**National Adult Day Services Week – Sept. 19-25**

National Adult Day Services Week is a great opportunity to **showcase the services and programs** that meet the needs and enhance the lives of participants in adult day services.

LeadingAge Minnesota will **give voice to the values and benefits** **of adult day services** via its social media channels during this week. A consistent theme will be **reducing social isolation and support for the field of Adult Day Services.**

Join us to **amplify our collective voice** by celebrating this important week in your organization and sharing your activities and stories with us and the public.

**CORE THEMES & MESSAGES**

**Reducing Isolation and Supporting the Field**

* Adult Day Services gives seniors and people with disabilities and their family caregivers respite from chronic loneliness and isolation. By working in partnership, Adult Day Services helps them maintain independence, manage chronic conditions, reduce social isolation and connect people to resources and support.
* There has never been a more critical time for Adult Day Services professionals to come together to solidify our place in long-term care. The pandemic has changed the ways we serve seniors, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. However, these changes also present unprecedented opportunities to improve policy, funding, and services.
* Adult Day Services help seniors and people with disabilities remain at home longer while giving caregivers peace of mind that their loved one is in good hands when they can’t be there. In addition, Adult Day Services is the most cost-effective option for older adults and people with disabilities, costing substantially less than home care, assisted living or a nursing home.

**GENERAL PROMOTION IDEAS**

Marketing doesn’t just happen. You need to consciously and actively tell people about Adult Day Services. A complete week dedicated to Adult Day Services is the perfect time for a focused marketing push. Consider some of the following ideas for what you can promote during this week:

* Highlight the ways your program prevents social isolation both for participants and family caregivers.
* Share the [**Adult Day Service marketing flyer**](https://www.leadingagemn.org/assets/docs/17293-LeadingAge-AdultDayServices-SellSheet-vF-HI.pdf) to tell people in your community about what you do and who you serve.
* Communicate the COVID protocols you have in place that keep everyone safe.
* Promote the ways in which your center **has pivoted in response to COVID-19** (e.g. new service delivery options, new partnerships, etc.).
* Feature the impact your continued **connection with participants and family caregivers has enhanced their well-being.**
* Consider **highlighting employees and volunteers**who make service delivery possible.
* Interview and share stories with the media**from participants and families** who live better because they participate in Adult Day Services.
* Tell how your center provides **person-centered practices** to help people live independently, stay connected and age well.
* Focus on **family and/or primary caregiver support**;
* Showcase **serving diverse populations** in their community; and
* Conduct a **Facebook campaign** celebrating the people who participate in Adult Day Services.

**CELEBRATION & AWARENESS IDEAS**

* Host a virtual **Adult Day Services Week Celebration Lunch** and invite all participants, family or primary caregivers to participate.
* Invite a **speaker to talk about the value of human connection and wellness** as we age. Invite all participants, family or primary caregivers, as well as stakeholders you are trying to strengthen a relationship with such as social workers, discharge planners and other community-based services.
* Structure activities around prevention of social isolation:
	+ Turn your parking lot into a performance space to host local musicians, entertainers or host your own drive in movie.
	+ Offer special virtual programming focused on:
		- Reducing isolation and loneliness
			* [Connect with pets virtually to reduce isolation and loneliness](https://petstogether.org/book-your-get-together/)
			* [Check out the hundreds of free tours of museums, space, national parks and more](https://mcn.edu/a-guide-to-virtual-museum-resources/)
	+ [Host a virtual fundraiser to help support your operations](https://www.giveforms.com/blog/how-to-host-a-virtual-fundraiser-an-in-depth-guide-for-nonprofits)

**ADVOCACY IDEAS**

**Advocacy**

As providers have faced unprecedented financial pressures due to COVID-19, it is imperative that lawmakers are aware of the impact sustained closure and reduced capacity has had on your operations. Consider connecting with your lawmaker to fill them in on what your participants and family caregivers are experiencing and your ability to continue to offer services in the future.

To find the lawmakers that represent you, visit the [**LeadingAge Minnesota Action Center**](https://actnow.io/GFKpqT7). Enter your address – either at home or at your center – to learn more about connecting with your elected officials.

You’ll find some important data points below, but it is most effective for you to personally share your experiences.

**Your Impact**

During the last 18 months:

* Participants experienced significant loss of cognition, mobility and strength.
* Participants experienced increased levels of depression and anxiety.
* Family caregivers experienced increased feelings of depression, anxiety and stress.

**The ADS Field in MN**

Between March and August 2021

* 15% of providers across the state have closed permanently.
* 50 counties throughout the state do not have an Adult Day Services provider.
* The most significant barriers to resuming services are low reimbursement rates that don’t cover the cost of providing care and workforce challenges.

**SAMPLE MEDIA RELATIONS**

National Adult Day Services Week presents a unique opportunity to engage the media in your work. Consider inviting the media to virtually join an event or activity, or see if they would be interested in profiling your program, a participant or family caregiver. The media will most likely not be aware that September 19-25 is National Adult Day Services week, so don’t wait for them to contact you. Use the following resources to help you personalize a media pitch to your local newspaper or television station.

**Sample Media Advisory**

*A media advisory is typically distributed to local media 2-3 days before the event. A follow-up phone call the day preceding the event is also a good practice.*

WHO: [Name of Invited Guest or Speaker] and Insert Organization Name Adult Day Participants

and Family Caregivers

WHAT: [Name of Event, such as Legislative Tour and Roundtable, Community Conversation on Meaningful Connections, How to Age in Place, Foot Clinic, Intergenerational Story Hour]

WHERE: [Insert Address, City, State and Zip]

WHEN: [Insert Day, Date and Time]

Insert Name will host a Reducing Isolation seminar featuring guest speaker Jane Doe who will share tips, resources and best practices to encourage older adults and people with disabilities to stay independent and connected. Program participants and their families will share their experiences in how they are working to age in their homes. A virtual tour of the program is available following the seminar.

