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## The Detection and Prevention of Weight Loss Attributed to COVID-19 Social Restrictions Within Long-Term Care Residents

Grace Gohman

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, ggohman001@csbsju.edu

Caitlin Williams

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, CWILLIAMS003@csbsju.edu

Alexander Lucken

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University, ALUCKEN001@csbsju.edu

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# The Detection and Prevention of Weight Loss Attributed to COVID-19 Social Restrictions Within Long-Term Care Residents

Capstone Completed by: Grace Gohman, Alexander Lucken & Caitlin Williams

# Who We Are

We are a group of senior nursing students dedicated to bettering the health of the geriatric population of Central Minnesota in the midst of the COVID-19 global pandemic.



# What We Work Towards



## Geriatric Health

Understanding how future nurses can better serve the geriatric population



## Impact of COVID-19

Analyzing the full extent of COVID-19 within a long-term-care setting



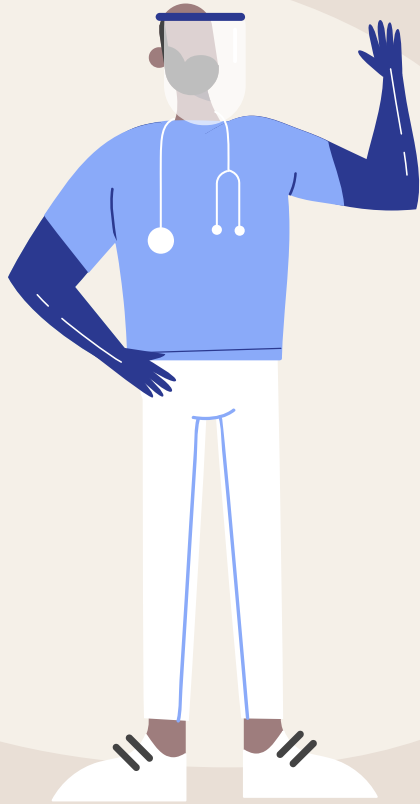
## + Quality Improvement

Providing the utmost service for quality improvement of a facility

# Long-Term Care & COVID-19 Restrictions

How COVID-19 has presented a new phenomena within the LTC setting





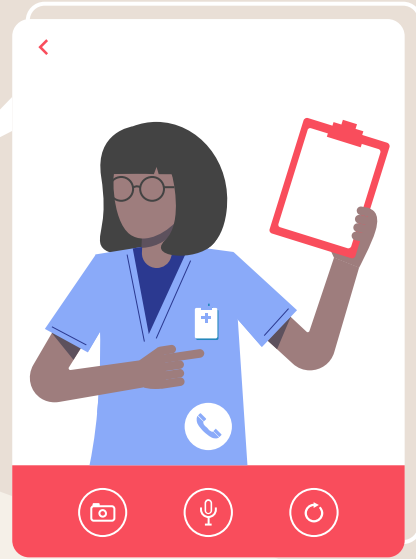
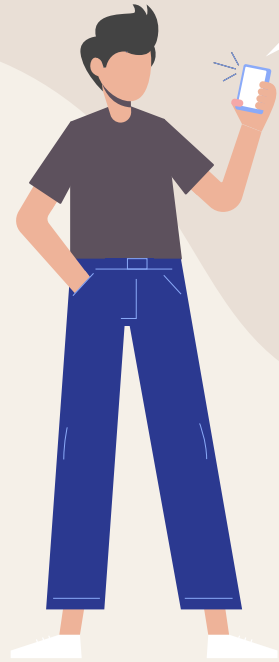
## Visualization

Close your eyes, imagine you are a resident living at a long-term care facility. The day is March 13, 2020

# Now

A year after COVID-19 restrictions were put into place, LTC residents are still faced with holistic health consequences of these orders.





# Moving Forward

How can we best manage the social isolation and unintentional weight loss within this specific setting?





# Our Project

Implementing change to  
promote nutritional health of  
the geriatric population

# The Process

## Complexity

Understanding the complexity of COVID-19 and its widespread effects

## Weighing the options

There are a vast amount of hardships, which would we choose?

