

# Covid-19 Give Back @ Lincoln Park Assisted Living

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### Community Impact

- The Covid-19 pandemic brought on challenges in 2020 that we did not anticipate. Many precautions were taken to minimize exposure, especially to vulnerable populations.
- This meant isolation to those in assisted living.
- The simple, but meaningful task of running errands for residents was a way for us to provide a sense of normalcy to those in isolation.
- To mitigate the risk of exposure, we picked up weekly requested items including favorite snacks, needed medications, and household supplies.
- This involved collecting lists and money, shopping for items, labeling, and returning items to the facility.
- The goal was to gather the personal items that each resident desired. It was a small way to provide residents with something familiar for them to look forward to each week.

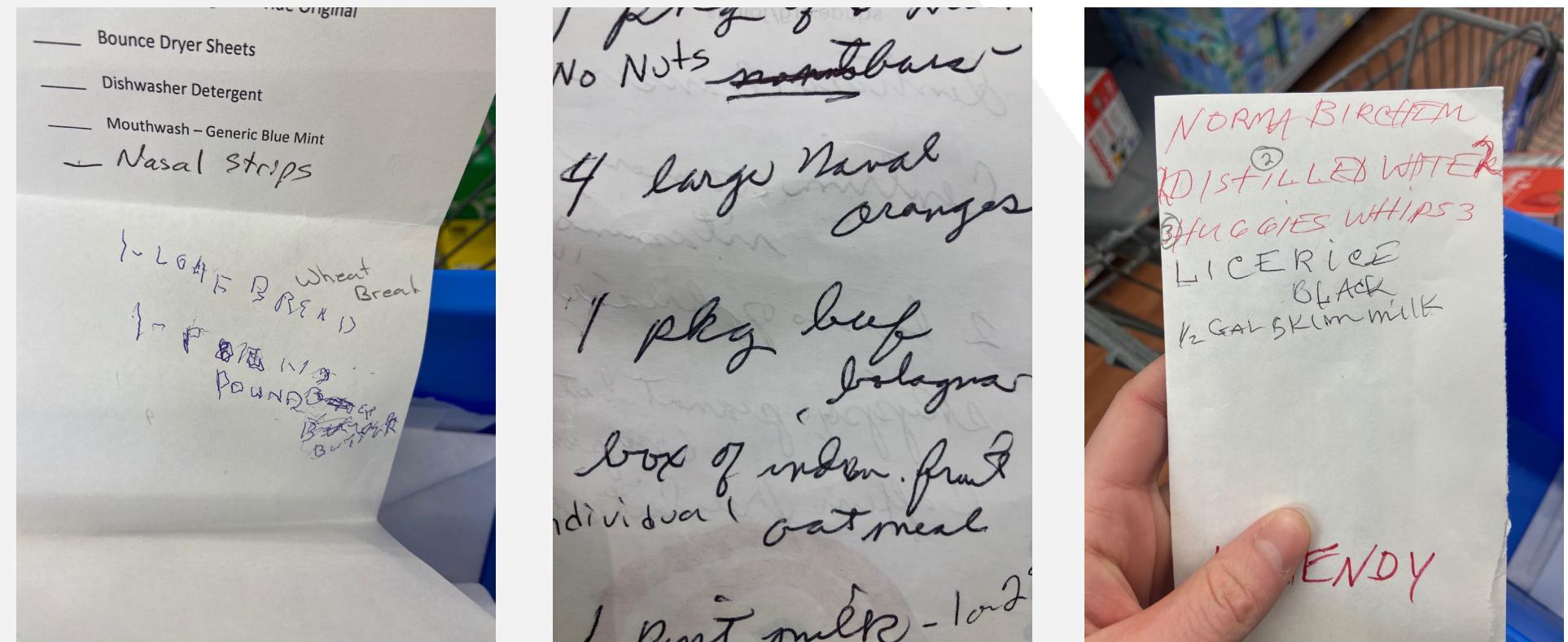


### Challenges

- Communication was the most difficult challenge.
- Due to the isolation, all communication was handwritten. And many lists were illegible.
- Lists were often open ended and hard to interpret, for example even something as specific as "caramel candy" brought up questions of - hard or soft? generic or brand name? 1 candy or 1 bag?
- As you can imagine, nearly every item became 5 questions. Because of this, we asked residents to specify quantity, brand, and flavor to avoid confusion.
- We also asked the facility staff to pre-read lists, so that they might identify difficult to read items, or non-specific directions and ask residents for specification.
- Another challenge was navigating all corners of the grocery store. We now know, lefse is in the dairy aisle. Who knew?!



- In the future, we think it would be valuable to have an electronic way to share grocery lists, so that we can ask any questions ahead of time.
- For this reason, we began asking residents to submit lists early.



### Growth

- We experienced a sliver of the additional hurdles the geriatric population faces in both interacting and communicating with others outside their home.
- Communicating with others remotely can be difficult
- Providing clear instructions with as many specifics as possible will lead to the desired outcome quicker.

