Understand the needs and desires of older adults aging alone
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Who is aging alone in the U.S.?

13.8 million or 28% noninstitutionalized older adults

9.3 million are women

Almost half of women over 75

8.9 million widows - 2.5 million widowers

More than three times likely to live in poverty than older adults living with family, 17.3% vs. 5.3%, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2018)

Top 4: Administration for Community Living, 2017
Geriatric Research says

Aging alone puts us at risk for an Elder Orphan Status

Definition: The aged, community-dwelling individuals who are socially and/or physically isolated, without an available known family member or designated surrogate or caregiver, can have a series of adverse biopsychosocial consequences on an individual.

Low social support has been linked to both poor physical and psychological health and an increased risk of mortality for the elderly population. Moreover, decreased social interaction that can stem from this lack of support is correlated with low affect and arousal, poor cognitive and social skills, and altered neurophysiological functioning.

https://www.hindawi.com/journals/cggr/2016/4723250/
First Academic Research
https://www.seniorcare.com/featured/aging-alone-study/

Elder Orphan Facebook Group

Rupal Parekh, PhD, UCONN

Carol Marak, Founder

In Association With
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS ARLINGTON
78% have no help with bills or making financial decisions
EXAMPLE: Asking for another person's perspective. As most of you know my husband transitioned to glory months ago. Our mortgage and deed are in his name. I maintained the mortgage payment without ever contacting the bank. All is current. I knew I would not be able to maintain everything as the mortgage is half of my widows benefits. Then you have all of the other house maintenance and living expenses.

So most recently I have started the move to an apartment. I am still in the house but, anticipate being in the apartment no later than end of October.

**My question** Does it make sense to contact the bank at this point? I am not sure if they will even talk to me as I am not on any papers. I am the sole heir. I don't want to maintain the loan nor do I want to refinance. I can't take care of the yard and maintenance of house and outside blgs. It's too much. I really just want to find out if there was a life insurance policy that I am unaware of that would pay off the mortgage and then I could sell the house. I chose not to contact them before now till I found another place to live within my budget. I have health issues so going back into the workplace was not an option.

Does it make sense that I am safe enough now that it would still be a few months process before they start any kind of foreclosure process which would still give me time to sell items left here. Also what department of the bank do you think I should start with. I know this is probably confusing but, would appreciate any suggestions.
What’s needed

Support to mitigate the emotional stress when dealing with financial decisions

- Get feedback from trusted peers
- Get feedback/advice from financial advisors, attorneys
- Attend local seminars/webinars that offer tips, advice, education

What matters most is understanding one’s emotions when dealing with a financial decision
What’s your idea/solution?
55% have no help with medical decisions
What’s needed

Creative ways to get advice and feedback about medical and health decisions

- Physicians,
- Geriatric Care Managers,
- RNs,
- Health care Practitioners,
- Patient Advocates

Options that are less costly

We need coaching services via Skype/Zoom, tools/apps that auto/self-assess a person’s risks for frailty, falls, depression/mood, and help manage chronic illness.
Screen for Risks

Screen for Risk for Elder Orphan Status

- Identify All Medical Issues
- Identify Cognitive and Functional Abilities
- Obtain Detailed Social Support Information
- Utilize Service Delivery to Home
- Make Safety and Injury Prevention a Priority
- Address Goals of Care and Advance Directives

Add these to the Annual Medicare Wellness Check
What’s your idea/solution?
52% reported being lonely
What members (EO group) do when alone
What’s needed

Join PaPa - Connecting college students with older adults - Grandkids-on-demand

Roommate matching service - college student to rent from adult for free or nominal rent in exchange for services

Men’s Sheds—provide men with a place to gather and make furniture, fix lawn mowers, take on community projects like building playgrounds, or just chat over a cup of coffee

“Welcome Dinners” for refugees, immigrants and others that are new to the community. It’s a simple concept: bring people together, no matter what their background, to share a meal and connect.

The UK appointment of a Minister for Loneliness – the world’s first minister tasked with tackling the issue – many will be watching the impact of the UK’s interventions closely.

Faith organizations create a friend matching service or a Minister for Loneliness
What’s your idea/solution?
70% have not identified a would-be caregiver
43% lack a **living will** or health care power of attorney
Community Services Needed

Community based aging resource centers and adult day care centers (community access to social services and senior organizations with a goal of preventing avoidable hospital admissions).

Community multidisciplinary teams to care for patients with medical, functional, social, and safety needs.

Public-private partnerships to help vulnerable populations, linking health-care teams with community and government agencies (e.g., social services, adult protective services, and senior agencies).
Do you have a burning question?
Credits


Images - Seniorcare.com and Pixabay.com

Quotes and stories - members of the Elder Orphan Group

Geriatric Research - headed up by Dr. Maria Carney
Carol Marak, founder, the Elder Orphan Facebook Group, Consultant, Syndicated Columnist | CarolMarak.com

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