

Addressing Social Isolation through Technology Solutions

Kristie Kulinski: Hello, on behalf of the Administration for Community Living (ACL), welcome to today's webinar, addressing social isolation through technology solutions. I'm Kristie Kulinski with ACL's Office of Network Advancement. We are so excited about the interest in this webinar with nearly 2,500 registrants. Next slide please.

This webinar will highlight how technology can be leveraged to increase social engagement, including specific hardware and software options. Presenters will also identify resources for acquiring and distributing technology, as well as training mechanisms for older adults and adults with disabilities to use technology solutions designed to mitigate social isolation. A few housekeeping reminders, the link for closed captioning has been shared via the chat feature, all audio will remain muted for the webinar. However, we encourage you to use the chat feature for any questions you have, please feel free to chat in any questions or comments throughout the session. Please select the send a message to "all panelists" option. Recording of this session and slides will be made available on the ACL's COVID-19 webpage.

I'd like to quickly draw your attention to an upcoming webinar that complements the information you'll learn about today. Successfully Engaging Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities via Technology, Strategies and Best Practices will take place July 9th at 1:00 p.m. Eastern time and will highlight programs, best practices and tips for creating communities of learning and engagement via technology. Presenters will address marketing and outreach, barriers to participation, strategies for conversations and more. Anyone may register for that webinar by visiting [ACL.gov](https://www.acl.gov) and checking out the announcement section of the website. Next slide please.

Now, I would like to introduce our esteemed presenters. In the interest of time, I am sharing brief information, but there is certainly much more I could say about each of them. They are truly experts in this area and we are delighted to list their expertise on today's webinar. We have Majd Alwan, who is a Senior Vice President of Technology and Business Strategy and Executive Director of the LeadingAge Center for Aging Services Technologies (CAST). We also have Cathy Bodine, who is the director for inclusive design at the University of Colorado Denver. She is also an associate professor in a number of departments. Scott Code is the Senior Director of the CAST team. Ryan Elza is the Social Entrepreneur for Social Connectedness at AARP Foundation. Sandy Markwood is the Chief Executive Officer of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging. Liz Persaud is the Training and Outreach Coordinator with Tools for Life which is Georgia's Assistive Technology program and of the Pass It On Center which is the National Assistive Technology Device Re-utilization Coordination and Technical Assistance Center. And finally, Carolyn Phillips, who is the director of Tools for Life, the Georgia Assistive Technology program and the Pass It On Center. Next slide please.

Before I turn it over to Ryan Elza to get us started, a quick but exciting announcement. Earlier this week, we announced the Mobilizing and Empowering to Address Social Isolation Challenge. It seeks solutions that affect socially isolated individuals and match them with appropriate technology tools and social engagement programming that best meets their needs. Critical partners should include a team of stakeholders with relevant technical expertise as well as knowledge of technologies and programs that address social isolation. Preference will

be given to teams that coordinate with or are informed by a state No Wrong Door System and I know we have a number of Systems grantees on the line today. It will be two phases with cash prizes awarded in each phase. The total prize available is \$750,000 and the top two contenders will present at CEF 2021 in Las Vegas where the winner will also be announced. A registration email to register for the competition is due July 15th and the submissions for phase one are due on September 8th. For more specific info, you can visit the <https://www.challenge.gov/> website. Now, I am going to turn it over to Ryan Elza with AARP foundation to get us started.

Ryan Elza: Thank you so much. Hi, everyone, very pleased to be here and thank you, ACL, for pulling this event together today. I'm with AARP Foundation. We are the charitable affiliate of AARP and our mission is to serve lower income older adults around two pillars: building economic resilience and social connectedness. Next slide please.

