

## **Aging Division iPad Program and ERAP-HSS Tablet Service**

The Aging Division has been actively engaging older adults throughout the pandemic with our drive on technology and virtual socialization activities. We have found our efforts successful and welcomed by older adults.

The connection with Telehealth is that the more devices in the hands of older adults, the more older adults will become comfortable with low-risk activities via socialization in virtual senior centers. This leads to the potentiality that they will be more likely to apply this technology to telehealth. It is a transition period, and requires patience and dedicated support.

With the Senior iPad Program, our link with Teltex enables three years of device support via phone, email and online videos. There is no worry about whether they will forget basic hardware actions, or more complex tasks because the dedicated support team is always there. These iPads are on permanent lease and are meant to be returned back to the Aging Division when no longer used or wanted.

With the ERAP-HSS program we have a grant payment for an android device with telehealth capability that the client owns outright. With this, any device from any store that meets our requirements will be acceptable, but another partnership with Teltex has given us a device with a router plug in that enables said device to instantly connect to the WiFi network without needing network passwords.

Regardless of program participation or not, we have another partnership with GetSetUp offering online learning and socialization activities run by older adults, for older adults. One of the main purposes of this platform is to encourage older adults to learn how to use digital devices and access critical digital services (e.g., Zoom, Gmail, smartphones, online health, etc.). This is a free service to all of Wyoming's older adults.

We have found that the more comfortable older adults get with using devices to socialize, the more likely they are to use these devices for higher risk activities like Telemedicine. With the devices comes a level of training needed to navigate problems that inevitably arise with technology, by no longer fearing those alerts/pop ups. There also comes a level of internet security awareness needed, and support features like Teltex telephone hotline and the GetSetUp program enable a more technologically savvy, web surfing senior citizens group, with small steps.

Our part in the device distribution arena is vital to ensuring more older adults get familiar with and utilize technology for telehealth purposes, and that's how the Aging Division contributes to the WTN.

By Mark Kelly and Jeff Clark - February 2nd 2022.