## Feasibility

How can we best implement an intervention in a short amount of time?

## Research

Are there facts that back up our claims?

## Method

How would we assess and measure the success of our intervention

## Result

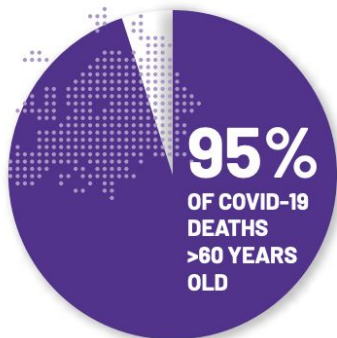
Utilizing our resources to promote the best end-result

# COVID-19's Disproportionate Impact on Older Adults

According to the Global Coalition of Aging, 2020

EUROPE

IN APRIL 2020

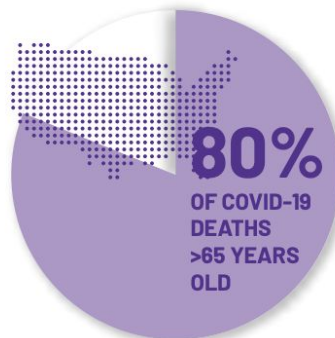


IN 2020



USA

IN 2020





# Immediate Restrictions Implemented Nationwide

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services released LTC facility restrictions effective immediately

- Restricting all visitors & volunteers
- Cancelling all group activities
- Cancelling all communal dining
- Implementing daily active screenings

## A Day in the Life of LTC Residents in Quarantine

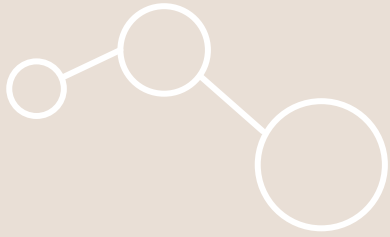
- Bound room
- Only contact with a fully gowned nurse
  - Social deprivation
- Only means to communicate with loved ones through windows, foreign technology

**76%**  
*felt lonelier  
than usual*



**64%**  
*did not leave  
their rooms  
to socialize*





# Supporting Arguments



“The rate of death following a COVID-19 infection is 8,200 times higher in adults aged 85 years or older”



by The CDC



“With 43 percent of adults age 60-plus in the U.S. reporting feeling lonely, the rates of social isolation and loneliness were already at the level of “a public health crisis,”

by the AARP



Seniors state eating together, whether at home or outside the home, is a **positive** activity. They experience less loneliness and recognize that they eat more when in the company of other people.

by Journal of Population Ageing



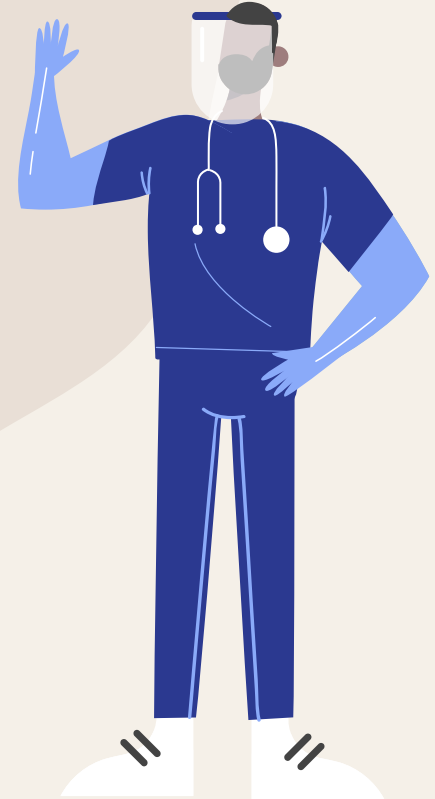
# Project Goals

## Early Detection & Prevention

1. Aiding in the *early detection* of sarcopenia
2. Preventing further weight loss in high-risk residents

## Education of Staff

1. Emphasizing the role staff hold
2. Providing feasible interventions



# Process

## DATA COLLECTION

Monitoring & assessing the negative impact COVID-19 restrictions present to LTC residents