So, even before the current coronavirus pandemic, research showed that prolonged isolation takes a real toll on individuals. Older adults and people with disabilities who were at increased risk of social isolation before the pandemic are the most at risk group now as we engage in the physical distancing. The statistic you see on the slide related to social isolation in older adults is from a recent research study conducted by the National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine released in February, 2020. This does not include the increased levels of social isolation as a result of COVID-19 and physical distancing practices. Social isolation is a health issue. The risks of prolonged isolation are equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day and staying connected to people and the things that matter to us are fundamental to our well-being. People need social connections to thrive. Isolation and loneliness are closely related but there are differences I want to talk about. Social isolation, when we think about it is objective: the size of the social network, the frequency of contact and the availability of transportation and the ability to take advantage of support resources. Whereas we look at loneliness, it is more subjective. It's the feeling of not having the connections and companionship that we need as humans. For many of us, the pandemic has upended our daily lives and routines. It has a dramatic impact on the way we stay connected. Now more than ever, we need to be vigilant, to take measures to keep ourselves, the people we love, and the people we serve, socially engaged and connected to their passions and loved ones. Next slide please.

So, I'm going to talk a little bit about how technology can be used to address social isolation. I am not going to talk specifically about certain hardware or software programs that are available, as my colleagues will talk more in depth about those. I will be talking about many different ways that technologies of all sorts can be used during this time in order to maintain social connections and build new relationships. Next slide please.

So, there is a universe of technology that exists out there, and there are solutions across different types of platforms and ways people can use technology to stay connected and informed, and have access to resources. Here on the slide, we have outlined all the different possibilities that you can use in order to stay connected. These could be low tech solutions, so anything from using your phone to stay connected through calling and messaging to thinking about how smart phones and increased capabilities of those devices are able to provide real-time, face-to-face interactions with loved ones or access to health and information, telehealth resources, and things along those lines. Also, you can think about how technology can be used in your everyday life in order to access essentials. So, how can you use the different online resources or platforms for online ordering in order to place grocery orders, for

example, when you're not able to safely leave your home. There are also ways to maintain your exercise routine and wellness. So, there are many different applications and websites and resources that exist out there that can walk you through different exercises and routines that match your own individual levels of physical capabilities and also can provide a sense of community through different online interactions and communities around these topics. You can also use technology to stay up-to-date on the latest information and resources. There are a variety of websites that are available that provide up-to-date information related to COVID-19, related to many important topics, that individuals can access. There is also a number of online communities and classes that exist out there that individuals can take part in. These don't have to be through computers or tablets. There are opportunities, there are different programs, that you will hear a little bit about later, where you can dial into conference lines and participate in remote telephonic based experiences. Technology allows you to access the latest news and information and also provides opportunities to still engage in virtual volunteering. While we may not be able to physically volunteer, there are opportunities that exist for individuals to volunteer virtually and there are also ways that people can use technology to stay entertained and participate in online games and activities that allow individuals to find that sense of fulfillment and purpose. You can access all sort of wonderful content out there on the web related to books, videos, and other types of resources. Next slide please.

I am going to give a couple tips related to getting and staying connected that folks can walk away with. These are things that you can think about in your own lives but also for the people that you are working with and serving. Number one, commit to contacting a friend or family member you haven't been in touch with regularly. Two, schedule a time with a friend to talk every single day. That can be through the phone or that can be through video chat. Three, even though technology is a really great way to stay connected and engaged in the world, it is still also important to encourage folks to get outside and stay physically active when they are able to and to do it safely. Four, get involved in online group activities or interesting virtual communities. For example, there are groups organized around faith, fitness, movies, music, sports or books. Five, check out to see if your local senior center is offering virtual games or activities that you or the people you work with are able to engage with. Six, as I mentioned before, volunteer to deepen your sense of purpose. There are ways to get help from the safety of your home like making calls or mailing or fundraising. Seven, stay connected to your neighbors. Meeting new people in your community is a great way to connect with people of all ages. And eight, do something pleasant or soothing for yourself every day. Keeping a positive frame of mind helps us connect. A couple of resources to let you be aware of from AARP Foundation. We have our Connect to Effect, a forum where you can learn more about social isolation and find resources and tools to stay connected. AARP also has a coronavirus updates page that has all the latest updates including tips for older adults on avoiding social isolation. AARP Community Connections, where individuals can find or start a mutual aid group, get assistance or connect with people in your community and lastly, where there are opportunities that you can find links to home our revote volunteering opportunities. Thank you for taking the time to listen today and look forward to staying connected.

