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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ELDERHELP'S HOMESHARE – A NON-PROFIT ROOMMATE MATCHING SERVICE THAT SUPPORTS SENIORS – EXPANDS TO SERVE PARTICIPANTS THROUGHOUT SAN DIEGO COUNTY

The program helps prevent senior homelessness and keeps seniors in their homes longer

San Diego, CA — ElderHelp's unique housing solution, HomeShare, is now available to all of San Diego County. HomeShare maximizes existing housing stock by matching seniors who want to remain in their homes with adults of all ages who need housing. The roommate matching service is a simple solution that benefits seniors and those seeking affordable housing.

In San Diego County, seniors are becoming unhoused at an alarming and rapidly increasing rate due to economic impacts and the lack of affordable housing. 43% of the more than 2,000 homeless seniors are experiencing homelessness for the first time. As more people find themselves without housing and shelter, further pressure is placed on limited housing resources. Affordable housing units are expensive and cannot be built quickly enough to meet the need. Programs, such as HomeShare that promote housing stability and use existing housing stock play a critical role in addressing San Diego's housing crisis.

A recent HomeShare participant shared that her experience has been "just amazing and I could not be any happier in life right now. You matched me with someone that has a similar lifestyle...gets to bed early and gets up early. The extra money helps, so I don't have to eat rice and beans all the time. I'm now able to buy nutritious food. I was at the point where I was thinking about having to sell my home and now, I don't have to."

ElderHelp's HomeShare is more than a roommate matching service. The program improves mental health, brings a sense of safety, offers mutual support, and provides both roommates with considerable cost savings. HomeShare participants share that one of the best benefits is peace of mind, knowing there is more than one person in the home. 80% of program participants say they feel safer, and 90% report feeling less lonely and isolated because of HomeShare.

ElderHelp's HomeShare is offered either through a Rental Exchange – home providers supplement their incomes by renting out a spare bedroom – or a Service Exchange, or a combination of both. Service Exchange is an option for home providers to receive assistance in exchange for a room, including housekeeping, cooking, transportation, grocery shopping, errands, yard work, or other support. For older adults or disabled homeowners, the program provides additional income or assistance with household chores that may otherwise be unaffordable. It allows them to stay in the comfort of their home instead of considering a costlier assisted living arrangement.

“ElderHelp has a deep understanding of the challenges seniors face obtaining and preserving affordable housing,” says Executive Director and CEO Deborah Martin. “Every day, we hear stories from seniors throughout San Diego County highlighting how housing costs are causing extreme financial distress. Shared housing plays an important role in helping to prevent homelessness and keeping seniors in their homes longer.”

In addition to making housing matches, ElderHelp provides housing consultations and referrals to those needing affordable housing. The organization’s new Housing Support Fund, created from an SDG&E grant, helps to prevent senior homelessness and support stable housing, assists with moving expenses, and reduces other barriers seniors face when relocating.

About ElderHelp

For 50 years, 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 shared housing program, HomeShare, has been in operation for 30 years. During HomeShare’s tenure, ElderHelp has made over 1,000 HomeShare matches for over 1,800 people. The nonprofit organization impacts the lives of more than 7,000 seniors and their families each year by providing vital services such as transportation, advocacy, home safety management, and support for family caregivers.

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