

Sherborn Council on Aging Receives Technology Assistance Grant, Increase Connectivity with Older Adults (ICOA)

SHERBORN, MA. The Sherborn Council on Aging is pleased to announce that they have received a \$16,000 grant to launch a Technology Assistance Program (TAP). TAP is partially funded by this grant from the MetroWest Health Foundation and is specifically designed to “Increase Connectivity with Older Adults (ICOA)”. The main objective of the grant is to bridge the gap for those that are challenged by today’s fast paced technology while also helping those that may feel socially disconnected through this pandemic crisis.

“We are very excited to contribute to helping our older population connect to a wide variety of social networking platforms” said Sue Kelliher, Director of the COA. “Helping people that are socially disconnected during this pandemic is a primary focus for us. We want to provide accessibility to technology so that people can be active and remain socially engaged. Our Technology Assistance program (TAP) is an opportunity for our staff and volunteers to make a difference in others’ lives while continuing to build our own team spirit”. The project with the funds granted from MetroWest Health Foundation is part of the COA’s broad-based community involvement program which seeks to promote goodwill both inside and outside the town offices of Sherborn.

About the TAP program

This program will include helping Sherborn and residents from nearby towns navigate the complex world of various media outlets, possible lending of an iPad, assisting older residents in getting up to speed on using the iPads or other devices, and getting volunteers from the community to become a technology partner to an older resident. There are two parts to this program, explains Renee Montella, Assistant Director and Program Manager of TAP. First, we are seeking those older individuals that are in need of the technology assistance and the second part is recruiting volunteers to help those residents in need through a “Tech Partner” system. We hope to pair individuals; those in need of the assistance with a trained volunteer to foster our vision of a broad-based community involvement program. The program is designed to build competency and confidence among users. The staff at the COA will provide training, guidance and the necessary tools to get both the older resident and the volunteer up and running. Elements of the program will consist of: helping someone set up an email account, teach them how to use and access Zoom, Facebook, shop online for services, or any other area of interest. We are looking for volunteers that have an interest or aptitude for technology, working with older populations, and are passionate about building a community partnership.

The COA launched this program on February 1, 2021. If you are interested in participating or learning more about this program, please contact the COA at 508-651-7858 or email the program manager at coaprograms@sherbornma.org