Kristie Kulinski: Thank you so much, Ryan. Now we will turn it back to the team at LeadingAge CAST.

Majd Alwan: Thank you, Christie. Thank you, Ryan for this introduction. My name is Majd Alwan, I'm the Senior Vice president with LeadingAge and I am the Executive Director for Aging Services Technology and for those of you who are not familiar it is a 501(c)(3)

nonprofit that has over 5000 aging service providers serving over 4 million earlier adults and caregivers on a daily basis. Our providers are across the continuum from home and community-based services, to housing, to continuing retirement communities or what is now known as lifetime communities, all the way to skilled nursing facilities. The CAST Center is a unique program that focuses on technology and helping our members and the population they serve, in terms of selecting and implementing the most appropriate technology solutions. We have been focused on developing hands-on tools that would help the providers select from commercially available products and technologies and programs. Since 2012, and in 2017, we launched a portfolio focusing on social connectedness technologies. Next slide.

We focus on the social connectedness technologies because we have seen a significant interest from our members and their clients and the families in remaining sort of connected to their loved ones in retirement communities and throughout the spectrum of aging services. So that portfolio follows a similar layout of the other portfolios that we launched initially. And we are distinguishing that portfolio between two types of social connectedness technologies, one that is focused on sort of self-initiated connections like social networks, video chats, audio chats, between older adults and their friends and family. But there is also another important category that our members, particularly who're interested in in terms of mediated or moderated conversations, the ability to push content and prompt and get people and residents and clients to engage more proactively. Think of it of as more proactive socially connected to modalities, whether sharing life stories, sharing information about community activities and event management, group exercises, mental exercises, games, music, common interest groups and facilitated communications and conversations and so on and so forth. There are even obligations, as we will see, that include companion apps and even robotic applications, including virtual reality. Next slide.

So, the embodiments of these technologies vary significantly. Some of them have multiple user groups, some of them connect the caregiver to a family member to keep the family informed, in addition to connecting the care recipient or the older adult with their family and loved ones, as well as their professional caregivers and their peers. Again, the interfaces vary significantly. It could be a smart phone for the family caregiver or the professional caregiver but it could be a tablet or even a common large screen signage inside the community or inside the room, like the resident's television set. That is one of the examples. Next.

The other embodiments include sorts of tablets, and we have seen recently, in the last couple of years particularly, a significant interest in and rise in the use of voice control devices, like Amazon's Alexa and Google home and Google home mini because these represent a very simple user interface that is very intuitive and is capable of solving issues for individuals with vision impairment. For example, those who do not like to use a regular tablet or a smart phone. Most recently, some of these technology companies have elected to incorporate and integrate with mobile robotic platforms to send the mobile robots into rooms where there is isolation for the sake of safety of caregivers who would usually bring the tablet to the individual and so on and so forth. And of course, the video chat capabilities are one of the most used functionalities on these embodiments. Next.

Some of these technologies are also used not only for social connectedness and video chat with family members, which is extremely important, especially again in these times, during the pandemic and under shelter in place and isolation and quarantine circumstances. But some of them were actually used for improving the functionalities of the individuals for physical therapy, for example, or occupational therapy. This is an example from INT L, one

of the first companies that conquered the space and primarily focused initially on skilled nursing facilities and congregant living settings and a senior housing. Again, seeing the need for more person centered solutions and more solutions aimed at individuals and the broader community, they created the tablet application. I believe that they have, just during the pandemic as an example, launched a project vital in ownership with the Department of Elder Affairs in the state of Florida and distributed about 300 of these tablets and over a short period of time of about a month, they have had over 4000 video calls between residents and their loved ones during the pandemic. Next.

Another example that combines visual stimulation and entertainment aspect, is these bikes that show you a certain trail. The handlebars can control the direction of the image you are seeing or the video you are seeing. As the cyclist is peddling its reflected in what they are seeing on the screen, and also, the undulations of the path on the screen that is preprogrammed, actually reflects a resistance on the peddling itself and again. This has been shown to show improvement in cognitive scores, more than just physical stimulation alone, or visual stimulation on its own. Last slide.

