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## **Program helping older adults live independently coming to Michigan this Spring/Summer**

WHEAT RIDGE, Colo. – Soon, seniors in Michigan will have better access to care and assistance as Senior Reach begins training and implementation in 12 sites across the state in May. The \$4.2 million grant has been provided by the Michigan Health Endowment Fund to help improve the health and wellness of seniors.

Senior Reach is a nationally-recognized health program that identifies and assists older adults who are isolated and struggling to maintain independence. From a community perspective, it is a cost-effective way to support these individuals with services, enabling them to live comfortably at home.

At the core of its solution, the Senior Reach program utilizes community education and outreach to identify isolated and at-risk older adults. Senior Reach staff trains community members who interact with these adults to recognize the warning signs of those who may be struggling. (For example: a postal worker who may notice mail has not been checked for days at an older adult's home.) Once trained, these community members become powerful allies for vulnerable older adults in the community.

After the older adults are referred to Senior Reach for services, they are screened via telephone and then connected to community services that will meet their needs. This can be anything ranging from coordinating transportation to the supermarket to setting up short-term behavioral health services. The goal is to ensure older adults have access to the support and treatment they need to maintain their wellbeing and independence.

The counties are able to implement Senior Reach as part of a state grant through the Michigan Health Endowment Fund. Training for the program will begin in April, with sites offering services after training is completed.

The twelve sites include:

### Urban

- Wayne County (2) – Services to Enhance Potential; Northeast Guidance Center
- Oakland County - Easter Seals of Michigan
- Kent/Barry Counties - Easter Seals of Michigan

### Suburban/Rural

- Lapeer County CMH
- Livingston County CMH
- Northern Lakes CMH (Crawford, Grand Traverse, Leelanau, Missaukee, Roscommon and Wexford Counties)
- Ottawa County CMH

### Rural

- Copper Country CMH (Keweenaw, Houghton, Baraga, and Ontonagon Counties)
- Montcalm County CMH
- St. Joseph County CMH
- Van Buren County CMH

**About Senior Reach**

Senior Reach is a nationally-recognized evidence-based program that identifies isolated, at-risk older adults living in the community. It is a population-based solution that connects them to community services so they can live independently at home. For more information about Senior Reach, visit [www.seniorreach.org](http://www.seniorreach.org).