



Supporting Seniors during the COVID-19 Pandemic

In April 2020, Hyattsville Aging in Place was trusted with a \$25,000 grant from The Greater Washington Community Foundation. As the Washington region moved into lockdowns to hinder the spread of COVID-19, The Community Foundation looked to local organizations that could help vulnerable people weather the crisis. The Community Foundation selected Hyattsville Aging in Place for one of its first 15 COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund grants because of HAP's deep roots in the community and its ability to address the particular needs of affected populations. Within four months, HAP successfully put the grant funds to use helping seniors and their families in Hyattsville and neighboring communities.



"This grant helped HAP maintain and expand its services during the pandemic," said Lisa Walker, chair of the HAP Board of Directors. "As we struggled to provide services while guarding the health of our Neighbors and volunteers, The Greater Washington Community Foundation grant helped us find solutions, help people, and build new partnerships."

HAP used the grant to fund several new initiatives, as well as adapt ongoing services:

- 1) Direct aid to seniors in need and their households
- 2) Rides to necessary medical appointments using GoGoGrandparent
- 3) Partnering and supporting local organizations during the pandemic
- 4) Care packages to combat social isolation
- 5) Strengthening HAP to deliver pandemic and future services

The Greater Washington Community Foundation grant not only helped HAP deliver needed support and services to seniors in need, it also spurred HAP to build deeper connections with other programs in our community, such as the St. Mark's Food Pantry, Sowing Empowerment and Economic Development (SEED), and Community Crisis Services, as well as with municipal and elected officials and civic associations throughout the region. This positions HAP well to better recruit volunteers, identify people in need, and work with partners both inside and outside of the city of Hyattsville.

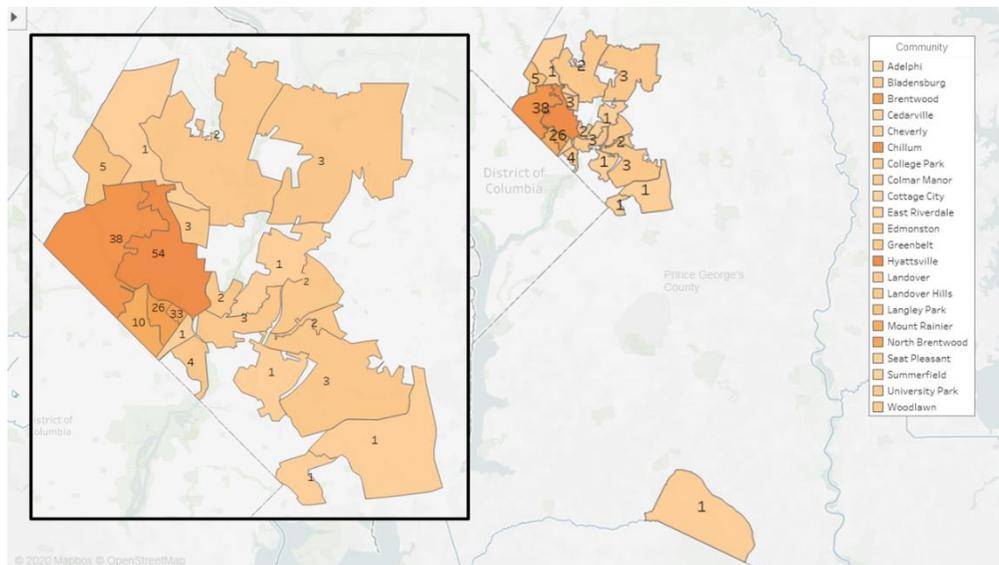
Although The Community Foundation grant funds have all been put to use, the need to support seniors as they age in our community is never ending. **While COVID-19 does still limit how HAP works, we continue to need volunteers to help us support our Neighbors.** Time spent volunteering with HAP is rewarding and helps keep our Hyattsville community strong and resilient.

Membership dues and donations to HAP are also critical at this time. Even though The Community Foundation grant is finished, HAP continues to fund services that combat social isolation. Care packages, the GoGoGrandparent service, and other support services are now paid for directly by HAP, along with necessary operational expenses.

While we are seeking additional grants to support this work, our biggest supporters have always been our members and donors. Please visit www.HyattsvilleAgingInPlace.org to renew your membership or to make a donation. The same website can be used to volunteer with HAP or to request services. If you aren't sure if you are currently a HAP member, please call 301-887-3101 or email HAPcares@gmail.com to check.

Direct Aid

The bulk of the grant funding, nearly \$17,000, was used to provide direct aid to seniors in need due to the pandemic and their households. This took the form of debit cards with values ranging from \$40 to \$100, which were delivered to nearly 200 area senior households. For this effort, HAP worked with elected officials, faith leaders, city staff, and other community groups to identify those in need. This effort extended beyond HAP's normal service area into neighboring municipalities and unincorporated parts of Prince George's County, including Mount Rainier, Brentwood, North Brentwood, Chillum, Langley Park, Riverdale, and the Port Towns. Recipients ranged in age from 60 to 94 and included persons infected with COVID-19 or other health issues that kept them isolated at home.



GoGoGrandparent

Because HAP suspended its volunteer driving activities to protect seniors and volunteers during the pandemic, HAP contracted with GoGoGrandparent to provide rides for seniors to essential medical appointments. This service allows seniors to request rides with Uber and Lyft drivers via telephone, instead of requiring an app, with HAP covering the costs of the service. HAP has continued this service for seniors in the city of Hyattsville beyond the grant period.



Partnering & Support

Where possible, HAP worked with other local groups aiding seniors. With help from Route 1 Mask Match, HAP delivered more than 75 cloth face coverings to community seniors and underwrote the cost of printing educational materials to promote proper mask use and care. HAP also purchased fresh food for seniors in need served by the St. Mark's Food Pantry. In total more than \$750 went to these efforts.



Care Packages

Combating social isolation for seniors, one of HAP's most important goals, was made both more difficult and more important during the pandemic lockdown. To help keep them engaged, HAP volunteers assembled and delivered care packages to 45 seniors across the City of Hyattsville, providing them with masks, cleaning supplies, activity books, and sweets and savories, along with educational materials about HAP and COVID-19. HAP is continuing this service, along with check-in calls, throughout the pandemic.



Strengthening HAP

Finally, some of the grant funding was used to improve HAP's website and communications capabilities. These investments were critical to the success of the grant-funded activities and improved HAP's outreach and support capabilities for the future.

Your support as a Hyattsville Aging in Place member, donor, and volunteer helps ensure we can continue to support Hyattsville's seniors during the pandemic and beyond. Visit www.HyattsvilleAgingInPlace.org to renew your membership, make a donation, to volunteer, or to request HAP services.