Again, some of these also incorporate, as you can see, giving medication. This is a system that uses the connect sensor bar and can be used for not only measuring posture and range of motion, but implementing exercise routines as games. What I love about these, this category of technology, is when we first launched in 2017, we had only about 25 or 20 solutions and now, the matrix and its last update has over 45 of the solutions. Again, some of these, most of these, were designed for service providers, but some of them are available to the consumers directly. What I love specifically about this category is you see the impact on the quality of life of the residence immediately. It is a want, it is fun, people sort of gravitate to it and stick to it and do it and at the same time, you can layer on top of these want-based types of interventions, namespace interventions like telehealth, like virtual visit check in with a physician, lifetime rehabilitation results. Scott is going to give you a quick overview of the overall portfolio and show you the online selection tool.

Scott Code: Thank you, next slide please. So, I just want to reiterate what he was saying. We have a lot of tools and resources available on our website, LeadingAge CAST, each technology selection tool has five major components. In 2017, we launched the Social Connectedness Engagement Technology Tool. It has a white paper that goes over all the information he was talking about plus information about important planning steps, models, as well. And we actually have an interactive selection tool and major case studies that highlight use cases of these technologies being deployed. Next slide please.

One of the reasons why this product category has been exploding recently is the evolution of a lot of different accessibility features such as zoom, voice-recognition, visual cues, that help people that have never used a computer or a tablet or technology before have access to this and force recognition has been blowing up. Next slide.

As I mentioned, we have a white paper that covers all the different types and uses of social connectedness technologies. It is very expansive so if you don't feel like reading the 50-page white paper, we created an interactive guide that walks you through the white paper by entering yes/no questions such as you understand the different types of technologies and if you said no, will give you a summary of what the technologies are and linking to the white paper if you want to dive deeper. Next slide.

The other thing we did is, we do a lot of product research so people don't have to go out on their own research to see what vendor is doing with key features and functionalities. And what we have done is create a product matrix that has all these different questions we ask managers to complete, what do you use, what customers you have, what is your focus area, what type of program development do you have and we send that to all the vendors in the space and they complete it. This is a screenshot of the product matrix itself. It was created with a group of vendors and aging service providers and users to vet whether we are asking the right questions and also vet the overall matrix when it is published. I encourage you to go to our website, just to look at this resource because it could save you a lot of vendor research because we kind of do that up front for you. Every year, we have a formal update of this product matrix to add new vendors and update existing vendors that have new product features and functionalities. Next slide.

The list itself has about 250 elements, which can be overwhelming, so we created an online tool where you can come to our website and answer 8 to 10 simple questions, about video chat, what type of embodiment you need, tablets, etc., and we will give you a short list of vendors that meet your needs. Also, if the vendor had partnered with a provider there would be use cases that highlight real-world situations of how these technologies are being used. In summary, I encourage you to go to our website and leverage this resource, it is free to everyone to use and it's a great starting point for everyone who needs a little bit of guidance on where to start and important planning steps. Thank you.

Kristie Kulinski: Thank you so much. Now we are going to turn it over to Carolyn and Liz with the pass it on center at Georgia Tech.

Carolyn Phillips: Excellent, thank you for having us. I am thrilled to be here with you. You can move to the next slide. What we are going to be doing, Liz and I, is we have worked together for what, 20 something years, so we are going to be sharing this time. I will be talking about things to consider when selecting technology. You heard our awesome partners, with some great resources. But where a lot of the magic happens is when you actually apply it to the individual, so we will give you quick tips on how to do that and some resources around that. Then, Liz Persaud, who is internationally known for making connection and acquisition happen when it comes to distribution technology, is going to give you tips about that. We are happy to be with you and appreciate the leadership of ACL in pulling all of this together. We will move to the next slide.

Person centered approaches and person centered design of technology, that absolutely falls right into how this needs to happen when it comes to matching that device, that solution, that app, that strategy, it could be a low-tech or no tech solution, to the individual. So it is very important that the individual is involved. We are lucky in Georgia that we would get to work with our Director of Aging Services, Abby Cox, and our awesome network of ADRCs. It's great that we are all on the same page about this and we have seen a tremendous implementation happening because of that approach. Making sure that it is what the person wants, it is what they need, and then moving forward. The second tip is really thanks to them. If you don't know your assistive technology program, we encourage you to get to know them and think about who all should be on their team. The person who you are working with, the older adult, individual with a disability, that is the lead person, and figuring out who else needs to be there. Is it a speech language pathologist? Is it a communication issue? Is it somebody who was in within LeadingAge, is it somebody within the ADRC system? Could it be a physical therapist, rehab engineer? A number of folks and figuring out how can we

figure out if this is a best fit and if it meets the functional needs of each individual and help folks become more independent. We see this happen all the time. I believe we are collectively brilliant and that goes right back to team and we really can find AT solutions (assistive technology solutions), mainstream tech solutions, building upon the good resources you have been hearing about. The other pieces really focus on the individual's functional needs and what are their skills, their strengths, what does the person bring? We, at Georgia Tech, at the Center of Inclusive Design and Innovation, are more focused on the human model, the social model, not so much the medical model of this is a patient or what have you. We employ, obviously looking at the human first that Cook and Hussey have in their book that is very well known internationally, we follow that as part of the model. Asking those critical questions of what does this individual need and how can we help with technology strategies and solutions. Looking at a built-in environment issue - is it a digital environment issue and then have them build upon that. We will move to the next slide.

I will encourage you to keep it simple. The simplest solutions, just like Scott was talking about, some of the different features within the phone or within the computer, sometimes, the solution is in your purse pocket or what have you, sometimes the solution already exists in the environment and it's just we haven't turned on the universal design features or accessibility features. This is where your program can really help and where we can help to.

So think about that. Also, when you're thinking about goodness of matching, you've got to think about the long term - who is going to support this when you leave the situation, who is going to cover the repair cost, or what have you? Once again, our ADRC's in Georgia have done a great job in their thinking about keeping it simple and translating that across the state. One other thing, last thought I will leave with you. Usually when we do this talk, it is well over an hour. So keep in mind that try before you buy. The evidence is there, the research shows. It is very important to actually try things out and your programs can help with that, we can help guide you through the partners you have heard from already. They can help with that too and Dr. Cathy Bodine is going to help you figure that out also. Our vendors have a return policy and allow for that, some of the ADRC's around the country actually have labs. We do that in Georgia. So, we will move to the next slide. I am going to turn us right over. Take it away.

Cathy Bodine: Thank you so much. I am going to take the next few moments and talk to you all about acquiring and distributing technology, so this will be great information whether you are an individual in the community that wants to know how to access assistive technology to actually get it in your hands, if you will, or even if you're a professional that is working in the AT field or the assistive technology use field and wanting to know more about distributing technology as well. Next slide please.

So, we are going to get back to the basics here and Carolyn mentioned this twice, especially when it comes to try before you buy. Try things out before you purchase it, so we want to encourage you to contact your statewide assistive technology act program and you can do that by visiting the [AT-3 center](#). These are statewide programs for each state and territory. By contacting them, you will be able to talk about accessing assistive technology and also direct services like training, the demonstration programs, the equipment lending - that is exactly how you are able to try before you buy, if you will. There are also all sorts of information you can talk to them about, including funding education - that is also an important piece on acquisition. Those of us who are in the assistive technology program world, we often say we never talk about assistive technology without having a conversation of funding. It isn't good

enough for us to educate about assistive technology and how to access it, but also how to acquire it and what are funding options are out there. Contact your statewide assistive technology act program. Next slide please.

So, along with that, we want to encourage you to learn more about said assistive technology programs, but to also access to our local community assistive technology reuse program. Reuse of assistive technology or even durable medical equipment - things like wheelchairs, walkers, hospital beds, canes, crutches, what have you. These are all important programs. Often, we are talking about people waiting on insurance, waiting for approval, or maybe they just need a backup piece of equipment. The reuse program can really help fill in those gaps. These are such important programs out in our communities and we encourage you to contact your local reuse program, just to talk about what types of equipment they offer and what type of the reuse activities they engage in. By doing that, you can go to the Pass-It-Along Center website to find your local AT-3 reuse program as it is another cost effect of way to access assistive technology and durable medical equipment. Next slide please.

