

# NEWSLTR

A PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS

## AGE-FRIENDLY LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

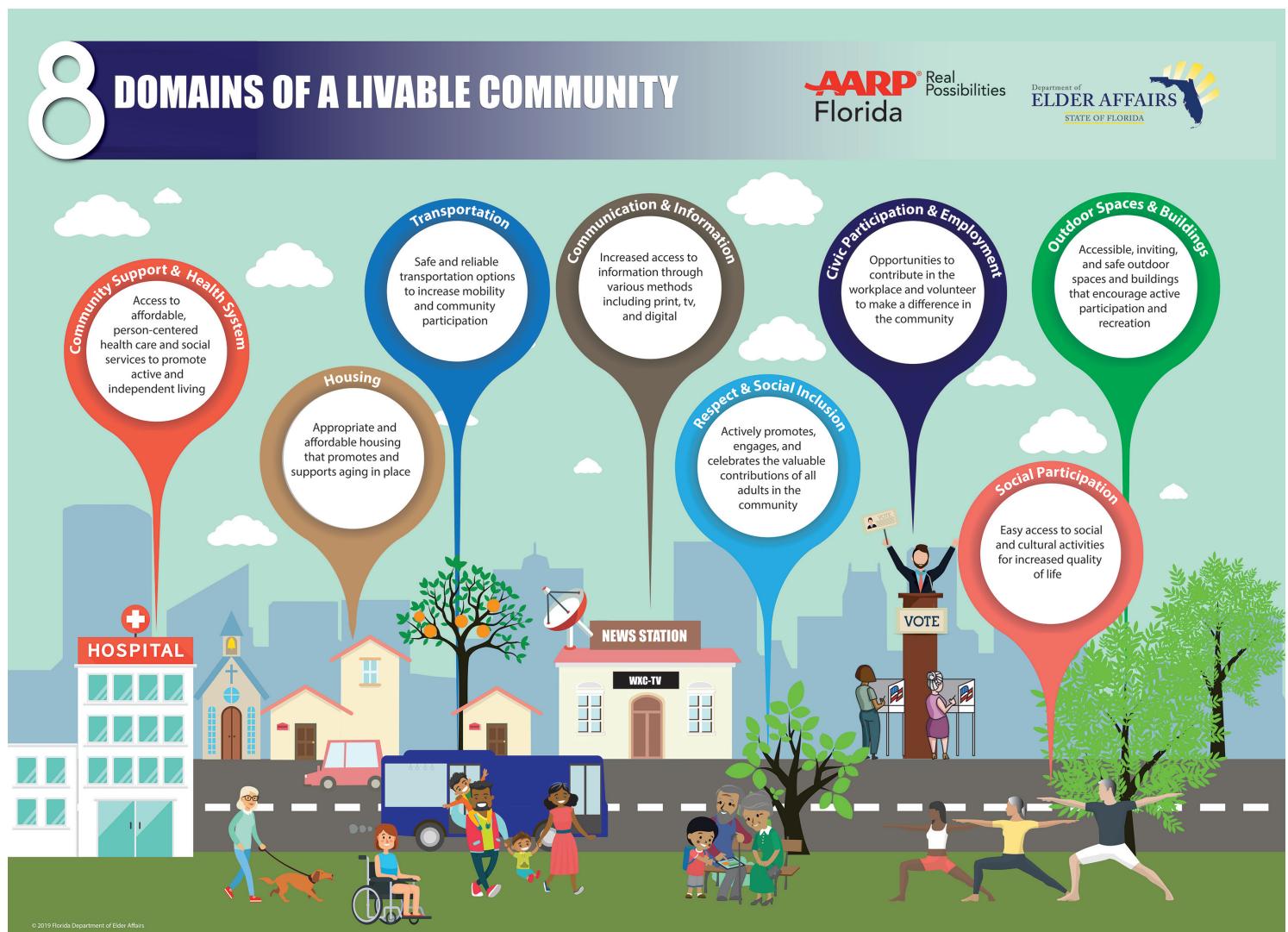
Click [here](#) for more information on Age-Friendly Livable Communities.

