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Maintaining social and emotional wellbeing among older adults during periods of increased social isolation: lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic [dataset]

Brigitta Scarfe Edith Cowan University

Claire Adams Edith Cowan University

Eyal Gringart Edith Cowan University

Daniel McAullay Edith Cowan University

Moira Sim Edith Cowan University

See next page for additional authors

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Author(s) Brigitta Scarfe, Claire Adams, Eyal Gringart, Daniel McAullay, Moira Sim, and Natalie Strobel

Coping during social isolation

Through a survey and interviews, older adults in Western Australia shared how they coped during the pandemic.

* Many older adults were resilient:

6390 of the older people we surveyed were only slightly affected by COVID-19.

down here. [During lockdown],
most people rang other
people to see that they were
okay too, because that's the
kind of community that it is...
[and] the priest was always
available [during lockdown].

Close community networks were an important source of support.

(1 haven't experienced any [anxiety around COVID-19], and I didn't know any from other people. It's just a matter of these things occur, and you have to adapt and move on, that's what older people have had to do in our lives, adapt and move on.))

Digital and online technologies (e.g., social media, zoom) were helpful for some people but not for others

 Helped me Keep in touch with family and friends

- Saved travel time

 Can't afford, don't have access, don't trust, and can't use social media and zoom.

Two in five only had two or fewer people to chat with.

*However, sometimes it was really difficult:

Barriers to accessing support services include:

the belief that
 should be able to
 cope on my own'

- a preference for face-to-face care

Nearly one in five older adults said they chose not to access services during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown even though they would have liked to.





Additional resources:

Association for Culturally Appropriate Services Mobile: 0413 619 748 Web: www.afcas.net Email: info@afcas.net

Council on the Ageing WA Phone: 9472 0104 (Tues & Wed) Web: www.cotawa.org.au Email: policy@cotawa.org.au

Delivering care during social isolation

During the COVID-19 pandemic, organisations like yours have been taking care of isolated and vulnerable older adults in the community.



Training in use of Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) and hygiene measures.

*Here's what you said worked:



Providing new services for clients, such as domestic assistance and shopping and delivery.



 Providing easy-tounderstand information
 Staying in touch
 through phone calls and postcards.



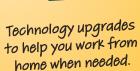
Networking with other organisations to share ideas.



Self care and checking in on co-workers



More time in advance to help clients get comfortable using technology.



*Here's what you said you needed:



More convenient funding in times of crises to adapt and change services.

Our clients say "We can survive if the dishes are not done or if the floor is dirty, but we cannot survive without talking with anyone for weeks."

That's very depressing and that's very sad.

It's more internal than external. We are caring for our community and the businesses and everything else, but also self care and how we can help each other to do more for that. updating the organisation's website and social media pages with advice on current restrictions, how to get medication, and useful phone numbers.





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