



**NEWBRIDGE**

Your Connection to Successful Aging

**NewBridge Madison  
Helping Older Adults  
During COVID-19**

# NewBridge Madison

**NewBridge Madison opened for business January 1, 2019**

**NewBridge Madison resulted from the merger of the four Madison Senior Coalitions** (East Madison Monona Coalition of the Aging, North/ Eastside Senior Coalition, South Madison Elderly Coalition, West Madison Senior Coalition). Each coalition had existed for over 40 years

**NewBridge Madison** is a private non-profit serving older adults in Madison and Monona

**Mission:** Providing older adults a bridge to successful aging

**Vision:** A community where all older adults live their best life.

# Programs and Services

Case Management

Caregiver Support

Cultural Diversity

Food Bridge Delivery

Home Chore

Loan Closet

Mental Health Resources (2021)

Nutrition Meal Sites/Dietitian

Senior Activities

Volunteer Guardian and Representative Payee



**2,119 Helpline Calls**

**1625 Northport Drive #125, Madison, WI 53704 | (608) 512-0000 | [www.newbridgemadison.org](http://www.newbridgemadison.org)**





**22,685 Take-out Meals**

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## 3,052 Food Pantry Box Deliveries

## March 2020 *Concerns and Trends with Clients and Participants*

- Many calls of desperation, panic and concern.
- Worried about catching the virus due to their age and the severity of their health problems.
- Frustration with canceled services and inability to access routine needs (i.e. blood draws/labs for medical conditions).
- Anxiety building as more services are shut down. COVID adding stress and challenges for those struggling with chronic pain and mental health issues. One client has pre-existing anxiety and depression and COVID has caused her anxiety to increase significantly.
- Feeling very isolated. Senior apartment buildings closed to the public and limited contact allowed between residents.
- Fear of being forgotten about. Expressed gratitude that NewBridge is looking out for them. Appreciate NewBridge, Food Bridge program and Necessity Kit deliveries. Clients impressed by the amount and variety of food. It makes them feel secure they have food in the home.





## April 2020

- Many are frustrated because they can't see their doctors for appointments. One client needs a prescription for diabetic shoes, but will have to wait 2 months. Another developed a serious foot infection but could not get it treated and now has to get the foot amputated.
- An older adult was diagnosed with COVID-19 on March 16th. It was very difficult for her to talk due to breathing issues. Despite all of this, she told me that she's "one of the lucky ones."
- A homeless older adult was very grateful to be receive housing in a hotel.
- Communication has been tough over the phone when trying to help older adults. Many have a hard time hearing over the phone and it makes it difficult to help them with paperwork.
- A client with chronic depression was in tears because she hasn't seen her grandkids in a month and her husband has Alzheimer's and she is dealing with extra behaviors related to not having activities or visitors to occupy him.



## April 2020 Continued

- Doing second round of check-in calls (began calls mid-March). Older adults are really appreciating the calls. They are lonely and really want to talk.
- Afraid to be around family and friends for fear of catching COVID. Makes it difficult to get the essential things they need.
- Needing reassurance that things will be okay, feeling lots of anxiety. Some with mental health issues are experiencing a spike in symptoms.
- A significant increase in calls for food and an immediate need to obtain food. One older adult had ZERO food left. Another received a Food Bridge and a Necessity Kit delivery for the first time and she was ecstatic!! She stated it is was more than she “could ever want.”





## May 2020

- Older adults are suffering from lack of hands on services. Terrified to go to the doctor's office, electing to risk their health. Transitions to long term care have continued without face-to-face meetings.
- In desperate need of in-home cleaning help with home chore program on hold.
- Appreciate assistance with the challenges of getting needs met during COVID.
- Some older adults lack of access/knowledge of "online" technology is an obstacle.
- Memory loss issues make communication very difficult.
- Some are concerned receiving their stimulus check, others concerned about finding housing.





## May 2020 Continued

- Calls to older adults are lasting for long periods; they are so isolated and lonely. Still a lot of isolation, depression, and anxiety.
- NewBridge started a Bridge Buddy program to provide volunteers for friendly conversations.
- Some are confused about the regulations for the stay-at-home order.
- A NewBridge client was one of the first COVID-19 deaths in Dane County.
- Continued frustration as they're not able to see loved ones and restricted to their homes or apartments.
- Still a great need for Food Bridge and Necessity Kits. NewBridge now providing curbside pick-up meals and mask deliveries.