## OCTOBER IS NATIONAL PEDESTRIAN MONTH

Learn about the importance of walkability to Age-Friendly communities on page 2.

## SUBSCRIBE AND STAY INFORMED

To subscribe to this newsletter, email us at [LivableFL@elderaffairs.org](mailto:LivableFL@elderaffairs.org).



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AARP Real Possibilities  
Florida

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# October Is National Pedestrian Safety Month

By Florida Department of Transportation

Thousands of people each year are killed on America's roadways, and many of those deaths could have been prevented. In 2018, 17% (6,283) of all roadway-related fatalities were pedestrians. Pedestrians in their early 60's were overrepresented, with 60-to 64-year-olds accounting for 22% of pedestrian fatalities.

To help keep pedestrians safe on America's streets, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has designated October as National Pedestrian Safety Month.

During the month of October NHTSA will join state and local safety partners to distribute messaging about safe walking — for pedestrians and for drivers.

Each week during the month of October, NHTSA and Florida will focus on topics related to pedestrian safety, reminding everyone that we are all pedestrians at some point!

## WEEK 1, OCTOBER 1 – 10:

**Alert Today Florida** will focus on how speed impacts pedestrians. This week will highlight International Walk to School Day on October 7.

## WEEK 2, OCTOBER 11 – 17:

**Alert Today Florida** will focus on distractions with an emphasis on the visually impaired. This week will highlight White Cane Safety Day with an event in Sarasota on October 15.

## WEEK 3, OCTOBER 18 – 24:

National School Bus Safety Week. This week **Alert Today Florida** will focus on illegal school bus passing. A school bus ride-along will be conducted in Melbourne on October 22 to highlight

the challenges school bus drivers face when drivers fail to stop for children to cross safely.

## WEEK 4, OCTOBER 25 – 31:

**Alert Today Florida** will focus on visibility at night. This week Sarasota Police Department will be highlighted as they conduct High Visibility Enforcement details to educate drivers about watching for pedestrians and bicyclists, especially at night, and will provide bicycle lights and lighted armbands to community members who may not have other means of ensuring they are visible when walking and biking at night.

For more information, contact Trenda McPherson at [trenda.mcpherson@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:trenda.mcpherson@dot.state.fl.us).

## What Is the White Cane Law?

Whenever a blind pedestrian is crossing or attempting to cross a public street, the driver of every vehicle approaching the place where the pedestrian is attempting to cross shall bring his or her vehicle to a full stop before arriving at the place of crossing. The pedestrian may be guided by a guide dog or using a cane which is white in color or white-tipped with red.

### TIPS FOR MOTORISTS

- A person using a white cane or guide dog **ALWAYS** has the right-of-way.
- At an intersection always assess the crosswalk before making a right turn.
- Never honk your horn or give blind pedestrians verbal cues.

- Come to a complete stop within five feet of the crosswalk at all stop lights and stop signs, unless there is an advance stop bar (line). Blind pedestrians use audible cues including the sound of your car to determine your presence at an intersection.

- Never stop in the middle of a crosswalk. Stopping in the middle of a crosswalk puts blind pedestrians at risk of moving into traffic to go around your vehicle.

Visit [AlertTodayFlorida.com](http://AlertTodayFlorida.com) for more information and see 2015 Florida Statute—316.1301.





## Age-Friendly Is Walk-Friendly

Do you want your community to be recognized as a Walk-Friendly community?

A Walk-Friendly Community is a city or town that has shown a commitment to improving and sustaining walkability and pedestrian safety through comprehensive programs, plans, and policies. Communities apply to the program to receive recognition in the form of a Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Platinum designation.

Submit an application by December 15 to be recognized for your efforts and receive feedback from the Walk-Friendly Communities team! To learn more, visit Walk-Friendly Communities at [walkfriendly.org](http://walkfriendly.org).