We encourage you to also contact your local Center for Independent Living (CIL). Here in Georgia, we have a strong partnership with our CILs all across Georgia. We know many assistive technology programs end up connected to the Center for Independent Living. We always say that you are truly living independently and not using assistive technology and that independent living and assistive technology are undeniably linked together. When you have both of those together, that formula creates great success in someone's life. We encourage you to contact your local CIL, not only to learn about solutions but how AT-3 can play a major role in this person centered approach. We've got some links here - I definitely encourage you to reach out to the National Council on Independent Living to find your local Center for Independent Living. I just want to encourage folks to reach out to local groups in your community, so your local Muscular Dystrophy Association, cerebral palsy, local groups - those are also great ways to have some basic conversations to talk about assistive technology just to get your foot in the door to start that conversation. Next slide please.

Last but not least, one of my favorites. We just want to encourage you to think about apps as assistive technology. It is important not to forget about that. Apps for your phone, your tablets, your PCs, your Macs, what have you, they are everywhere. There are so many app databases out there and we just encourage you to take some time and do some hunting around, do some research. This is just one and it belongs to Tools for Life. It's an app finder here at Georgia Tech and we have recently added two new categories, all focused on social distancing and teleworking because of the changes in our lives that are actually happening right now. This is just one of the app databases out there but we encourage you to really think about apps as assistive technology. There is so much out there that can help with organization, personal care and safety, relaxation, mental health, sign language, reading books, reading other documents, and as we said, social distancing, teleworking, vision, writing - you name it. So many apps out there that could be beneficial to folks as assistive technology. I will turn the microphone back over to Carolyn.

Carolyn Phillips: Thank you so much, Liz, we will turn this right back on over.

Kristie Kulinski: Thank you so much, Liz and Carolyn, now we are going to hear from Sandy Marwood.

Sandy Marwood: Thank you so much. You have heard about the importance of social isolation and many raised that technology can be part of the solution in addressing this health issue. As the CEO of the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, which represents the nation's 662 Area Agencies on Aging and serves as a voice in Washington for the Title VI American Aging Program that provide services and supports to millions of older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers, I'm here to tell you where the aging network is currently and where we hope to be on addressing social isolation through the use of technology. First, AAAs are realizing that social isolation poses health issues for older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers long before COVID-19 hit. Almost overnight, they launched new programs and services using technology to deliver services to our existing client base, as well as to new clients. In a recent survey of members, we found that 83% of AAAs were serving new clients and nearly 70% noted that their existing clients needed more intensive services than before COVID-19. So, given this increase in the need and service delivery of technology, technology is important. The AAAs activated the technological solutions they could with nearly 40% moving traditional services such as evidence-based health promotion, wellness programs, and caregiver supports to virtual during the pandemic but almost all agencies on Title VI programs expanded their telethon and telephonic reassurance programs to ensure they were doing wellness checks on vulnerable older adults and also supporting them. Like everyone else right now, we are looking forward to what service delivery will look like in the "new normal". As we look at how we can blend in technology as a standalone delivery tool and how we can blend technology effectively with in-person services once those can be reinstated, we are really doing it in a way that is person centered for disability programs. Providers are well positioned to distribute technology to older adults and caregivers and in the recent survey I mentioned before, 86% of AAAs are looking to support clients that have limited or no technological access. They also may have equipment but don't know how to use it so training is an important component. 83% are looking for technological solutions to address social isolation and 47% are looking to provide direct assistance on telehealth to clients. It is important to recognize the health applications and impacts of social isolation. Next slide.