## June 2020

- Many are still reluctant to go out even with some things opening back up.
- Some older adults are comfortable asking neighbors/others in close proximity to help. Some visiting with family outside.
- Some in-home cleaning services open again. Client thankful for the cleaning service provided through NewBridge.
- NewBridge “We miss you” yard signs appreciated by older adults.





## June 2020 Continued

- Mixed feelings about the protests during COVID-19.
- NewBridge beginning some Zoom programming. Many do not have computer access.
- Lack of foot care services has become a significant issue.
- It remains difficult to assist clients without being able to see them in person, or visit them in the hospital.





## July 2020

- Many continue to play it safe. Wary to go to the store, medical clinics and taking public transportation. One client has not left the house since March 14th and does not plan on leaving until there is a vaccine.
- Staff are assisting with technology instruction so they can attend online telehealth counseling and medical appointments.
- Worried about declining physically because they are not active due to the pandemic. Some are taking walks inside or outside of their homes to get exercise.



## July 2020 Continued

- Continue to be thankful for check-ins.
- Continued high demand for Food Bridge, take-out meal sites, and necessity kits. Increase in request for masks with the mask mandate.
- Some are doing better but others are experiencing difficulty with continued isolation and lack of social opportunities. Longing for hugs and handshakes when it is safe to do so.
- More older adults are attending our weekly NewBridge Zoom activities.





## August 2020

- Increased number of older adults struggling with mental health during the pandemic. Isolation has increased one client's dementia symptoms tenfold and caused another to begin hallucinating. Many have increased anxiety about getting sick or hospitalized and are being careful and limiting their exposure to other people.
- Staff holding some outdoor home visits out of necessity.
- Some are coping okay, getting back to in person medical visits and are learning to use the Dane County Call Center for rides.
- Continued difficulty setting things up remotely/virtually for services needed.





## August 2020 Continued

- Older adults continue to appreciate staff check-in calls, Food Bridge, the curbside pick-up meals and Bridge Buddies.
- Continued frustration about missing social activities and wanting to socialize, but also understanding that safety is important.
- Frustration that some apartment complexes are still not allowing visitors.
- More are in need of computers or in person instruction. Older adults without access to technology are having a more difficult time feeling connected than others, socially.
- Increased demand for in-home cleaning services.



## September 2020

- Continue to be grateful for check in calls, Food Bridge deliveries, Bridge Buddies and curbside pick-up meals.
- A lot of requests for needing in-home services whether to help with cleaning or maintenance.
- Fear of leaving their apartment because of COVID and heightened racial tensions. Feeling unsafe as a person of color.
- Clients continue to struggle with lack of socialization especially in their living communities.





## September 2020 Continued

- Caregivers are feeling the stress/burden of having family members so isolated.
- An overall continued exhaustion from older adults with everything going on in the world.
- Staff seeing more clients in person.
- Clients continue to share anxiety about catching the virus.
- Seeing a continued decline in mental health, memory and motivation.



## October 2020

- Continued struggle to conduct business over the phone with those who have hearing loss, or are not comfortable on the phone, taking more time to complete paperwork.
- Continued appreciation for check-in calls, Food Bridge, necessity kits, meals and curbside pick-up meals. One client has connected with Bridge Buddies (both as a Buddy and as a recipient of a Buddy), as well as the Edgewood Pen Pal Project.
- Mental health issues continue to rise.
- Increase in calls regarding financial issues.





## October 2020 Continued

- A number of NewBridge clients have come down with COVID-19 and are not doing well.
- Fearful of winter and increased isolation.
- More cautious of movement due to high numbers of COVID-19. Limiting activities.
- Some clients are challenging to get in touch with, not answering the phone.
- The election and flu shots are on the minds of older adults.
- Many are needing cleaning assistance. Some are uncomfortable with someone cleaning their home, not knowing if they have been exposed to COVID.



## November 2020

- Many will not be spending the upcoming holidays with their loved ones. Some may have a Zoom call instead.
- High volume of calls to sign up for our Thanksgiving meal delivery.
- Expressing concerns about social isolation despite having phone contact with family and friends.
- Continued appreciation for Food Bridge.
- Experiencing stress and anxiety due to the election process.
- Experiencing anxiety regarding medical benefits.





**Thank you to our  
amazing volunteers  
and business partners  
for your assistance  
during COVID-19!**