## Community Planning Webinars

Are you interested in transportation and community planning? Sign up for the [TransPlex Web Series](#), hosted by the FL Department of Transportation! Webinars will focus on topics important to Community Planning's role in developing and enhancing communities that benefit everyone.

Contact [planning@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:planning@dot.state.fl.us) or (850) 414-4800 for more information.



### Fridays in October

9:00 to 10:30 a.m.



[www.fdot.gov/planning/transplex](http://www.fdot.gov/planning/transplex)  
No Registration Fee

00:15:00

## 15-Minute Cities are Making a Comeback

[Find out how!](#)

*Illustration by Eniola Odetunde for Axios.*

# AARP Older Adult Response Initiative

Through the [Older Adult Response Initiative](#), the National League of Cities and AARP are working together to provide mayors, local leaders, and community organizations, information and resources to support their COVID-19 response. Data indicates that people age 50 and older, especially those with underlying health conditions, are among some of the most affected by COVID-19. Local leaders are taking action to support older adults in response to the coronavirus pandemic.



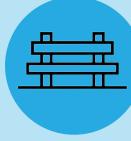
## Respect and Social Inclusion



- Create online programming for schools and senior care facilities on topics of shared interest to students and older adults

- Ask children to make and deliver greeting cards to Meals on Wheels recipients and people in senior care facilities

## Outdoor Spaces and Buildings



- Close streets to motor vehicle traffic so people can safely walk and bicycle while social distancing
- Automate crossing signals so pedestrians won't need to touch the crosswalk buttons

## Social Participation



- Start a daily, community-wide "appreciation clap" for health care workers and first responders

- Create a drive-in theater by projecting a movie onto a wall near a parking lot
- Host a "dragging Main" event so residents can get out and see other people by driving slowly along their community's main roadway
- Ask local entertainers to perform online or outside of their homes

## Civic Participation & Employment



- Connect people with educational and social opportunities through online "virtual" academies

- Promote online volunteerism for advocacy or service campaigns
- Foster local economic assets, such as maker spaces or by adapting commercial properties for needed but temporary uses

## Transportation



- Modify transit schedules, stations and seating to enable social distancing
- Provide specialized services for essential workers
- Suspend transit fares
- Increase paratransit services
- Enlist volunteers to deliver needed items to people who can't leave their homes or use their usual modes of transportation

## Housing



- Provide 24/7 services and shelter for individuals and families experiencing homelessness
- Work with local leaders and legislators to enact and enforce a moratorium on evictions
- Capitalize on relationships with funding sources to provide financial assistance to older adults and others struggling with housing costs
- Create a housing grant program for people with low-incomes and/or a job loss due to COVID-19

## Communication & Information



- Work with businesses and internet service providers to expand access to affordable high-speed internet

- Create a "friendly voice" call program for checking on people who live alone
- Establish information hotlines and distribute "necessity bags" that contain needed supplies

## Emergency Preparedness



- Add safety resources and tips to utility bills and local government mailings

- Create tool kits that can help older adults manage in the event of a power outage, food shortages or other disruptions
- Use or adapt existing emergency plans and resources

## Health Services and Community Supports



- Work with municipal offices, houses of worship and first responders to coordinate deliveries and visits to people who can't go out
- Expand where SNAP (supplemental nutrition assistance program) benefits can be used

- Conduct wellness checks and implement quarantine measures in senior care facilities
- Prioritize assistance to people with underlying medical conditions
- Stock book-swap boxes (such as Little Free Libraries) with needed items

- Improve access to fresh foods from farm stands, farmers' markets or community supported agriculture (CSA) harvests by enabling pre-orders and providing free or low-cost grab-and-go and home delivery options
- Provide vouchers for groceries and household goods to residents in need

