

JUNE/JULY 2022



Choose Well

Member Newsletter

SUMMER ISSUE



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MEMBER COUNT

By HHSA region, this is how Choose Well membership is distributed countywide.

HHSA Region	Total in Region
Central	13
East	26
North Central	43
North Coastal	39
North Inland	64
South	17
County Total	202



County of San Diego COVID-19 Updates for Older Adults

The County has released important COVID-19 updates regarding prevention and treatment for older adults and at risk populations. Specifically, a new COVID-19 prevention tool is available for those with moderate to severe immunosuppression, or those who have had a severe allergic reaction to the vaccine.

Evusheld is now available to San Diegans as a prevention tool. Evusheld is a monoclonal antibody injection which reduces relative risk of getting COVID by up to 77%. People who are eligible include those who:

- Are receiving active cancer treatment
- Received an organ transplant and are taking medication to suppress the immune system
- Have moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Have advanced or untreated HIV infection
- Take high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress their immune response

For more details, visit: content.govdelivery.com



North County Parkinson's Support Group Presentation: **Housing and Care Options for Older Adults**

Choose Well was invited to speak at the North County Parkinson's Support Group held on April 14, 2022. Many older adults, friends, and family attended the event to learn about the topic, "Housing and Care Options for Older Adults."

Attendees were incredibly engaged, asking many questions after the presentation, and already requested Choose Well to speak at another support group soon!



Choose Well Advisory Meeting: Finding a Safe Assisted Living Facility

On May 24, 2022, Choose Well hosted the first in-person advisory workshop since the pandemic. It was exciting to be able to host Choose Well members, colleagues, and older adults since these advisory meetings have been held via Zoom for the past few years. Additionally, the workshop was also translated into Spanish for the first time to accommodate Spanish-speaking attendees.

The workshop was free and open to the public. One of Sarsis' program partners, Congregational Tower, graciously opened their community room for everyone to attend. Entitled, "Finding a Safe Assisted Living Facility," the workshop educated attendees on facility safety, compliance, and common issues residents face in assisted living.

Twenty-four people attended and were highly engaged with the guest speaker about the topic. Some older adults asked questions about resident rights because they are concerned about losing their rights when they go to a facility. Others asked about emotional abuse and how often facilities are audited. These very concerns are

exactly why Choose Well San Diego exists, to allow people to compare assisted living facilities on the same quality measures. Attendees expressed that learning about Choose Well's website makes searching for a facility so much easier, and they appreciate the scoring system, which helps create their own subjective opinions about assisted living facilities they are considering. Attendees shared that they feel Choose Well is a wonderful program and are more likely to consider RCFEs that are Choose Well members because of their voluntary transparency and support of helping people better understand their facility.



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A Guide for Downsizing for Older Adults

As adults age, many individuals have to downsize in order to transition into a smaller space or long-term care facility. Additionally, older adults may want to downsize to cut costs or simplify their lifestyle. With all the planning and logistics related to the process of downsizing, along with the difficulty of parting with possessions they have owned for many years, it is often an overwhelming and emotional experience.

There are many resources available for those that find downsizing too daunting of a task. [Silver Lining Transitions](#), a San Diego-based senior move management company, helps older adults downsize, organize their home, and move. Their clients are usually those preparing to move into an assisted living facility. Jami Shapiro, founder of Silver Lining Transitions, suggests the following downsizing tips for older adults.



Gathering like items together could reveal redundancy and duplicate items that can be consolidated, such as these five saltshakers.

- Before you start organizing and decluttering, you need to understand your “why.” Taking on a hard project without a vision for what you are trying to achieve will make it harder to stay on task. Keep in mind that organization and reducing clutter helps improve mental health, saves money and time, and simplifies your life.
- Break the task into manageable pieces. Make a list of any area of your home you want to declutter. Doing a “brain dump” gets it out of your brain and into actionable steps. Create a “to-do” list, starting with the easiest tasks and working toward the harder ones. The momentum should give you the motivation you need to keep going and the satisfaction of crossing off your “to-do’s.”
- When organizing, clear off shelves and areas you want to declutter so you have a fresh canvas. Then, gather like items together and begin to fill the space. I like to use labels and bins, so everything has a place. This way, you’re more likely to put things back correctly.

- If you want to give items to loved ones, create a “Legacy List” of the most important items in your family, what their story is, and why they are important to you. When your family members understand, they’ll be more likely to accept them as gifts. It’s very important to make your intentions known. One of the things I’ve learned the hard way is how important it is to make sure family members know “who gets what.” Create a digital inventory or at least write things down to minimize disagreements.
- If you don’t want to throw something away but you are no longer using it and feel it could be of use to someone else, share it on a site like [Freecycle.org](https://freecycle.org) or [Buy Nothing](#) (localized to your community on a Facebook group). If you didn’t use it or fix it while staying at home during the pandemic, the likelihood is that you really can part with it. If it’s something you feel you’ll miss for sentimental reasons but it’s not part of your Legacy List and you aren’t using it, photograph it and put it on a site like [Artifacts.com](https://artifacts.com) where you can capture the history behind mementoes.
- Pick a date (one week ahead works best) and work backwards. If you want to declutter, make an appointment with a [local donation](#) center who will pick up your items. Then spend the next week setting your timer for 10 minutes per day. Fill one bag with

trash and one with donations. You can also use stickers for furniture. The key is to have a plan of action, otherwise you’ll likely be driving around with donations in your trunk.

- Eliminate the things that take up unnecessary energy from your life. If there is an item you’re holding onto out of guilt or obligation, one of the best ways to declutter is to eliminate the guilt and free yourself for something lighter to take its place.

Jami also stated, “Your home is your sanctuary. It’s an outward reflection of your inner world. When your home runs better, your life runs better. Most importantly, be kind to yourself. Releasing items can be like shedding skin. It’s not very comfortable but you’ll grow more when you do.”

Whatever the reason for downsizing, there are resources available to older adults who need assistance. Older adults can also use the seven simple steps listed above in order to plan and prepare for downsizing now or sometime in the future. Doing so can alleviate much of the emotional burden some older adults experience when making this significant transition later in life.



Before and after photos of a garage cleanup when helping older adults consolidate their belongings for downsizing.



Helping Families Find Distinguished Assisted Living Facilities

Choose Well is a free, innovative, web-based program that helps older adults and their families make informed decisions when selecting assisted living facilities.

Quality Measures

Discover specially evaluated Choose Well facilities that have voluntarily agreed to be scored on 11 measures of quality.

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Learn more details about the Choose Well program:



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being a Choose Well Member?**

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Choose Well is a free, innovative, web-based program that helps older adults and their families make informed decisions when selecting assisted living homes.

For information on other programs and resources for older adults and people with disabilities, visit www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov or call 800-339-4661.

