

# **Addressing Social Isolation and Loneliness among Older Adults at Health Centers: An Interdisciplinary Panel**

**Lisa Krinsky, MSW, LICSW  
Sean Cahill, PhD  
Paul Glass**

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# Our Roots

## Fenway Health

- Independent 501(c)(3) FQHC
- Founded 1971
- Mission: To enhance the wellbeing of the LGBTQIA+ community as well as people in our neighborhoods and beyond through access to the highest quality health care, education, research, and advocacy
- Integrated primary care model, including HIV and transgender health services

## The Fenway Institute

- Research, Education, Policy



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- Grand Rounds
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  - CE and HEI Credit
- Environmental Influences On Child Health Outcomes (ECHO) Programs
- Publications and Resources



Learning Module



Publication



Toolkit



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<p><b>Other Health Professionals</b></p>	<p>Confirm equivalency of credits with relevant licensing body.</p>

# Meet the Panelists



**Lisa Krinsky,**  
MSW, LICSW



**Sean Cahill, PhD**



**Paul Glass**

# Learning Objectives

- Describe the key differences between loneliness and social isolation.
- Identify key health concerns and outcomes related to social isolation in older adults.
- Explore strategies for connection and care with aging individuals.
- Discuss best practices for incorporating social connection into health care for patients.



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# Social Isolation and Loneliness

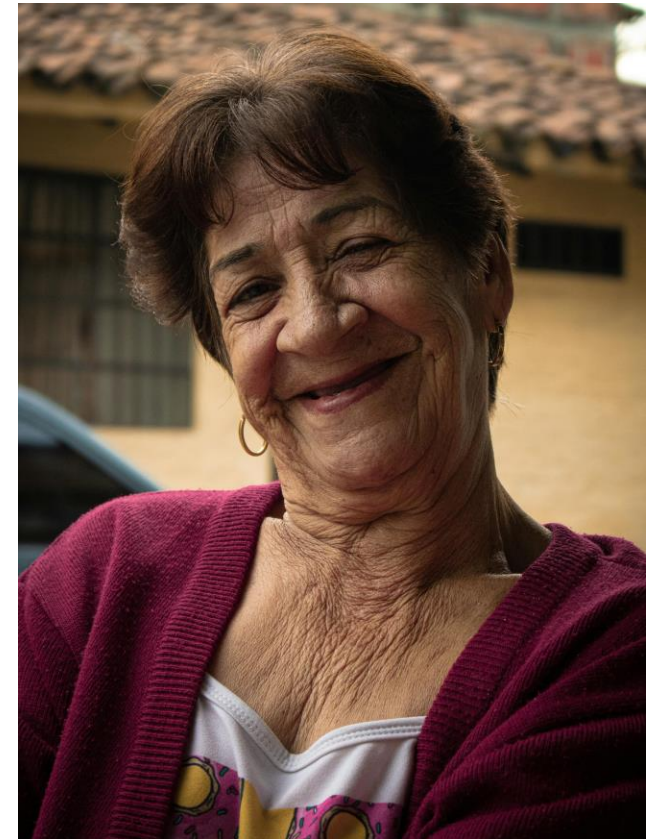
- **Social Isolation:** the lack of social contacts and having few people to interact with regularly; lack of social contact
- **Loneliness:** the distressing feeling of being alone or separated



# Case #1: Maria

**At an annual physical, the nurse practitioner (NP) asks Maria, a 68-year-old Latina woman with hypertension, how she's doing.**

- Maria left her job and moved into her 90-year-old mother's home to care for her since she has progressive dementia.
- She spends all day caring for her and rarely has anyone relieve her in looking after her mother.
- She had to enlist a neighbor to watch her mother just so Maria could make her appointment.



# Case #1: Maria



**The NP asks Maria who supports her as a caregiver and how often she talks to anyone else.**

- Maria says she's always been "a loner" and doesn't have much contact with people other than her mother.
- She enjoys gardening and reading when she has the time.



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**Share in the chat:**

**How are you thinking about:**

- Social isolation
- Loneliness
- Health
- Other issues

**What questions might you ask Maria?**

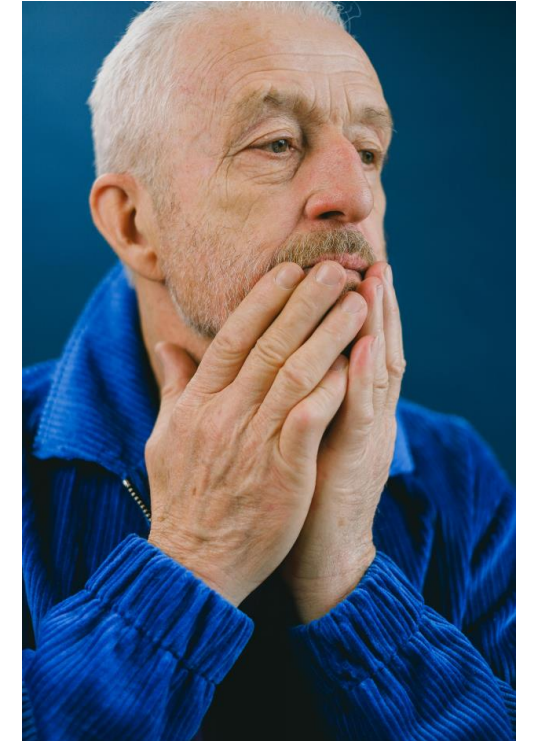
**What might you suggest to Maria?**

**What referrals might you make?**

# Case #2: Fred

**Fred is a 74-year-old white man who has been living with HIV for 40 years. When he meets with his health navigator, he shares:**

- He lives with his two cats in his own home in a rural area.
- He has few friends, stating “Everyone I knew and loved died years ago and I haven’t wanted to make any new friends since then.”



# Case #2: Fred



- Fred describes himself as “someone who doesn’t know how to use any of that complicated computer stuff” only using a basic flip phone.
- Fred says he’s sleeping a lot more and has little motivation to do anything.



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**Share in the chat:**

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**What questions might you ask Fred?**

**What might you suggest to Fred?**

**What referrals might you make?**



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# Closing Thoughts

# Thank You!

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