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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GRANT EXPANDS ELDERHELP'S OUTREACH AND SUPPORT TO SENIORS IN NEED
\$100,000 from The San Diego Foundation COVID-19 Community Response Fund with support from SDG&E
Visit www.elderhelpofsandiego.org/COVID-19
Photo link: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/vzdy9LFzMsZeXLDt6>

San Diego, CA — COVID-19 has impacted all of our lives, but none more than seniors. With 95% of COVID-19 deaths over the age of 60, seniors remain the most vulnerable and isolated population. Mandated to shelter in place since mid-March, there is no end in sight. During this incredibly challenging time, ElderHelp has experienced a 773% increase in requests for services. The mission to support seniors living independently in their homes has never been more critical.

Thanks to a \$100,000 grant from The San Diego Foundation—funded in part by SDG&E, ElderHelp has mobilized staff and engaged vetted volunteers to provide seniors with the support they need to shelter in place in their own cherished homes. The funds will be used to deliver fresh groceries and household supplies to the doorsteps of local seniors to maintain health and nutrition, making an average of 522 deliveries each week. Collecting essential items either from food distribution sites like the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank, grocery stores, or local restaurants, ElderHelp has converted its office space into a food pantry. Staff and volunteers will sort and package the goods to deliver to community members.



Currently providing a lifeline for more than 880 seniors, plus hundreds of callers from the community at large, ElderHelp is committed to meeting individual needs and providing vital services. In response to stay-at-home mandates and high demand, they have completely revamped their service delivery model to not only keep seniors safe, but ensure the well-being of staff and older volunteers as well. According to ElderHelp CEO Deb Martin, “the greatest demand right now is help with urgent food, medication, and supplies, but we’re also working to address isolation, depression, and ease financial concerns. This grant allows us to meet the increasing demand and support the community at large.”

“With the COVID crisis extending even longer, the number and the magnitude of the challenges can be a cause for despair for our most vulnerable populations,” said Eugene “Mitch” Mitchell, vice president of state governmental and external affairs at SDG&E. “Pulling together as a community right now is of the utmost importance to meet the needs and fill the gaps created by the pandemic.”



To address isolation, ElderHelp provides 90+ check-in and friendly visit calls each day. Seniors are matched with volunteers who engage in encouraging conversation, allaying fears and anxiety and alerting staff of potentially serious medical concerns.

For those with essential healthcare needs, ElderHelp provides safe, reliable transportation to doctor's appointments and delivery of prescriptions. KN95 masks are issued to all volunteer drivers and clients.



“During this challenging time, San Diegans are going above and beyond to support their neighbors, uplift the needy and give to families hit hardest by COVID-19,” expressed Mark Stuart, President & CEO of The San Diego Foundation. “Every day, we are seeing the needs of our local communities grow, particularly among our oldest residents, and we hope that the generosity of San Diegans will continue to grow with them.”

ElderHelp's COVID-19 Emergency Support initiative addresses the needs of San Diego's 460,000+ seniors. As our community comes together to support this population through the pandemic, ElderHelp is committed to providing vital services that support safety, health, and well-being of all.

About ElderHelp

Since 1973, ElderHelp has been providing San Diego seniors with 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. Executive Director, Deb Martin, is available for teleconference, quotes, and in-person interviews. Contact dmartin@elderhelpofsandiego.org or 619-284-9281.

About The San Diego Foundation

The San Diego Foundation inspires enduring philanthropy and enables community solutions to improve quality of life in our region. For more than 45 years, The Foundation and our donors have granted more than \$1.2 billion to support nonprofit organizations and strengthen our San Diego community. Learn more at SDFoundation.org, and consider a donation to the [San Diego COVID-19 Community Response Fund](#), helping nonprofits and San Diegans affected by the coronavirus pandemic.

About San Diego Gas & Electric

SDG&E is an innovative San Diego-based energy company that provides clean, safe and reliable energy to better the lives of the people it serves in San Diego and southern Orange counties. The company is committed to creating a sustainable future by providing its electricity from renewable sources; modernizing natural gas pipelines; accelerating the adoption of electric vehicles; supporting numerous non-profit partners; and, investing in innovative technologies to ensure the reliable operation of the region's infrastructure for generations to come. SDG&E is a subsidiary of Sempra Energy (NYSE: SRE). For more information, visit SDGNews.com or connect with SDG&E on Twitter (@SDGE), Instagram (@SDGE) and Facebook.