Depression  
Loneliness  
Anxiety  
Weight Loss

## PHASE 1 INITIAL TOPIC CHOICE

Socialization



Initial focus on how to better implement socialization methods within the facility

## PHASE 2 FOCUS SHIFT

Nutritional Detriments

Importance of Residential Snack Time



## PHASE 3 BRAINSTORMING

Staff Education

Nutritionist Consult

Weight Charting Importance

Meal Time Data Collection





# 9/10

Residents were proven to have experienced a 7% or greater weight loss in a 16 month period

# Timeline of Data

## Pre-COVID

Communal dining, activities & visitors allowed

**January 2020**



**June 2020**

**3 Months In**

Specific residents begin to lose weight

## 9 Months In

The most dramatic decline in resident weight. Why?

**December 2020**



**April 2021**

**Present Day**

Continuous decline, student interventions implemented

# Project Overview

COVID-19  
Isolation  
Restrictions

10 selected  
resident's  
weights  
monitored



LTC  
Residents

## RESULTS

90% of our selected, high-risk residents faced a unspecified weight loss of more than 7% of their body weight between January 2020 & April 2021

90%  
Experienced weight  
loss after restrictions  
were put in place

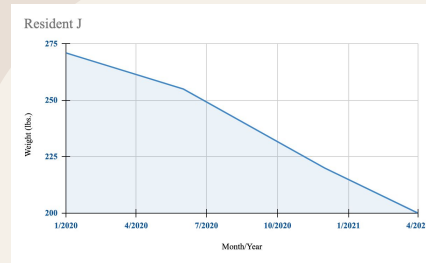
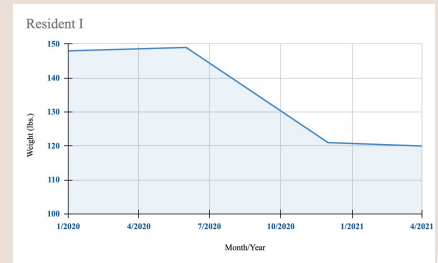
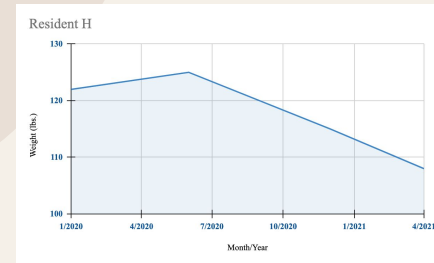
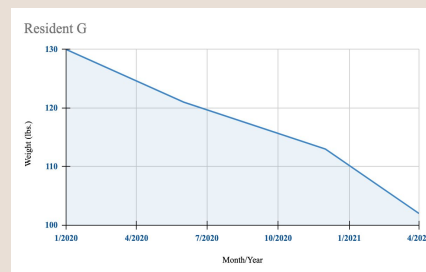
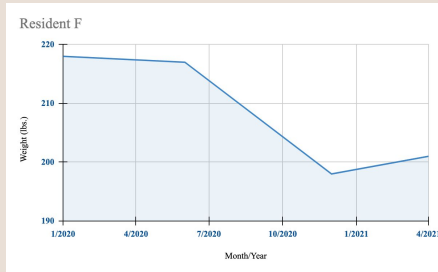
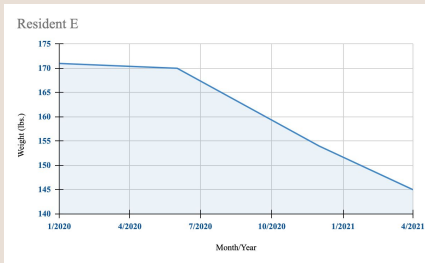
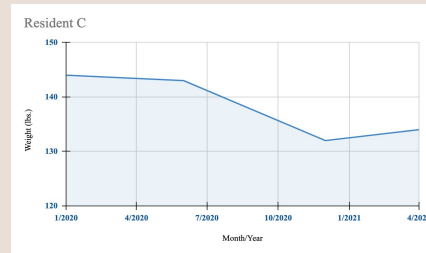
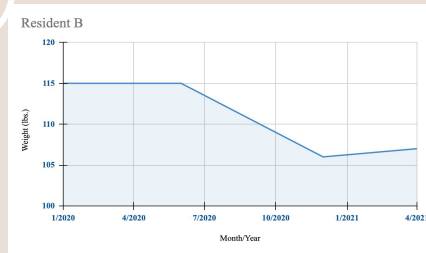
## POSSIBLE CAUSES

