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### Senior Life Solutions

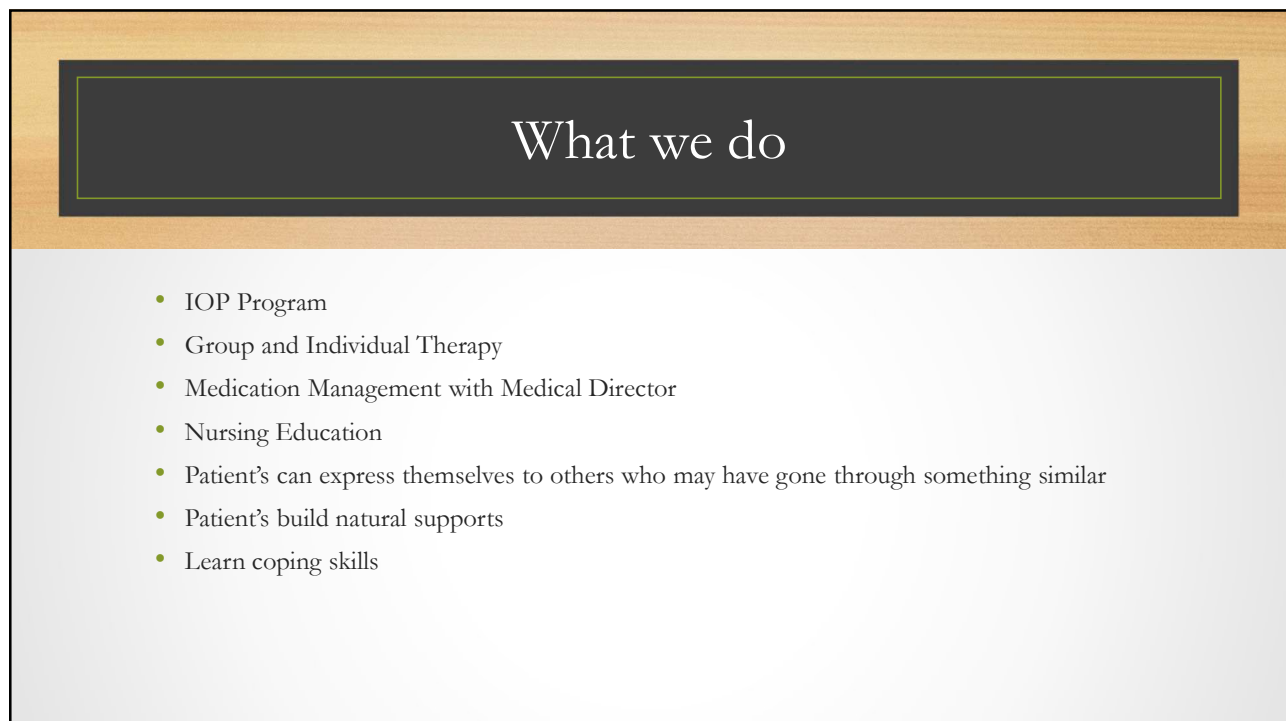
- Senior Life Solutions is a hospital-based program, designed to meet the needs of individuals typically 65 and older who may be experiencing:

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	
Chronic Health Condition	Life Transitions
Decreased Energy	Loss of a Loved One
Feeling Lonely or isolated	Loss of Interest
Life Transitions	Recent Health Diagnosis
Decreased Sleeping/Eating	Feeling Lonely or Isolated
Acting as a care giver	Feelings of Uncertainty

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## Benefits of Volunteering

- Build new friendships
- Healthy for the Mind and Body
  - Improves depression, anxiety, and lowers stress levels
  - Helping others activates the reward center in the brain
  - Stay physically active
- Brings Fun and Fulfillment in Life
  - Explore more interests & can be relaxing
- Increase Sense of Purpose
  - Feel purpose when you help others, give time and talent to something meaningful
  - Change perspective on life

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## Rounding

- Questions to ask volunteers:
  - What gets you out of bed in the morning?
  - What sorts of things do you enjoy about volunteering here?
  - Is there anyone who has been helpful to you?
  - What would help improve your experience here?
  - If you had a magic wand and could change one thing in your life, what would it be?
- Building Community
  - Introduce volunteers to key staff members they may interact with
  - Foster a culture of communication and support

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## Identifying Volunteers in Need

- Mental Health Warning Signs/Risk Factors:
  - Persistent sad or anxious mood
  - Trouble expressing positive emotions
  - Increased worry or stress
  - Failing to keep volunteer commitments
  - Living alone, isolated, disconnected from friends/family
  - Recent loss of spouse or loved ones
  - Volunteers who are also caregivers

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## How to Help

- Active Listening Skills
- OARS:
  - O- Open-Ended Questions
  - A- Affirmations
  - R- Reflective statements
  - S- Summarizing

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## Open-Ended Questions

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- Open-ended questions can help gain more information than closed-ended questions.
- They prompt the person to continue talking and share more information.
- What sorts of things do you enjoy about volunteering here?
- What would an ideal day of volunteering be for you?
- Some of the volunteers I have supported in the past have (insert stressor volunteer has experienced). I'm wondering how your (insert current stressor) is impacting you?

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## Affirmations

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- Affirmations are statements that validate the person's emotions.
- It's a form of positive feedback that can help improve self-esteem.
- Have been found to reduce stress, increase feelings of wellness, and help people adopt positive changes that can improve mental health.

Examples:

- "I really appreciate your hard work today."
- "Thank you for sharing that with me."
- "You're a real asset to us."

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## Reflective Statements

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- Helps people explore their thoughts and feelings.
- It offers the opportunity for the person to correct any misunderstandings of what they have said.
- Examples:
  - It sounds like you...
  - So you feel...

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## Summaries

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- Can be used throughout a conversation, but extra helpful at transition points; i.e., after the volunteer has spoken about a particular topic, has recounted a personal experience, or when the encounter is nearing an end.
- Begin with a statement indicating you are making a summary. Example:
  - Let me see if I understand so far...
  - Here is what I've heard. Tell me if I've missed anything.

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## Summaries Cont.

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- Summarize what you believe the person has said.
- Be concise. Use just a few sentences.
- Be sure to include a reflection of their emotion.
- End with an invitation. For example:
  - Did I miss anything?
  - Does that seem correct?

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## Summaries Cont.

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- Following the summarization, you may also end with an open-ended question:
  - What would be helpful to you from here?
  - What could I do to better support you?

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## Offering Support

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- Volunteers do best when:
  - They understand expectations (they're properly trained, understand policies, and how to maintain safety).
  - They can give and receive feedback.
  - They can feel satisfaction from accomplishments.
- Reduce Burnout
  - Proper support reduces burnout.
  - Allow for a balanced schedule.

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## Support Cont.

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- Support Groups for Volunteers
  - Know local resources
  - Access social support (VFW, Senior Center, YMCA, coffee groups)
  - Grief groups

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## Incentives and Appreciation

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- Individual Appreciation
  - Thank You Notes
  - Gratitude Jar
- Group Appreciation
  - Workshops
  - Luncheons
  - Spotlights in newsletters, TVs etc.
  - Discounts for local businesses
  - Discounts on lunch at hospital cafeteria

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Thank you!

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