**AARP**  
Real Possibilities

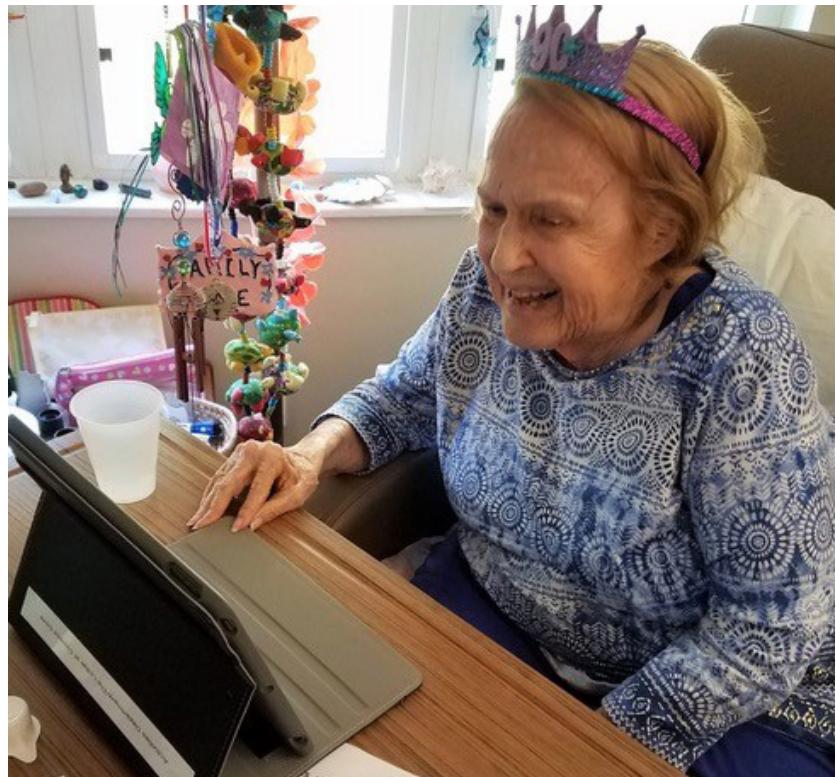


LEARN MORE: [AARP.org/Livable](https://AARP.org/Livable)

## Project VITAL

The Alzheimer's Association has collaborated with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs to keep seniors in Florida connected and engaged with loved ones during social isolation measures. Project VITAL (Virtual Inclusive Technology for All) was created to address the Governor's call to action to combat social isolation within long-term care facilities. Phase I of this innovation consisted of a partnership with the Alzheimer's Association and a contract with the technology company iN2L. In Phase 1, 300 customized tablets were delivered to 156 long-term care facilities throughout Florida along with support services and core programs, as well as training/mentoring through Project ECHO provided by the Alzheimer's Association.

Phase II of Project VITAL included the distribution of another 300 tablets to an additional 150 long-term care facilities, along with the services, programs, and training/mentoring provided to Phase I participants.



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Survey  
DEPARTMENT OF ELDER AFFAIRS

**START** your survey,  
**ASSESS** your risk,  
**FORM** a plan, and  
**EXAMINE** your options.

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# DEPRESSION *Is Not a Normal Part of Growing Older*

## talk it out

If you don't know what you are feeling, it's hard to find a solution. Putting a label on your emotions can help you define a problem and find an answer.

**If you are anxious, depressed, or lonely during social distancing, ask the following questions:**



**Q** Are you able to meet your physical needs, such as food, rent, or medications?

**Q** With the current need for remaining in the home and refraining from social activities, how are you doing with the transition to social distancing?

**Q** Do you feel your use of alcohol, drugs, or other substances has increased since the beginning of the crisis?

**Q** Have you been experiencing any feelings of stress, anxiety, or depression?

**Q** Do you feel capable? Independent? Happy? Do you feel in control of the important aspects of your life?

**Q** When this is over, what are you looking forward to? What sort of plans have you made?

### Talk It Out

- Stay connected to family, friends, and loved ones through phone calls, emails, text messages, and social media.
- Talking to a trained mental health professional can help.
- Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor.
- Call 1-800-662-4357 to talk to a trained mental health professional.