Depressive symptoms stemming from isolation restrictions and lack of socialization

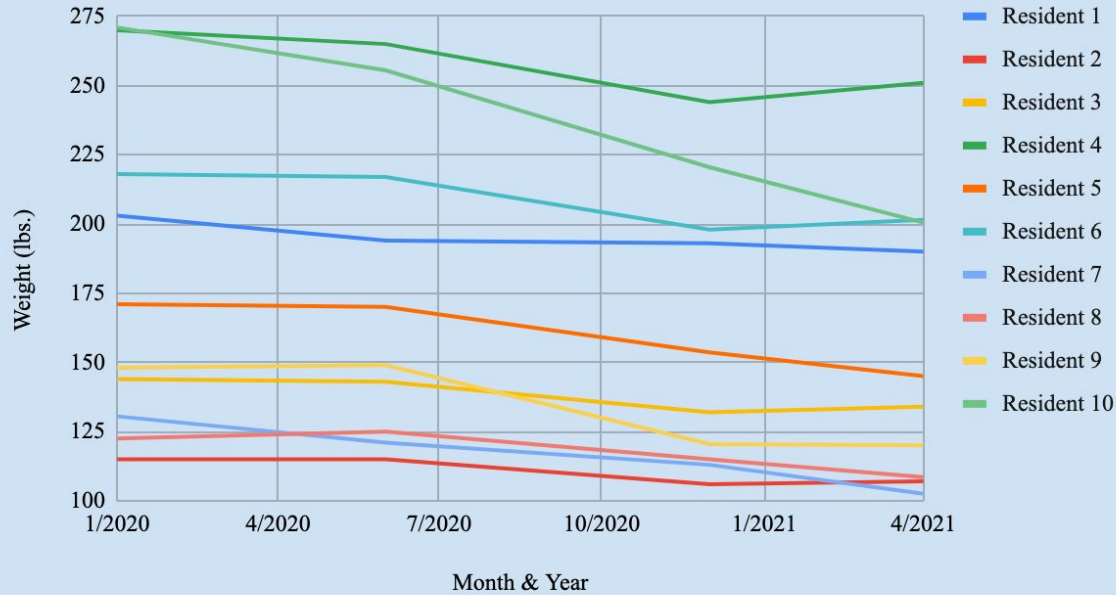
16 MONTHS  
Experimentation  
time

GOAL  
Increasing weight in  
high-risk residents

# Individual Numerical Data



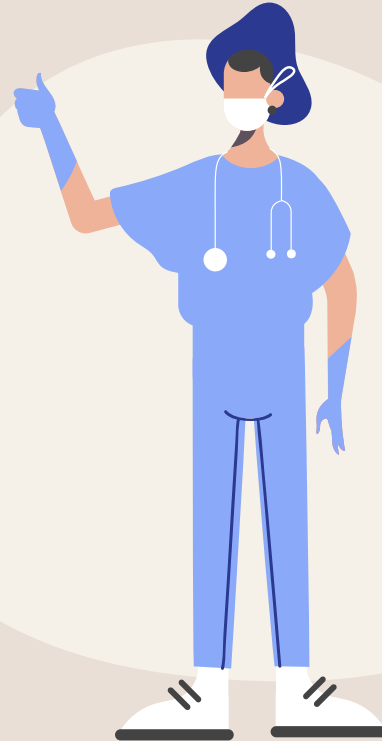
## Residential Weight Loss



**Grouped Data**

# Potential Solutions

- Use of essential oils; peppermint, fish oils
- Communal events such as ice cream socials
- Dining room renovation
- Snacks; education and reinforcement





**SNACKS**

# Implementation

## Signage

## Snack Carts

Last Time I Ate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Snacks I Enjoy:

Last Time I Ate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Snacks I Enjoy:

Last Time I Ate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Snacks I Enjoy:

Last Time I Ate: \_\_\_\_\_  
Snacks I Enjoy:

## Resident Rooms

## Encouraging the use of the dining rooms for meal times is important!

Socialization with other residents and staff members increases appetite and makes meal times more enjoyable. It leads to more regular eating and consumption of higher-quality meals.

