Sue Premo, Executive Director of Options for Independent Living says, “We are responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic by stepping up the connections that we're having with the people we serve, while at the same time minimizing face-to-face contacts. We are going to do our best to reach out and make sure that people have what they need in order to get through this situation. 'Social isolation' is necessary, but we want to minimize the impact that isolation can have on people's physical and emotional health.” Isolation, loneliness, and fear are big threats right now in uncertain times. At Options for Independent Living, the health and safety of both consumers and staff are their first priority. To be proactive, staff are contacting consumers by phone, teleconference, email, etc. They are sharing this information with other CILs and SILCs in the spirit of teamwork and community.

Sandy Popp, Director of Independent Living Services, created this list of questions to guide conversations with consumers:

1. How are you doing? Do you have support available to you through family, friends, caregivers, etc.? If not, ask what their support needs are and can we assist in any way?
2. Are you feeling over-anxious/depressed about the situation? If they do, all that may be needed is validation of that feeling…you may have to just listen to them.
3. Are you currently, or planning on, self-isolating during this time?
4. Do you have enough food / medication /supplies in your home?
5. Are you able to get to any upcoming urgent medical appointments?

Autumn Nordall is the President of Options' Board of Directors. She noted, “This is a time when our communities need to come together and reach out to people who may need your help. If you have a neighbor/friend/relative who is older or has a disability, ask them if they need something. Together, we're stronger than any virus!”

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**ADDITIONAL RESOURCE PROVIDED BY ILRU ON COPING WITH ANXIETY AND STRESS**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Manage Anxiety & Stress

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/managing-stress-anxiety.html>