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Older Adults Can Learn How to Use Videoconferencing, Telemedicine and Other Technology; MDHHS providing new service to help cope with COVID-19 social distancing

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LANSING, Mich. – Older adults can now get help to learn how to navigate technology such as videoconferencing and telemedicine that has become more necessary during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Aging & Adult Services Agency at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is announcing a partnership with GetSetup, a mission-driven education technology company dedicated to creating economic and learning opportunities for older adults. The partnership creates a new free resource for Michiganders age 60 and over as the state continues to face the pandemic.

“It’s critical to keep older adults who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 safe during the pandemic,” said MDHHS Director Robert Gordon. “However, it’s also important for them to maintain social connections and be able to meet their needs from home. Technology can help, and this initiative will help older Michiganders become more comfortable with that technology.”

Older Michiganders can access more than 150 free online group classes designed for and led by older adults. Offerings include classes on how to use a smartphone or tablet, how to use services like video conferencing, Gmail, Facebook, grocery delivery and telemedicine, as well as virtual social hours.

An internet connection is all that’s needed to access GetSetup.

“We realize that now more than ever, our older adults are at home and may need assistance learning how to use video services to communicate with loved ones, learn how to do things like ordering groceries or household items online, finding exercise classes or even learning to access services like telehealth,” said Dr. Alexis Travis, senior deputy director of the Aging and Adult Services Agency. “Older adults are at greater risk for complications related to coronavirus and have had to follow public health guidelines closely, including social distancing. We believe this platform will help reduce social isolation by empowering older adults when it comes to using technology while providing a safe place to learn, grow and make friends.”

GetSetup.io is a pioneering social platform where seniors can learn about a variety of topics through a live, interactive peer-to-peer teaching model. The platform currently offers classes on essential life-changing skills, from professional development to technology, health, wellness and hobbies. It also offers casual social hours. Its expert guides hold graduate and master’s degrees in business, music, science, and more.

"We are thrilled to partner with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and make our interactive learning platform available to more than 2.5 million older adults across the state," said Lawrence Kosick, co-founder of GetSetUp. "Older adults experience loneliness and social isolation more than any other age group, but at GetSetUp we see the health benefits of continuous learning and socialization. Through GetSetUp, older Michiganders now have a way to learn and connect with others online, as well as find new economic opportunities helping teach their peers."

As part of the program, GetSetUp will run classes 10 hours a day to make it easy for Michiganders to take a class anytime they like from the comfort and safety of their homes. The classes are available free for the next six months. This initiative is supported in part by the Michigan Health Endowment Fund.

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We have said all along that the vaccine would help us return to a sense of normalcy and today we announce that day is here. #MIDoseofHope https://twitter.com/GovWhitmer/status/1405598054284148741

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Stay Smart. Stay Safe. @MichiganHHS reports today, June 17, 2021, 172 new COVID-19 cases & 20* deaths. For * details bit.ly/2KcnkrO. Michigan's total cases are now 893,002 & 19,598 deaths. Find the latest data & #COVID19 news at

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