

# THE NEWS

Coalition for Older Adults' Social Connectedness

January 2022

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



- [Is Social Disconnection Comparable to Smoking?](#) by Julianne Holt-Lunstad at TEDxBYU
- [Loneliness and Social Isolation: Podcast with Carla Perissinotto and Ashwin Kotwal](#) on GeriPal
- [Policy Recommendations Made to Biden Administration](#) (read on for more)
- [Connect+You](#) is scheduled for 1/25 at 10am PT
- Funding Opp 3/15: [NIH Social Disconnection & Suicide Risk](#)
- Funding Opp 3/1: [RRF Research Grants](#)

## CLINICIAN'S CORNER with Dr. Carla Perissinotto

Hello friends and colleagues. In an effort to keep us connected, we aim to send this newsletter out on a regular basis. We are hoping to use this space to share some insights

on recent literature that may be relevant to the work that we all do. With that in mind, I wanted to highlight 3 articles that were published this fall and that may be of interest to all of us.



1. [Kotwal A, et al. The epidemiology of social isolation and loneliness among older adults during the last years of life](#)

**Key Points:** Social isolation and loneliness affects 1 in 4 adults at the end of life. Rates are higher in low income adults and those with impairments.

**Why does this matter?** Social isolation and loneliness are not routinely asked about in those with serious illness. We may be missing opportunities to improve quality of life at the end of life.

2. [Shah SGS et al. Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Digital Technology Interventions to Reduce Loneliness in Older Adults: Systematic Review and Meta-analysis](#)

**Key Points:** This is a meta-analysis (reviewed 6 studies out of 4939 screened articles) with adults (average age 74-78), that showed no evidence for digital technology interventions (DTI) to improve loneliness.

**Why does this matter?** There is a big movement for more DTI for loneliness but thus far the data are inconclusive. However, "DTI" is defined broadly and this needs to be looked at in more specific populations and broken out by type of intervention.

3. [Kahlon MK et al. Effect of Layperson-Delivered, Empathy-Focused Program of Telephone Calls on Loneliness, Depression, and Anxiety Among Adults During the COVID-19 Pandemic A Randomized Clinical Trial](#)

**Key Points:** Telephone calls by lay people can improve loneliness for older adults (age 65) over a 4 week period.

**Why does this matter?** There has been an increase in the creation of telephone support programs. What is needed now is knowing if the effect lasts greater than 4 weeks and what happens when the phone calls stop.



## Member Highlight

Front Porch programs, Well Connected Español and Creative Spark, bring you the fifth annual virtual Creative Aging Symposium. This year's theme, Rooted in Belonging, explores how cultivating roots of belonging - in your surroundings, a phase of life, within your spiritual compass - unlocks resiliency, our ability to transform and reinvent. Two symposiums held simultaneously in English and Spanish feature special musical performances, inspirational speakers, and interactive experiences that will spark new ideas or powerful reminders about how we belong to ourselves and others.

[www.creativeagingsymposium.org](http://www.creativeagingsymposium.org)

We want to highlight your org in future newsletters! [Submit your info here.](#)

## Coalition to End Social Isolation & Loneliness (CESIL)

### Policy Recommendations Made to Biden Administration

On January 15, CESIL submitted a letter to the Biden Administration outlining the key policies we recommend them to apply within the first 100 days of the new Administration. Specifically, the letter emphasized the need for a national awareness campaign.

- Develop a national strategy to combat social isolation and loneliness for all Americans;
- Create an Inter-Departmental and Agency National Coordinator of Social Isolation and Loneliness to lead and coordinate administrative efforts,
- Identify and leverage current federal and state resources, and make recommendations to cabinet officials and the White House aimed to reduce stigma and encourage social connection; and,
- Provide funding for an HHS-led national public education campaign to raise the visibility of the crisis of social isolation and loneliness and develop provider-focused education initiatives.



**Thanks to the [Joseph & Vera Long Foundation](#) for their support of the Coalition for Older Adults' Social Connectedness.**

This newsletter is intended for individuals who want to stay informed on social isolation, loneliness, and social connectedness efforts in Northern CA. If that's not you, feel free to unsubscribe [here](#).