sources we have counted on for years. This will limit our ability to respond to their needs at a time when they need us most.

For the last 6 months of the COVID crisis, Alliance on Aging has assisted over 7,500 frightened and anxious seniors. They are overwhelmed with media coverage of COVID and call us for reassurance as well as accurate COVID information and resources.

Our OMBUDSMAN program is preparing to resume their monitoring visits to the 2,500 residents in our local nursing homes and residential care facilities. The most vulnerable in this pandemic, they are lonely and have not been able to visit with their families for the last 6 months. On their advocacy visits, our Ombudsmen will follow the protocols set by the CDC which include frequent COVID testing and the use of personal protective equipment to ensure the safety of the residents, staff and themselves. Ombudsman staff are also providing timely emergency preparedness training for care facility staff and senior community providers.

Our Medicare (HICAP) counselors are preparing for the annual Part D Open Enrollment beginning on October 15. This is an annual opportunity for seniors to change the prescription plan, which could save them thousands of dollars. Throughout the year, our Medicare counselors are available to the 60,000 local Medicare beneficiaries to help them understand the complexities of Medicare Parts A, B, C and D, and assist with billing disputes and benefits inquiries.

Our Peer Counselors are providing emotional support and counseling to more seniors who are dealing with increased depression and anxiety during this time of isolation and uncertainty. They too are isolated from their families and friends and not able to engage in community activities that once brought joy and meaning to their lives. Even the most resilient seniors are challenged in this COVID environment and respond positively to a call from a caring person in the community.

Our Tax Counselors are ready for a season which may not allow in person services. This could mean implementing a model of virtual visits with pick up and drop off of documents or resuming in person services at sites throughout the county. This vital program serves 2,000 low-income seniors and generates tax refunds of \$1.7 million. This goes directly into the pockets of seniors and into our community.

Our Transportation Program has been working with seniors throughout the county to help facilitate necessary trips to the doctor and coordinate pickup and delivery of groceries and medications. Staff have begun working with the South County cities to explore ways to expand the very limited transportation options for seniors in the rural parts of the county.

Our Outreach Staff has assisted over 800 seniors with applications for benefit and discount programs, relief services and other COVID related benefits. Our Alliance on Aging homepage has been redesigned to be a comprehensive clearing house of COVID services and resources specific to seniors. Together with our AOA monthly newsletter, it has become a vital link to information for local seniors and the community during this pandemic.

Thank you for being one of our most loyal and generous donors. All of our programs are possible through contributions and support from the community. Don't miss out on making sure the seniors in our community have the information and support they need during these unprecedented times. Please consider donating to Alliance on Aging so that all of our programs will continue positively affecting the senior community. The need for your help is greater than ever.

Sincerely,



Teresa Sullivan
Executive Director

SENIORS NEED YOUR SUPPORT Now More Than Ever . . .

We need your help in assisting Monterey County's 78,200 seniors (60+) who are most vulnerable to COVID-19.



GOAL

Connect SENIORS to critical information and services unique to their needs during the current crisis via online and printed COVID-19 services guide.

HOW ARE WE HELPING SENIORS?

- Demand for our services have increased by 66% since the pandemic. In the past 4 months, we conducted over 3,200 check in phone calls with seniors.
- We are now the one-stop clearinghouse for COVID-19 updates and information for seniors.
- We are creating a bilingual, COVID-19 interactive services guide that will connect seniors to food resources, testing sites, Medicare counseling, the latest scam alerts. The guide would empower seniors by providing them a pathway to services.