### CREDIBLE RESOURCES

#### Elder Helpline

1-800-963-5337

[Elderaffairs.org](http://Elderaffairs.org)

#### COVID-19 Call Center

1-866-779-6121

[floridahealthcovid19.gov](http://floridahealthcovid19.gov)

#### CDC

1-800-232-4636

[cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)

#### Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

1-877-726-4727

[samhsa.gov](http://samhsa.gov)

#### Suicide Prevention Lifeline

English: 1-800-273-8255

Español: 1-888-628-9454

TTY: 1-800-799-4889

#### Domestic Violence Hotline

1-800-799-7233

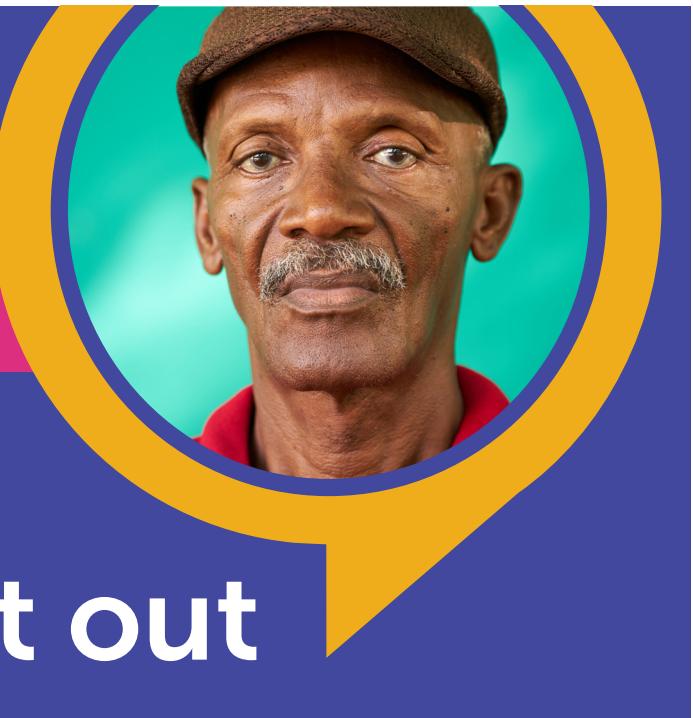
#### Senior Friendship Line

1-800-971-0016

Department of  
**ELDER AFFAIRS**  
STATE OF FLORIDA



**Seek help when needed – If distress impacts activities of daily life for several days or weeks, talk to a clergy member, counselor, doctor, or call 1-800-662-4357.**



# talk it out

## Things you can do to support yourself

**A**

Take care of your yourself. Stretch, take deep breaths, or meditate. Eat healthy, meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep, and avoid alcohol and drugs.

**A**

Take a break from watching, reading, or listening to the stories, including limiting social media.

**A**

Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling. Use video chats to interact with friends and loved ones.

**A**

Unwind and relax. Make time to try to do some other activities you enjoy.

## Talk It Out

- Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.
- Text HOME to 741741 to connect with a Crisis Counselor.
- Call 1-800-662-4357 to talk to a trained mental health professional.



## OH, MOTHER!

While we are all finding our way back to "normal," SAGES Theater is creating a new series of virtual skits that use humor - where it can be found - in the current dilemma of staying safe at home. These short video skits by SAGES can be enjoyed at home to relieve some of the stress. They are funny because they are true.

SAGES first skit in the series, "Oh, Mother!", allows people to recognize themselves or someone they know who is experiencing the anxiety of isolation but are afraid of connecting through unfamiliar video technology (i.e. Zoom). We hope this fun 5-minute video will inspire viewers and older loved ones to adjust to a new normal of social distancing yet stay connected.



Starring Sandi Sunter from SAGES Theater Inc. 