They have already been distributing technological solutions to clients that are socially isolated using whatever resources they have available. As this slide notes, by utilizing the new CARES Act funds that have been distributed throughout the aging network to develop and purchase equipment, as well as using Older Americans Title III funding. Use those across the board because, as this slide notes, the primary focus now of Area Agencies on Aging is to see if they can meet the nutritional needs of isolated older adults as well as to address their social isolation needs. It reinforces the important role that technology in the aging and disability networks can play in the telemedicine arena. They are recognizing that many clients don't have access to equipment and even if they have the access, they don't know how to use it. Recognizing this and exploring new avenues, they may be able to use technology, by using the Civil Money Penalty Reinvestment funds to purchase equipment. As we look at all of these opportunities, I want to point out the State Units on Aging have been very supportive. I want to mention the expansion of distribution in New York and in Florida, the distribution of robotic pets to people with dementia during the COVID crisis - whoever received the ADRC funding are also investing that and helping them to distribute technology. Throughout the crisis, they will continue to step up and look for ways to distribute technology and best use a range of technology to address the needs of socially-isolated older adults as we continue to look at the equipment and training in the appropriate blending of technology with in-person services to meet people's needs.

Kristie Kulinski: Thank you so much. Now, finally, certainly not least, I would like to turn it over to Cathy Bodine with the University of Colorado to wrap up.

Cathy Bodine: Thank you so much, it has really been --

Kristie Kulinski: I apologize for interrupting; you are sounding a bit distant. I just want to make sure the audio quality is good for our participants.

Cathy Bodine: Okay. Is this better?

Kristie Kulinski: It is a bit better. Thank you.

Cathy Bodine: I will do my best. Thank you so much and, as Kristie said, I am trying to bring us all back together again and I am going to talk about training. There are all kinds of training you can pick up on as we go forward - there is training for technology on software and apps. Next slide.

So, one of the most important things you can remember on learning to use the technology is that the most important thing is to understand what type of training you need. We will come back to that in just a minute but I would like to move onto the next slide. The training is one of the most important things you can understand. There are those using the technology, care providers, setting up technology, each of whom who have a different training need and many of them have many different learning styles. It is highly critical to understand who the audience is that you are thinking of implementing. Next slide.

Again, coming back to the type of training that is needed, is it an app or software? Does someone need to learn about accessibility features, or does someone need to learn how to choose the correct features? All of these are very important and it may need a different person, or maybe the same person, or maybe there is not a lot of support in the technology. No matter how good it is, is not going to work unless people know how to use it. It is really critical to understand what type of training is needed. Next slide.

So, there are so many resources out there, with a number of them already mentioned, I tried to take a few examples I will talk about more soon. I had very dear friends in the late 80s, who have spent more time at the Genius Bar that they pay for in terms of their iPad at the cost of their iPad, but they are very, very helpful. The technology services, senior training for use of technologies, AARP, public libraries - no matter where you live, there is a public library. There is training going on for the use of technology and Medicare, even as classes you can take online to learn to use a computer. Investigating where you can find training is really critical. Next slide.

Accessibility features - these are built-in features that are very important that may make the difference on the device. There is the need to select the accessibility features - many major tech companies all have support teams to help with training on the accessibility features. The technology programs are also incredible resources. Each state and territory in our country has a technology act program and you can go to the AT-3 center and get a list of programs that are close to you. Learning these accessibility features and how it can be used is very important to access the technology. Next slide please. Again, talking about choosing accessibility features and matching, as we mentioned earlier, the needs of the technology features depends on the user. We never want to match the user to the technology, the

technology has to work with the user. So there are all kind of folks around the country, programs can get you to a local resource. There are places like United Cerebral Palsy Association or things that are deployed in a nursing home facility, you know, companies like INT L, they also provide training. So it is very important to really make sure that you are thinking about what exactly it is that you are training. Community colleges and universities and colleges throughout the country have disability services programs. If someone is taking a free course at a community college, you can visit with disability services and get some help with learning to use the technology you have or the accessibility feature. Next slide please.

That is a very brief, quick overview of some of the training considerations to think about and some of the places you might go. I'm sure we are all happy to provide you with more information. Thank you very much and I will turn it back over.