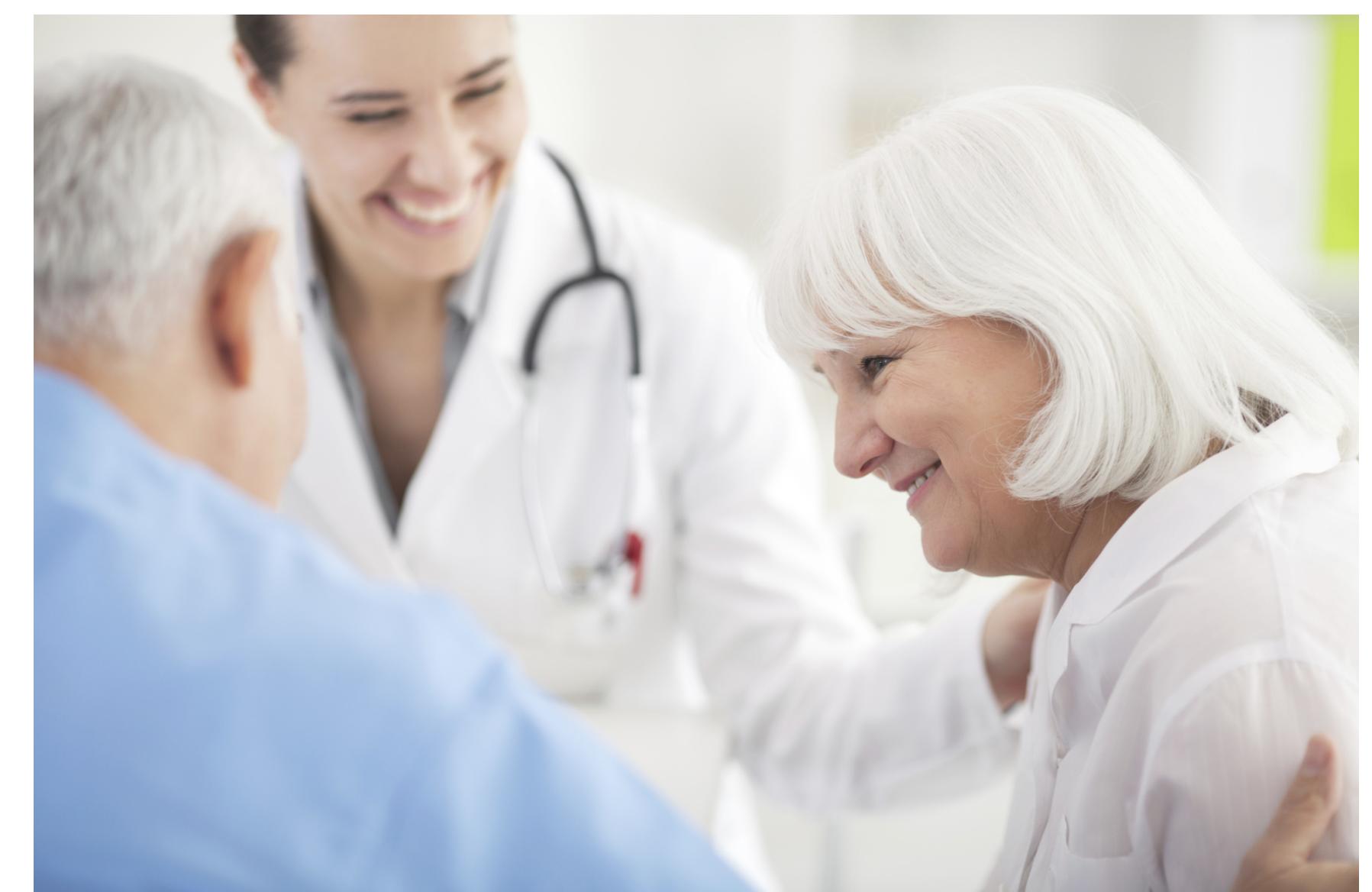


- This is both true for the person requesting a need, and for the person fulfilling that need.
- Helping others during a crisis provides a "we are all in this together" community.
- And finally, while socially distanced, you can still get to know someone quite well through their grocery list. ☺



### Takeaways for Future Medical Practice

- Physicians work with assisted living patients regularly.
- Patients often bring lists of concerns to visits.
- Communicating ahead of time with patients about what specifics they should provide at the visit, will help ensure they bring the specifics we need.
- This forethought will help patients formulate the information they want to share, and hopefully help them feel less on the spot during a visit when we probe with more questions.
- Ideally this will expedite the time we do have together.
- Additionally, take into consideration the needs geriatric patients might have that others do not during a time of crisis.



### Thank You

- To Heather Kaluzniak and Carissa Klarich for organizing the many efforts UND medical students made to step up during the pandemic. This is one of the needs NSRN identified.