**S\*A\*G\*E\*S**  
*Plays with Purpose*

## 2020 DISASTER RESOURCE GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE

The 2020 *Disaster Resource Guide for Older Adults* is a special edition of the *Elder Update* published by the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA). It has information and guidance older adults need to prepare for hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and other extreme conditions. Free and downloadable, the *Disaster Resource Guide* is one of the many publications that DOEA provides.

To download the *Elder Update* or for more information about DOEA programs and services, visit [elderaffairs.org](http://elderaffairs.org).



The *Elder Update* is a news publication produced by the Department of Elder Affairs. It is distributed for free to more than 50,000 Floridians including seniors, caregivers, policymakers, and elder-care service providers. To subscribe to the *Elder Update*, fill out our online form at [elderaffairs.org](http://elderaffairs.org)

# Durable Medical Equipment Fraud Schemes Are on the Rise

By Anne Chansler, Director of Elder Protection, SHINE Program

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) Serving Health Insurance Needs of the Elderly (SHINE) Program has received multiple reports of Medicare phone scams involving Durable Medical Equipment (DME). The Social Security Act prohibits suppliers of DME from making unsolicited telephone calls to people on Medicare. The reports indicate people have not only received unwanted sales calls, but other people have received unordered supplies including back braces. One person

reported receiving 20 different items from five different companies.

People on Medicare should be aware that DME sent by a supplier needs to be prescribed by their doctor. According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), fraudulent telemarketing and DME supplies contribute to the estimated \$60 billion in fraudulent Medicare payments each year. To help put a stop to unsolicited calls and unordered supplies, you may consider the following actions:

- If a caller pressures you to buy medical equipment, HANG UP.

- If you receive items in the mail you didn't order, refuse the delivery or send them back and report it to your local SHINE Senior Medicare Patrol Office at 1-800-963-5337.

With your help, we can stop Medicare fraud one case at a time.

To receive help from SHINE, please arrange to speak with a trained SHINE counselor at 1-800-96-ELDER (1-800-963-5337). For a listing of SHINE counseling sites and enrollment events, please visit [floridashine.org](http://floridashine.org).

## Now Is the Time to Create a MyMedicare.gov Account

By Mary Spinelli, SHINE Program

With Medicare Open Enrollment beginning on October 15, now would be a great time to create a [MyMedicare.gov](http://MyMedicare.gov) account, if you have not already. During Open Enrollment, SHINE volunteers will be available to help you navigate your Medicare changes. Setting up your [MyMedicare.gov](http://MyMedicare.gov) account ahead of time will allow your SHINE counselor to provide you with faster assistance.

Some benefits of a [MyMedicare.gov](http://MyMedicare.gov) account are:

- See drug prices based on your Medicare plan.
- Compare your current plan to other Medicare plans.
- Store a list of your prescriptions for future use.

To create your account, go to the

[MyMedicare.gov](http://MyMedicare.gov) website and select the "Log In/Create Account." Have the following information ready (for the Medicare recipient):

- Medicare Number – You can find this on your Medicare card or on the letter you received from Social Security after you enrolled.
- Last name.
- Date of birth.
- Current address with ZIP code or city.
- Part A or Part B coverage start date (found on your Medicare card).

To receive assistance from SHINE while setting up your [MyMedicare.gov](http://MyMedicare.gov) account, please arrange to speak with a trained SHINE counselor at 1-800-96-ELDER (1-800-963-5337). For a listing of SHINE counseling sites and enrollment events, please visit [floridashine.org](http://floridashine.org).