CONTACT: Name, Title, Organization, Marketing/Communications Director, Greenville Adult Day

 email and phone

**Sample Media Pitch Script**

Hi (insert first name),

Social isolation as we age is a growing problem and has become even more prevalent due to COVID-19. (Insert Name of Program) is hosting a program to share new information on how social isolation can impact our health and wellness, as well as resources to help people stay connected and engaged. I invite you to join us (Insert Date, Time and Place) to learn more about this important topic and talk with participants who are seeing positive health outcomes because of their participation in an adult day program. For more information, please contact me at (insert phone) and (insert email).

**Sample News Release**

Use if media did not attend the event; include a photo from the event.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact: Name

DATE email and phone

**REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION THROUGH MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS**

**(Insert Organization Name) Connects Seniors to People, Services and Support**

PRAIRIE HILL – (Insert Date) – Seniors are most at risk for social isolation and loneliness, which can impact physical, emotional and mental well-being. (Insert Organization Name) is helping area seniors reduce social isolation through purposeful activities and meaningful connections at their center in (Insert town).

According to a University of California - San Francisco study, more than 40% of seniors regularly experience loneliness. Loneliness increases mortality by 26% and is as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

“As people age, they lose connection to people and their community, which can lead to social isolation and a higher risk of loneliness,” said Insert Name, Title, Organization. “It is important as we age – and particularly as isolation increases during the COVID-19 pandemic – to maintain and strengthen our ties to people and our community. Insert Organization Name is creating a space that provides meaningful connections to people, activities and purpose for area seniors as we look to tackle the growing concerns and health impacts associated with social isolation and loneliness.”

“Social isolation is associated with poor health status and higher mortality. Through our activities and programs, we are collectively tackling this growing problem and working in partnership with the seniors we serve and their family caregivers to give them a sense of purpose and improve health outcomes.

Some of the activities and programs offered at Insert Organization Name include: List here.

Minnesota’s population age 65 and older will double in the next decade. More and more seniors are expressing a desire to remain in their homes as they age, which creates an even greater need to have supportive services available to help them manage their health and wellness as well as remain connected to people and their community.

Insert Name said Insert Organization Name has invested in programming that helps seniors age well and live fully, but inadequate government reimbursement could hinder access to quality services and support for local seniors. A survey conducted by LeadingAge Minnesota showed that nearly 30 percent of participants rely on the state’s Elderly Waiver program to pay for these valued services.

“Our seniors want to remain in their homes and communities as they age. We are seeing a growing demand for services and supports in a population that often does not have the financial resources to pay for this care,” said Insert Name. “Government funding that helps seniors pay for home and community-based services is insufficient and has not adapted to meet the evolving needs and increased demands for these services.”

“With the threat of coronavirus looming, adult day services have been a lifeline for me. The services I receive at Insert Organization Name help me stay connected to my community and maintain my health. I don’t know what I would do without the services I receive and the help I have from Elderly Waiver. I hope we do everything we can to make sure those who need these services are able to receive them,” said Insert Name.

Insert Name said the Minnesota Legislature should support funding that more closely aligns with the actual cost of providing services and supports to older adults and people with disabilities.

“We know that the relationship between our staff, participants and family caregivers is a key contributor to the health, wellness and quality of life of those we serve,” said Name. “We hope lawmakers take a close look at the benefits and values of Adult Day Services for its fast-growing aging population and understand the impact their decisions at the State Capitol have on the people who rely on these services to help them remain independent and connected.”

**Sample Social Media Ideas**

Don’t underestimate the power of social media in promoting your program. Consider these tips as you develop your communications plan:

* Develop a unique hashtag for your program, such as #noisolation, #stayconnected, #independentaging and use in all posts. Use the official National Adult Day Services week tag: #ADSWEEK2021
* Promote any event you host during Adult Day Services week; tag #ADSWEEK2021
* Post 1-2 photos each day that represent your mission and values, and showcase the variety of people you serve; tag #ADSweek2021
* Tag the media on your Facebook or Twitter posts regarding any celebratory events, community conversations or lawmaker visits you may host during this week. Tag @leadingagemn, too!
	+ **What does Tag the Media Mean:** Your local media (newspaper, television and/or radio station) are all on Facebook or Twitter. Research your local media outlet by simply typing their name into the search tool available on Facebook and Twitter. You will then see their “handle” (ie: @name, such as @leadingagemn or @kare11 or @wctrib). Use that “handle” in your post so your post directly goes into the Facebook or Twitter feed, and is also seen by those who follow them.
* Share and/or retweet the LeadingAge Minnesota Facebook and Twitter posts that will be posted each day (Sept. 19-25) at 12:15.

**Sample Twitter or Facebook Posts**

1: Better Together: This week we celebrate Adult Day Services and the clients/ families they serve. Making a difference. Every day. Even during COVID-19. #ADSWEEK2021 (include a photo)

2. How do we respond to COVID-19? We pivot and get creative! Continuing to serve clients and family caregivers virtually and in person. #ADSWEEK2021 (include a photo)

3. Get to Know Us! We’re Adult Day Services, and we’re making a difference in the lives of seniors and people with disabilities each day. #ADSWEEK2021 (include a photo)

5. Did you know lacking social connections is as damaging to your health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day? Adult Day Service reduces social isolation and increases quality of life. Learn more at (insert your web site). #ADSWEEK2021

(include a photo)

6. More and more people want to remain at home as they age but may need some help. Adult Day Services is the partner you need. Learn more at (insert your website). #ADSWEEK2021 (include a photo)