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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



Parker Health Group Inc. Teams Up with AARP Foundation to Combat Social Isolation

Voice-Activated Technology to Empower More than One-Thousand New Jerseyans

(Piscataway, NJ) – Parker Health Group Inc. (parkerlife.org) has provided a grant of \$170,000 to AARP Foundation to implement Connect2Affect Connected Communities in 13 New Jersey affordable senior housing buildings, serving more than 1,000 residents across 11 counties.

AARP Foundation Connect2Affect Connected Communities is a comprehensive solution designed to connect older adults to their affordable senior housing communities and to each other by making it easy to get community information using just their voice. The program works with affordable senior housing providers to equip their communities with voice-activated devices, tools, and training that help residents maintain the social connections they need to remain independent and age in place longer. Older adults can hear what programs and activities are coming up, community news, or find out if the mail has been delivered, just by using their voice. They can also use the smart speakers for music, news, weather, and other applications suited to their individual interests.

Social isolation can have a negative effect on someone's mental and physical health, and older adults are especially vulnerable during this time when social distancing is in place. Connect2Affect Connected Communities is a way to help seniors stay connected and socially engaged. Voice is a user-friendly technology that reaches across all ages and abilities.

The Diocesan Housing Services Corporation of the Diocese of Camden is implementing the program in five of its communities. "We're so excited by the opportunity to bring the Connect2Affect initiative to the residents of our communities. Amid the social constraints imposed by the coronavirus pandemic, it is essential that we take every step we can to ensure that seniors stay connected with family, friends, and their community," said James Reynold, Executive Director. "We are especially grateful that Parker has chosen to partner with AARP Foundation to support this initiative in New Jersey. We could not have implemented the program without their generous support."

Parker President and CEO Roberto Muñiz added "We are pleased to collaborate with AARP Foundation and provide this funding to help seniors stay engaged and connected, now more than ever. Parker is committed to supporting seniors with care, services and technology that enables them to live their best life, wherever they call home."

"Social isolation is a serious and complex health issue, one that desperately needs our attention more than ever during these unprecedented times," said Emily Allen, senior vice president of AARP Foundation programs and head of its Social Connection team. "Connect2Affect Connected Communities is part of AARP Foundation's efforts to identify innovative solutions to help adults age 50 and older build the social connections they need to thrive, through the current pandemic and beyond."

About Parker Health Group, Inc.

Parker Health Group, Inc. is a non-for-profit, New Jersey-based aging services organization with over 113 years' experience that is committed to empowering older Americans. Since 1907 Parker has been challenging, changing, and expanding the idea of what it means to grow older in America and how all of us can make aging part of life.