## Upcoming Events

### OCTOBER

Virtual Walk to End Alzheimer's

National Community Planning Month

10/15 Medicare Open Enrollment Begins

10/15 White Cane Safety Day

10/30 Florida Department of Transportation Mobility Week

### NOVEMBER

11/1 Daylight Savings Time Ends

11/3 General Election Day

11/11 Veteran's Day

11/26 Thanksgiving Day

### DECEMBER

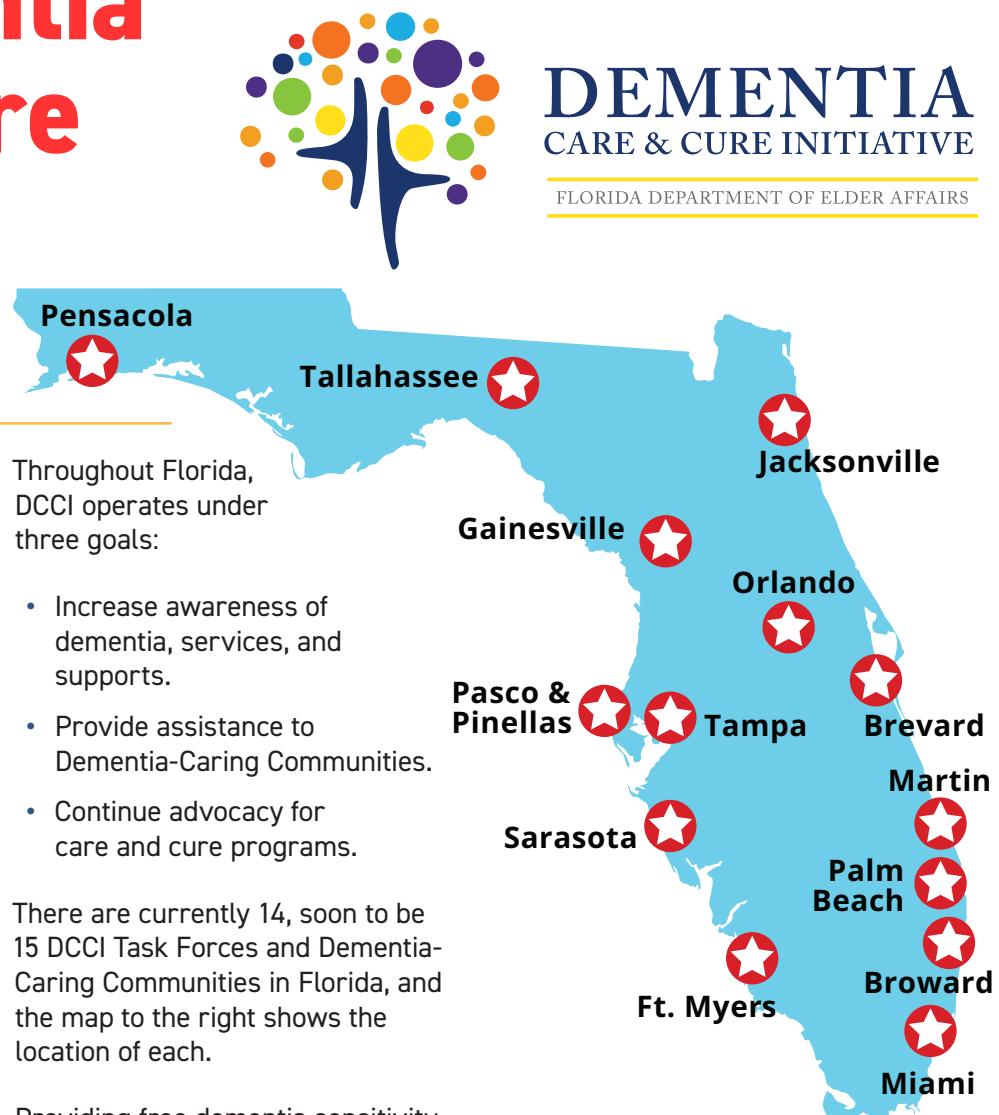
12/15 Application Deadline for Walk Friendly Designation

# The Dementia Care & Cure Initiative Turns 5!

By Laura Copeland  
DCCI Program Coordinator

Happy five-year anniversary to the Dementia Care and Cure Initiative (DCCI)! This initiative was announced in 2015 by the Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA), as a response to the rapidly increasing incidence of dementia in Florida. Florida ranks second in the nation for the number of cases of Alzheimer's, the most common type of dementia, with approximately 580,000 present day. This number does not take any other types of dementia into account, and it is projected to climb to 720,000 by 2025, according to the Alzheimer's Association.