Socialization also reduces the level of depression and anxiety caused from isolation and loneliness. This is especially prominent during the past year and the visitor restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Socialization helps the residents maintain their self-esteem and sense of worth.

In the dining rooms the residents typically gets the food faster and warmer. Plus it's more fun.

## Why is the snack basket important?

Healthy snacking stimulates appetite in the residents .

Helps to stabilize blood sugars for those that need to maintain a good level and maintains energy levels throughout the day.

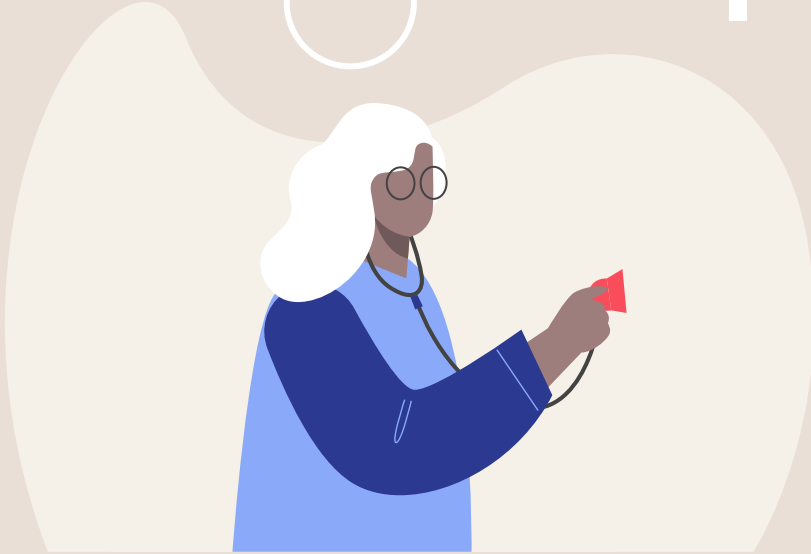
Snacks can decrease the residents hunger and keep them from overeating at meal times.

Snacking and choosing the snacks they eat can make eating and nutrition fun for the residents!

## Nursing Station



# Limitations



## Consistency

Weights are not taken weekly

## Time

Four-Week time period

## Resources

Regulation of staff implementation over time

# Conclusion



## Staff Readiness

Staff were receptive and excited for the change



## Resident Excitement + Commitment to succeed

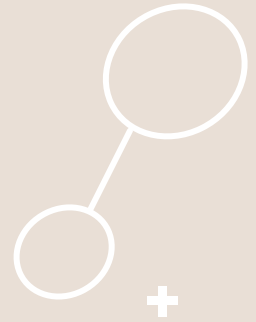
Residents were eager for change and seemed ready to eat



LTC facility's dedication to resident health



# What can you do to help a loved one?

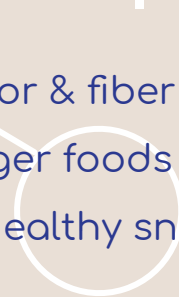


## Know the Signs

- Loss of interest in socializing or hobbies - isolation
- Fatigue
- Loss of ability to perform activities of daily living
- Worsening of mood and/or cognitive disorders
- Sudden, constipation

## What to do

- Reach out & stay connected
- Encourage movement
- Aid in creating scheduled meal times
- + • Increase flavor & fiber
- Embrace finger foods
- Encourage healthy snacking



# Final Takeaway

Continue to offer love and support  
to your elderly loved ones  
throughout the duration of  
COVID-19 and further into the  
future



# Thank You

Thank you for attending our final CSB/SJU Nursing project!

Please feel free to offer us your questions, comments or feedback!

## CREDITS:

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