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Colorado-based program to begin implementation in Michigan with funding from \$4.2 million grant

WHEAT RIDGE – Senior Reach, a partnership between Jefferson Center for Mental Health, Seniors' Resource Center and Mental Health Partners, will begin serving Michigan this spring as part of a \$4.2 million state grant through the Michigan Health Endowment Fund. The grant is provided specifically to help improve 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.

"We are thrilled to be expanding into Michigan," Liz Smith, director of older adult services at Jefferson Center said. "Senior Reach is the perfect solution to the problems the Michigan Health Endowment Fund is trying to solve. By giving community members the tools to support one another, we open up multiple new avenues of assistance and resources."

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.

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.