DCCI aims to create communities throughout Florida that are sensitive to, supportive, and aware of the needs of individuals affected by and living with dementia. While this initiative is state-directed, it's community-driven, and the real work of DCCI is carried out by volunteer led and run Task Forces, which operate in Dementia-Caring Communities throughout the state. Each DCCI Task Force works autonomously to create welcoming spaces and make their communities more hospitable to those who are impacted by dementia, and no two Dementia-Caring Communities in Florida look alike.



Providing free dementia sensitivity education to various sectors of communities is a big part of what DCCI Task Forces do, in addition to supporting individuals with dementia and their caregivers in the community. Most of these activities are done in-person, and while some activities are now on hold, during these challenging times with COVID-19 upon us, DCCI Task Forces across the state have adapted with the times and have looked to and found innovative and creative ways to reach their communities.

The Mid-Florida Task Force has rescheduled their Dementia Resource Expo as a virtual three-day

## DEMENITIA CARE & CURE INITIATIVE

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conference that will take place in October. The Broward County Task Force is filming a multitude of educational sessions relating to various aspects of dementia and dementia care, which will get posted on the ADRC Broward website and be available for caregivers and members of the community to learn more. The Jacksonville group is exploring virtual engagement opportunities for people living with dementia and their caregivers through local museums and are exploring virtual education opportunities. DCCI Task Forces in the Big Bend, Sarasota, Lee, and Martin Counties are all offering

# Virtual Dementia Resource Expo

**October 20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**DementiaResourceExpo.org**

**Education • Resources • Outreach**

virtual dementia sensitivity education through various online platforms, and the Central Florida, Brevard, and Pasco-Pinellas groups are formalizing training materials and plans. The Lee County DCCI created an all-inclusive resource document with COVID-19 information, and Sarasota has done something similar, and is turning theirs into a full-fledged website.

Information sharing has been occurring regularly for all DCCI Task Forces throughout Florida, as members are kept abreast of local, state, and national educational webinars and events, along with pertinent information and resources. Task Forces are continuing to meet as regularly scheduled, but in a virtual manner.

Through meetings, most DCCI Task Forces throughout Florida have now connected with and are building fruitful relationships with the [African American Alzheimer's Caregiver](#)

**FREE event**

**Live online presentations**



**Daily sessions from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm**

**For more information or to register visit our website**

*Presented by the Mid-Florida Dementia Care and Cure Initiative, Elder Options, and the UF Health Memory Disorder Clinic*

**DEMEN**  
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**ELDER** OPTIONS

**UF** Health  
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NEUROLOGICAL DISEASES

[Training and Support 2 \(ACTS 2\) Project](#), as this program now has a statewide virtual reach. Social media usage has increased by DCCI Task Forces that have social media accounts, and the Northwest Florida group is in the process of creating a Facebook page.

A resource that was finalized and is available for all DCCI Task Forces to use throughout the state stemmed from a collaborative effort between the Florida State University College of Medicine, Department of Geriatrics' [REACH Program](#), the DCCI of the Big Bend, and [Aging Advocate](#). They created a 22-minute [video](#) to educate first responders and family care partners. This video explains the basics of dementia, communication tips and supportive interventions, critical thinking strategies, and ways that families can be prepared when crisis situations occur. This content is especially relevant during times of restricted support for persons with

dementia due to COVID-19.

Thank you to everyone who is involved with DCCI across the state, and for keeping on throughout COVID-19. Your unwavering support and commitment to this initiative is truly helping and making a difference in the lives of those impacted by dementia throughout Florida.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to [DCCI@elderaffairs.org](mailto:DCCI@elderaffairs.org) for more information or to learn more about DCCI.