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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ELDERHELP EXPANDS OUTREACH AND SUPPORT TO SENIORS IN NEED

Visit www.elderhelpofsandiego.org/COVID-19

San Diego, CA — During the COVID-19 crisis, ElderHelp is committed to sustaining the health and well-being of San Diego County seniors, especially those who are isolated or home bound with limited access to food, medical services, and family support. During this incredibly challenging time, ElderHelp staff and vetted volunteers have mobilized to provide seniors with the support they need to shelter in place.



Currently providing a lifeline for more than 800 seniors, plus hundreds of callers from the community at large, we've experienced a 140% increase in client interactions, and a 123% increase in seniors served. In response to stay-at-home mandates and the high demand, we have completely revamped our service delivery model to not only keep seniors safe, but our staff and older volunteers as well. The greatest demand right now is help with urgent food and supplies, easing financial concerns, and providing supportive housing resources. Here is an update:



Combatting Food Insecurity: Vetted volunteers and staff are delivering fresh groceries and supplies to doorsteps to maintain health and nutrition. We are collecting essential items - either from food distribution sites, grocery stores, or local restaurants - and then delivering to seniors. We're also providing assistance with no-contact grocery shopping and delivery without entering the home, as well as online shopping. Working closely with the Jacobs & Cushman Food Bank, and other local agencies, we have turned our office into a food pantry to have additional resources for the most vulnerable.

Addressing isolation: Friendly visits—We have tripled our check-in calls and friendly visiting outreach. Seniors who are matched with volunteers continue to receive encouraging phone calls and conversations, allaying fears and anxiety and alerting staff of potential serious medical concerns. We have asked that our over-65 years of age volunteers remain home, but they continue to stay engaged by with telephonic friendly visits.



Protecting Seniors: Unfortunately fraudulent activity and scams have escalated. ElderHelp remains vigilant about vetting every volunteer, exercising health and safety protocols, and educating seniors about how they can safely access resources and support.

Mobilizing the Community-- To meet increased demand, we've scheduled weekly online Volunteer Orientations each Wednesday. Community members can register at www.bit.ly/Volunteer4EH or email volunteers@elderhelpofsandiego.org for more information.

Helping Seniors Shelter in Place—Donate to www.bit.ly/EHdonate2seniors Donations will be directly applied to programs that support those affected by COVID-19 restrictions and mandates and help them recover from its impact.

Executive Director, Deb Martin, is available for teleconference, quotes, and in-person interviews. Contact dmartin@elderhelpofsandiego.org or 619-284-9281.



About ElderHelp

Since 1973, ElderHelp has been providing San Diego seniors with affordable, personalized services and information to help them remain independent and live with dignity in their own homes. The nonprofit organization impacts the lives of more than 6,500 seniors and their families each year by providing vital services such as transportation, advocacy, home safety management and support for family caregivers.