Kristie Kulinski: Thank you so much and my thanks to all of our presenters for those present for presentations. We have had a number of questions and comments come through in the chat and it is quite evident that people are really appreciating the information and resources that are being shared. As Carolyn noted, we could spend far longer than an hour, as this is certainly a truncated version of what could be a day or two-day seminar. We would like to take some of your questions on the remaining time we have. We have had a number that have come in - unfortunately we are not going have time to get to them all but I would like to address some. The first question I opened this up to any of our panelists, talked quite a bit about a variety of tech strategies directed at older adults and adults with disabilities. Any feedback or suggestions for individuals who are living in more rural areas who may have limited access to Internet or do not have access to Internet and what type of technology solutions may be available to them?

Scott Code: This is Scott Code. One of the things I want to mention, even in our matrix online tool, there are organizations that provide input on their product or service that aren't so technology focused. One program I am talking about, if you don't have access to Internet but you want to do a telephonic based program, there is a great program called Well-Connected where you can connect with older adults either on the phone or online. It is available nationally - that is one option if someone doesn't have any connection to the Internet.

The other thing that our white paper does is we look at available subsidies to acquire Internet connectivity and one of those options is the FCC's Lifeline Program. For individuals who qualify for this program, they can get a significantly discounted Internet service, again, wherever it is available. Some of the options include satellite Internet service, which can be extremely expensive if it is not through the Lifeline Program.

Kristie Kulinski: Excellent, thank you so much. Another question about technical assistance. If your organization would like to provide iPads or another technology to older adults but they want to be sure that the devices are actually used and don't get cast aside if there are issues or challenges with utilizing the devices - to the programs that provide technical assistance or other types of organizations providing technical assistance, once the devices are provided, they are actually used?

Sandy Markwood: Kristie, this is Sandy, and I would have to say that that is one of the goals that the Area Agencies on Aging have is to see if they are distributing devices. Along with the device comes training and it is not just a one-time training, there are continual check ins to make sure the devices being used. So, I think, as I mentioned, they need to be blended, you

can give people equipment but you also need to give them training. It can't be a one-time training, it needs to be continuous. I know it was mentioned earlier, but we have partnered with OATS, the Older Adults Technology Services to help us through our resource center to provide that level of training. They are also doing trainee trainer program, so that is critical.

Also, I would add, many of the technologies that are out there have built-in capabilities to track use, especially those that are designed for engagement. In other words, there should be a moderator, a program activity director or someone who is pushing content. That is why we emphasize the importance of engagement technologies that have these capabilities and the programs that have the engagement element, rather than just relying on the person's own initiative. These two factors, the monitoring capability and the pushing content and engagement aspect from a moderator are the two other important aspects in addition to the availability of the technology for training of all the different stakeholders.

Kristie Kulinski: Terrific, thank you. Was somebody else chiming in?

Carolyn Phillips: This is Carolyn, I was going to say, building on what they were saying, I would also encourage folks to point you right back to your AT programs. A lot of us just have contracts where we can provide that kind of technical assistance and we rely upon all the resources you just heard about, along with OATS. Thank you.

Kristie Kulinski: Terrific, one final question, I recognize we have one minute left so we will be very brief. What about providers who are serving very low income people who may not be able to afford some of the tech solutions that were addressed today? I know, Majd Alwan, you noted the FCC program, are there other programs out there that allow individuals to access these solutions?

Majd Alwan: Absolutely, many of our members, almost all of our members are not-for profits. They have charity care and many of them actually do offer these technologies, regardless of ability to pay as a standard of care. For those who live on their facilities, we are advocating for Internet connectivity with the federal government. Internet connectivity in affordable housing communities, for example, in partnership with a number of our housing providers and AARP. There is always the vital program I mentioned, which is from a grant from the Alzheimer's Association and the Department of Elder Affairs. There are a lot of grant opportunities, CMP money was mentioned as well, so charitable funding, grant funding and standard of care for those who serve the lower income populations in addition to the Lifeline Program, which is primarily for the Internet connectivity, just to be clear.

Kristie Kulinski: Think you and thank you to all of our presenters today. We have more questions coming in - we unfortunately didn't have time but we know there is a lot of interest in this topic. On behalf of ACL and my colleagues, we are grateful for your time today. We are so grateful to all of the participants who logged in today as well, so thank you so very much enjoy the rest of your day and have a great weekend. Thank you.