

LET NO ONE BE ALONE

*Reaching out and connecting with older adults
to reduce isolation and loneliness*



RESOURCE 5

7 Positive Actions That Community Businesses Can Take To Help Customers Feel Less Isolated



The involvement of the business community is crucial in ending isolation and loneliness. People need food, pharmacy services, personal services such as hair-cuts, and public transport or a fill-up at the gas station.

1. Designate a particular time when only older adults can shop along with a place to sit and enjoy a coffee and chat. Many businesses provide home delivery. However, providing a designated time to shop and interact with others can provide needed companionship to isolated older adults.
2. Pharmacies or grocery stores who deliver can ask their staff and volunteers to intentionally take five minutes to visit with an isolated older adult as they drop off their delivery.

3. Pharmacists can meet a customer who has mobility difficulties at their vehicle to provide a vaccination or deliver a prescription. A five minute intentional chat by the window or in a vehicle provides opportunity for a health-provider to do an informal assessment, give encouragement, and deliver a needed vaccine that might otherwise be inaccessible.

4. Businesses can provide telephone answering services that use real people rather than automated services, and minimize the number of automated menus and button pushes that telephone callers must go through before speaking with a live person. Customers support businesses where a live person answers.

There are 5 **LET NO ONE BE ALONE** resources. All 5 resources can be found on the SSM website: skseniormechanism.ca

Watch SSM's Facebook page through the year for suggestions about dealing with social isolation, and check for posts every February for Let No One Be Alone Week: [skseniormechanism](https://www.facebook.com/skseniormechanism). Please repost on your Facebook page! Thank you!



YOU could be the reason someone feels **seen, heard, and respected** today.



RESOURCE 5

5. Store employees can intentionally chat with customers whether they are on the phone taking a grocery or prescription order, or talking with people in the store. This suggestion is made with the understanding that front-line employees may be busy.

6. Customer Service and Respect increases when staff are trained to:

- * be friendly and patient with customers
- * move to private areas to discuss private matters with customers
- * be sensitive to customers in varying circumstances and avoid stereotyping or condescending behaviours. (For example, speaking too loudly, showing impatience or speaking too familiarly).



7. Extra customer service or a willingness to chat during a business transaction mean a great deal to many people. The 'little extras' that a business can provide promote a feeling of being cared for and valued that can create a loyal customer who will tell others, thus growing your business, too!

Think about ways that businesses can support older adults in your community!

Other ideas can be found at:

<https://agefriendlysk.ca/for-businesses-2/>
on the Age-Friendly Saskatchewan website.



Access the 5 LET NO ONE BE ALONE resources: