Lori's Hands: Impacts on Participating Clients

Final Evaluation Report

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Submitted to Lori's Hands, Inc.

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Background

Lori's Hands, founded in 2009, is a service learning organization based in Newark, Delaware. Every year, over 100 community members receive visits from college student volunteers through Lori's Hands. The organization's clientele includes individuals who are living at home with a chronic illness and are willing to share their experiences with the student volunteers who assist them. During the period covered by this report, Lori's Hands volunteers consisted exclusively of University of Delaware (UD) students. (Since the time of data collection, Lori's Hands' Delaware chapter has expanded to include students from Wilmington University and Delaware Technical Community College. Lori's Hands has also launched a second chapter in Baltimore, MD with student volunteers from area schools including Johns Hopkins University and University of Maryland Baltimore County.) Students volunteer their time with Lori's Hands for a variety of reasons, including expanding their career readiness and providing volunteer service to their community. Participating college students can also earn patient contact hours, volunteer hours, and/or college credit.

In the fall of 2019, Lori's Hands initiated a partnership with UD's Center for Research in Education and Social Policy (CRESP) to understand the impact of the program on participating clients of Lori's Hands. This impact evaluation paralleled the collaboration between Lori's Hands and UD-CRESP to evaluate the program's impacts on student volunteers. (The resulting report, "Lori's Hands: Impacts on Participating Students. Final Evaluation Report" is available here: http://www.cresp.udel.edu/publications/.) As such, the partners examined and discussed possible survey measures and outcomes of interest, resulting in an evaluation approach and protocol based on these research questions:

1. What are client perceptions of Lori's Hands as a program? Why do they get involved?
2. How, if at all, do clients benefit from participating in Lori's Hands? Are these benefits related to their relationships with student volunteers?
3. Do clients feel as though they have made an impact on the lives of their student volunteers?

4. In what ways can the leadership of Lori's Hands improve their programming to better suit the needs of their clients and student volunteers?

5. What are the best strategies to measure participant outcomes, either through existing or new instruments?

Methods

Initially the team began with an in-depth literature review of several previously validated tools used to assess similar research questions, including:

1. De Jong Gierveld Emotional and Social Loneliness Scales[1] which consider different types of relationships, including confidant relationships;

2. National Institute of Health's Patient-Reported Outcomes Measurement Information System[2] that evaluates a range of patient characteristics, including emotional distress and social role participation;

3. University of California at Los Angeles Loneliness Scale[3] which measures both objective (i.e., living alone) and subjective (i.e., feeling lonely) types of loneliness experienced by elderly populations; and,

4. World Health Organization Quality of Life tool[4] which assesses several psychometric domains of its respondents, including physical health, psychological, social relationships, and environment.

While each of these studied tools are validated for evaluation of their respective focus areas, none was appropriate on its own for our purposes, given the potential breadth of impact that Lori's Hands might have on its clients. Our interest was in understanding how and if Lori's Hands achieved outcomes in five programmatic service areas: (1) increased social support, (2) increased physical activity, (3) improved home environment, (4) improved nutrition, and (5) improved access to and coordination of care. Further, we were interested in understanding

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[1] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2921057/#CR6
[2] https://commonfund.nih.gov/promis/index
[3] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26187595/
[4] https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15085902/

impacts from both process and outcome perspectives, including: program operations; strengths and weaknesses; and, perceptions of the range of program impacts from client perspectives (e.g., effect of participation on client view of young people) – all in order to help identify a future tool should the program wish to conduct future survey-based studies. Accordingly, the team decided upon and developed a combined qualitative and quantitative interview protocol designed to generate responses to the specific research questions. This protocol included 30 open-ended qualitative questions as well as seven quantitative questions (two regarding food security, five regarding client perceptions of Lori's Hands). The full interview protocol can be found in Appendix A, and was approved by UD's Institutional Review Board (IRB) as noted below.

Lori's Hands staff provided CRESP with contact information for current clients to facilitate communication. Between July 16th, 2020 and August 27th, 2020, 24 potential client participants were contacted via phone by CRESP research assistants regarding their interest in participating in the study, which included completing a structured interview. Of these clients, 79% (n=19) agreed to participate. Of the remaining five clients, one declined to participate, two were unreachable, and the remaining two were not available for the interview after the initial contact. After interviewing 19 clients, it was found that interviews were yielding similar responses such that no further recruitment occurred. Each interview lasted 25 to 50 minutes. All interviews were conducted using the provided phone number, in order to comply with COVID-19 physical distancing guidelines and restrictions. All interviews were led by trained CRESP researchers and were recorded using a portable, digital audio recorder. Clients were assured of the interview's confidentiality and were encouraged to provide both positive and negative feedback, without risk of repercussions or changes to their Lori's Hands services. Participants received a small stipend for participation in the form of a $20 Visa gift card. The UD IRB approved all human subjects-related aspects of the process, including the content and process for communication with students, as well as the administration of the interview protocol.

After each interview, the audio file was uploaded to CRESP's secure server as well as to a professional transcription service's website. The resulting transcribed interview documents

were uploaded to Dedoose™, a web application for managing, analyzing, and presenting qualitative and mixed method research data[5]. Consistent with the Dedoose™ User Guide[6], CRESP researchers developed a coding structure reflective of the evaluation's research questions as well as of the general feedback from the client interviews. This coding structure relied on the following themes (or "parent codes"), (see Appendix B[7]):

- Feedback on Lori's Hands operations;
- Client Experience;
- COVID-19 Impact;
- Client Needs; and,
- Great Quote (which was applied in addition to any of the codes represented by the coding structure).

Three CRESP researchers trained in the use of Dedoose™ attained inter-rater reliability scores that ranged between $\kappa = 0.85$ and 1.00 on a test designed to capture the key components of the coding structure; this score fell within an almost perfect range[8] of scores. Each interview was coded by one of the three trained staff members who used both inductive and deductive approaches to code excerpts. Throughout the coding process, coders met weekly to resolve discrepancies and discuss challenging code applications until consensus was reached.

Findings

Client Characteristics

As shown in Table 1, the client cohort interviewed for this study were mainly female (n=15, 79%) whose average age was about 76 years (range: 57 – 97 years). Of those interviewed, 85% (n=16) were Caucasian, two of whom were Caucasian of Latina ethnicity. The

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[5] Dedoose™: https://www.dedoose.com/. Version 8.3.35. Los Angeles, CA: SocioCultural Research Consultants, LLC

[6] https://www.dedoose.com/userguide

[7] Refer to Appendix B for a chart of each parent code and its definition; this Appendix also includes the "child" and "grandchild" codes that underlay and otherwise document the data represented by these codes' application.

[8] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3900052/#:~:text=Cohen%20suggested%20the%20Kappa%20result,1.00%20as%20almost%20perfect%20agreement

remaining interviewees, 16% (n=3) were African American. At the time of their interviews, clients were mainly living alone (n=13, 68%), with the rest of the clients split between living with a spouse (n=3, 16%), and with another family member (n=3, 16%). Nearly all of the clients were food secure (n=18, 95%)

Table 1: Cohort Attributes (n=19)

Demographic and Other Characteristics[1]	
Average Age	76 years
Gender	
Female	n=15, 79%
Male	n=4, 21%
Race	
African American	n=3, 16%
Caucasian	n=14, 74%
Caucasian, Latina ethnicity	n=2, 11%
Living Situation	
Alone	n=13, 68%
With Spouse	n=3, 16%
With other family member	n=3, 16%
Food Security	
Food insecure	n=1, 5%
Food secure	n=18, 95%

[1] At the time of interview.

Findings: Research Questions

Using the transcribed interviews, researchers examined the qualitative data for key themes using Dedoose™ to facilitate web-based coding and subsequent analysis. Trained CRESP researchers applied codes ("parent," "child," or "grandchild" – refer to Appendix B) to selected interview excerpts in order to answer the study's research questions. Table 2 provides an overview of the eight client benefits identified from the data, including a description of each category and exemplar quotes from the interviews. Findings related to each research question are presented following Table 2; these findings include quotes that exemplify the finding.

Table 2: What Clients Gain from their Lori's Hands Experience

Client Benefit	Description[1]	Exemplar Quote
Emotional fulfillment	Client gains a deep human connection that leads to fulfilling emotional needs such as feeling loved, appreciated, etc.	It's not like, "Okay. I'm 74 and you're like 19 or 20 or something," and, you know, worlds connect. It's like coming in and we're talking and we're laughing and stuff like that, and it's just-- it's just easy. You know, I just--I, like I say, I just love them to death. I enjoy them being here, and, you know, then we'll be sitting here and talking and talking and talking and I'll look at the time. I'll be, "You've been here, it's been over two hours," you know.
Unconditional relationship	Clients gain a relationship not based on obligation (as opposed to, for example, a relationship with a healthcare provider)	Those two-- I really enjoyed talking to them. Like I said, one of them is in-- lives in France. The other in Pennsylvania, and the--one of them, she, the girl that lives in Pennsylvania, she went up to Massachusetts for a vacation, I guess, over Memorial Day weekend. They have a place up there, so they were there, and it was on a Sunday and she called just to see how I was. You know, so, I mean, they're extremely thoughtful. To me. I mean, I think that they are, because I think it's a very nice thing, and kids that age, I just, you know, to call somebody different that's not family just to see how they are and they're away on vacation, it's just, you know, most of them don't give a thought about anybody <laughs> except having a good time or, you know, I mean, at that age.
Assistance with tasks	Client receives help with tasks that they may not be able to complete on their own.	And those nurses and the social workers, they introduced me to Lori's Hands and they were a godsend because they helped me to become more functional. I don't have to worry about if I need something, you know, in the middle of the week and it's not my shopping time.

Client Benefit	Description[1]	Exemplar Quote
Close connection to someone you might not ordinarily connect with	Client builds a close relationship with their student that goes deeper than just volunteer/client; companionship.	This young woman happens to be a Dreamer, and her family is facing this threat of deportation. I can't even imagine the stress that that adds to her life. So I've offered on her behalf-- maybe if she could put me in touch with people, I'd be happy to write letters on her behalf.
Intergenerational understanding	Client has new knowledge and understanding of their student's life, abilities, and beliefs or vice versa.	Oh, they would talk about school, and then I would talk about my life, a little bit about when I went to school or how I would handle certain things years ago when things were different, and it was a good experience for both of us. Whatever the topic was for the day we would just decide to talk about it.
Someone to talk to	Client enjoys having dialogue with the student.	Plus, the, you know, just sitting here and having somebody different to talk with. Young, young people. That's... I like that. I like just spending time talking with them too.
Appreciation	Clients display gratitude for the support they receive.	They have the sense they helped somebody and it was appreciated…always, for me anyhow, and I don't take them for granted, and they're very respectful.

Client Benefit	Description[1]	Exemplar Quote
Mental acuity	Client gains the increased ability to keep the mind sharp in responding to a stimulus through conversation or action	I think it is very important for older people especially to remain mentally active and communicating with people, and I think a lot of them end up with a very solitary life.

[1] See Appendix B for complete description.

Finding 1: Perhaps the most significant impact of Lori's Hands is its ability to provide companionship to clients who may be isolated.

Clients had an extremely favorable experience with their Lori's Hands volunteers and often formed relationships that led to valuable companionship and genuine interest and concern toward one another's life. Isolation due to healthcare needs, physical disability, or COVID-19 precautions often resulted in an almost universal sense of client loneliness. Therefore, having a regular companion to talk to was particularly satisfying to some clients. In terms of her emotional benefit, one client stated, "…*what benefits me is that they're there for me. You know, I get satisfaction just with them being here. You know, even talking to me, I'm satisfied with that.*"

Further, some clients found that having students in their home felt like an intimate gathering of host and guest. As previously noted, a majority of clients expressed feelings of loneliness; boredom was also mentioned often. Therefore, the introduction of students into their homes was something clients looked forward to. Having the ability to discuss their lives with students presented an opportunity for socialization that many were lacking due to being homebound, especially for those clients living alone. In regard to her relationship with her student volunteers, one client exclaimed, "*It's really, really great, you know. These girls, you know, they help me a lot; just being here talking to me, you know, it helps me. You know, because I don't have-- I don't get much visitors anyway. And to me they're like a guest and it's really, really great.*"

Additionally, clients noticed that their student volunteers appreciated the interactions as well, and this led to a more genuine and meaningful bond, which became an important part of clients' lives. Student and client bonds often modeled typical friendships, where they would discuss topics such as politics, school, and family and would participate in activities like watching movies and chatting about their favorite parts. This was of particular interest to some clients due to the age gap, as one client notes, *"I'm an old lady and you can't imagine until you get my age how important it is to have companionship and younger people come to you and you can tell that they appreciate being there."*

Companionship through Lori's Hands was especially appreciated by clients as it improved the interaction with others that clients often lacked, even before COVID-19 induced isolation. These relationships were often fortified through the belief of clients that their student volunteers truly wanted to be with them and were truly invested in their time together. This time together then, was beneficial on both ends as the students looked forward to seeing their client as well as a means of maintaining that special bond. In regard to the impact of student volunteers on their daily life, one client said, "*But so what I tend to use, you know, appreciate most, is the sort of the contact. It's another person to talk to, to interact with, because of the isolation and things.*"

Other clients felt a large impact in their lives with social support and companionship. For example, a client who strongly bonded with their volunteers stated: *"…I love that the girls were willing to understand what I was talking about, and we would really have good conversations. I mean, they would really get it on it, you know, and share their ideas and stuff, too."* And, *"…It provides me with companionship with the girls coming over and talking, and then, like I say, the phone calls to make sure I'm all right."*

Of the topics discussed, companionship with their student volunteers was the most prevalent amongst the clients in terms of their benefits from the Lori's Hands Program.

Finding 2: Almost half of clients established a deeper relationship with their volunteers than they anticipated, often extending outside of the "official" Lori's Hands volunteering sessions.

The bond between clients and students was especially fortified due to its unconditional nature. Many clients mentioned visitation by neighbors, healthcare officials, family members, and friends; however, the Lori's Hands visits were special in that the student volunteer relationships usually seemed less "obligatory" and more personal and sincere. Many clients even went so far as to say that they considered their volunteers as family. This was especially notable for the clients who did not have current relationships with their families of origin, as one client passionately proclaimed, *"Because I don't have any family and so I take them as my family, you know. Try and stay in touch with them as much as I can."*

Such interpersonal connections have proven to withstand the tests of time as many clients have continued their relationships and communication with their student volunteers outside of the regularly scheduled weekly visits. This prolonged interaction is meaningful to the clients as a testament to the devotion and authentic care of the Lori's Hands volunteers. Some clients recounted stories of their volunteers going above and beyond the required volunteer activities as one woman appreciatively said, *"While I was in the hospital two of them even brought me a pizza."*

Additionally, while some communication is briefer, it remains important. Clients often mentioned that their students would check in from time to time simply to make sure that their client was doing well. This was often over text, calls, and sometimes even Facebook. Clients were thankful for the opportunity to chat with their students and were even sometimes surprised that they were able to maintain relationships with younger generations. For example, one client noted, *"And so I actually do kind of keep in touch with them, but I keep in touch with them as-- not real close friends, because I'm an old fart, and they're-- I keep using that. I'm an elderly person, and they're children. Or they're young adults. And so, we still chat sometimes, or we're on Facebook together, and we also text and stuff like that once in a while, so I do keep in touch. But then, there was this other girl that called for a while, and just called to check on me, and we would chat it up."*

Many clients became protective of their student volunteers as they would family. These relationships had depth and many clients projected that they were comfortable discussing virtually any appropriate topic with their student. Notably, one client stated, *"You know, I mean, I start to feel almost like they're my granddaughters, you know."*

Finding 3: For clients, participation in Lori's Hands has either created a new appreciation for or has fostered a new interest in understanding the lives and experiences of their students. Some clients even went so far as to say that their interactions with the students changed their perspective on the quality of the youth of America.

As clients became more comfortable interacting with their student volunteers, many discovered that their prior perspectives, which came from media or younger family members, had improved. One client recounted the benefits of her interactions with her student

volunteers when she said, *"I think the main benefit of us is getting to know young people that aren't our children, so to speak, our grandchildren and more on a one-to-one basis, a even basis, and I don't think we get to do that very much. We're all in our own little bubble, but our bubble is older people, educated people, well-off people. I mean, we're all relatively well-off, the people that we hang out with anyway, not that we--that's just the way it is. So it gets us to see certain people outside of our bubble and how they think and what their problems are."*

In fact, clients reported that forming relationships with their student volunteers was beneficial to the ways in which they interacted with younger generations. Through learning about each other's lives, clients were able to empathize with and learn from the experiences of the students. To illustrate, one individual said, *"So I got a lot from talking with them and finding out about the programs that they were going into and what they were doing and where they were living now. I mean, one was in one of the houses, and the other was in one of the dorms, and just learning about young kids today, it helps me with my grandchildren, and my grandchildren are at different ages doing different things."*

While clients were generally happy with, and sometimes surprised by, the quality of work that their student volunteers were doing, some instead talked about the quality of their character. One client even went so far as to say, *"Just by their ringing my doorbell tells me they've got an open heart. They have a generous nature, and they are open to sharing. I learn so much from them, and I like to think they learn from me as well."*

The confirmation of a symbiotic relationship alludes to the fact that many clients believed that the younger students were also learning new things about, and ways to interact with, older generations. Lori's Hands presents unique opportunities for developing intergenerational understanding and empathy, which may not be present outside of both clients' and student volunteers' everyday lives.

Finding 4: Lori's Hands provides unique and needed services that both supplement those received from family and friends, healthcare providers, and/or social services, and that deeply affect clients' lives.

Many clients clearly indicated that the assistance provided by their Lori's Hands volunteers is more than mere services. The students not only met their clients' tangible needs but went above and beyond by providing emotional and other types of support that may not be available from other sources. When describing how beneficial and different these services are outside of Lori's Hands, one client stated: *"…and so I'm sure that a lot of the population, there's just things that we can't do anymore, and those are the kind of things that are the hardest to-- there's the gray area of getting your needs met if you're compromised, and Lori's Hands does help fill in that gray area sometimes where-- you can't always have friends all the time. You can, but I'm cognizant, too, of not over-stretching that. So it definitely fills a niche that I feel like a lot of other places just miss a little bit. It's very unique."*

A number of other clients had such praise for the organization that they believed it should be expanded beyond the population it assists right now, as exemplified by this quote: *"…I would say that it's a worthwhile organization and that, you know, they should expand their offerings to help other folks. I think that that's a critical need as the population ages, and I'm seeing more and more folks that could use that help, not just me, but there are others who get injured or get sick, especially with this virus who could use the extra hand, if you will, to help them, you know, through their day-to-day needs."*

Finding 5: Student volunteers most often provided help with household tasks (cleaning, organizing, etc.), social support/companionship, and nutrition support (food preparation and grocery shopping). At times, they also helped with obtaining prescriptions and mobility in the home.

Many clients felt their volunteers were largely helpful in completing tasks they were often unable to work through on their own. With the assistance of their student volunteers, clients received significant help with basic tasks with which they may have previously struggled. Many clients expressed gratitude for the assistance with home environment tasks, saying that it improved their daily life as illustrated in the following, *"…but I think it's wonderful that they can*

come in and just keep us clean in the house, and that's one of my things, and the things that I care to is the biggest help, because then it gives you relief and makes us feel good." And, *"Because, I mean, it's such a big help. Just them doing, like, the litterbox for me, because I can't take care of my cats anymore, and, you know, them doing that, and then, like I say, taking out the trash. I cannot carry a trash bag out and stuff. That's immensely-- an immense help."*

Another component that Lori's Hands aids clients with is nutrition, specifically food preparation and grocery shopping. The significance of this assistance is exhibited in the following statement by a client, *"...oh, it was helpful. At times I needed water or something. They was right there and very good companion, but the most of things-- if I needed my water or a sandwich and something they would come and go to the store for me."*

At times, volunteers also helped obtain prescriptions for clients as exemplified in the following quote, *"Just last week the girls came and they went to the store for me and they call me every week to check on me to see if, you know, I need anything or can they assist with anything I might need as far as groceries, medication pickup, you know, like that."*

Clients also received mobility assistance from their volunteers and expressed that it was beneficial for them, *"I was in a wheelchair for quite a while, so one of my favorite things for sure was when I knew the students were coming and I knew they could at least push me outdoors to get around my neighborhood a little bit."*

Finding 6: Clients perceived an increased sense of compassion and access to career-oriented experiences as two of the main benefits for students who volunteered with Lori's Hands. They also believed that students would feel satisfied with their work, thinking that it truly made an impact in someone else's life and was valuable in nature.

In addition to benefiting greatly from the Lori's Hands program themselves, clients also saw that student volunteers benefitted from assisting the clients; some of these benefits included: increased sense of compassion, valuable experiences for future career areas, and feelings of making a difference in someone else's life. Clients believed that their student volunteer's efforts would contribute to the student's sense of fulfillment and the belief that they are making an impact, as the following quote portrays: *"... so I believe it would give the*

volunteers a sense of gratitude or a job well done-- and a job well done, that they're doing something where there's a need, and they're filling that out of the kindness of their heart with no expectation of payment or reward or prism or cookie, even."

Many volunteers and their clients had experiences where they gained knowledge of others. One client noted that the volunteers often learned about the lifestyle of those outside of their typical environment, as the following exemplifies: *"…one of the volunteers was from China, and she was particularly interesting because she was always kind of interested in how old people live here as opposed to China. I guess she was surprised how independent we were in a sense as opposed to the older folks in China. But, anyway, so I think she learned a lot about our lifestyle. I mean, I'm sure she knew about the student lifestyle, because she was a student, but she didn't have that much interaction with older people.*"

Finding 7: Pairing Lori's Hands clients with student volunteers of diverse cultures enriches clients' lives and provides them with unique opportunities for personal growth.

In addition to expanding generational understanding, some clients also experienced an expansion of their cultural frames of reference through their student volunteers with diverse cultural backgrounds. These experiences were enriching and were opportunities clients may not have had if not for Lori's Hands. Clients also saw value in forming relationships with students who were not necessarily from their immediate area. As one client shared, *"I couldn't imagine I'd meet somebody from China. Or somebody from Africa. But that -- that made it possible. Lori's Hands made that possible.*"

The relationships built between student volunteers and clients with different cultural backgrounds provided unique opportunities for learning. One client emphasized a connection she made with her student volunteer through culture and dance, *"There was -- one was really nice. He was an Indian and he was into Indian dancing, and I was a dancer, professional dancer, and then the "World of Dance" had a Indian group on it, and so we really made a connection with -- he had done Indian dancing and that sort of thing, so that was kind of a nice connection.*"

Finding 8: Clients see the value in having someone else around to converse with as a means of engaging in hobbies and learning about technology. However, many clients would like more help with technology use.

The ability to engage in discourse with their student volunteers contributes to clients' increased sense of enjoyment around hobbies and interests such as playing card games, watching television, and technology. For instance, a client who enjoys crafting as a hobby stated, *"Oh, I talked about family, and I'd ask about their family, and usually they were helping me. We had things out, and then I'd give them stuff for crafts. I'm a crafty person, and I like to do crafts, but I'm always giving them something, and so, yeah, we'd just talk like friends. You get to know a little bit about them, what they're doing in school, where they live, you know, stuff like that."*

Another client made a similar comment about engaging in card games and watching movies with their student saying, *"They would come up with card games. I had some DVD movies that we watched, and then mostly, you know, talking and sort of interacting about what was going on and what I was trying to do to help myself and others."*

Clients also received various types of technological support from their students including fixing a broken computer, help navigating computer and iPhone use, and editing computer slides. However, when asked about one thing that Lori's Hands could help them with at the current time, clients frequently expressed the desire for additional assistance with technology use. One client in particular shared a unique need as follows, *"I'm lagging, and so especially with my starting of a new business, I would love if someone could come in and hold my hand, show me how to use my cell phone, how to better market my products, that young-kid sort of thing."*

Another client expressed a need for computer assistance saying, *"Lori's Hands can bring somebody to type, you know, on the computer."*

Finding 9: Clients suggested several improvements, including more advertising of the program and extended volunteer visits.

After inquiring about potential improvements to the Lori's Hands program, clients frequently expressed that they wished more people knew about the program. One client shared, *"Now getting more people involved would be great…I wish they gave all, everybody business cards, you could hand out business cards to some of the family members…a billboard…near the University of Delaware would be great."*

In addition, clients suggested that longer visits would be beneficial for them as illustrated by this quote, *"…if they could stay longer that would be great. That's the only disappointing thing, an hour's kind of, they're barely here and then they're gone. You know? It would be nice for two hours at least."*

Additional Findings (Quantitative)

Clients were also asked two sets of quantitative questions in the form of statements to assess food insecurity and to rate their experience with Lori's Hands. The first set of statements regarding food insecurity were as follows: (1) Within the past 12 months we worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more, and (2) Within the past 12 months the food we bought just didn't last and we didn't have money to get more[9]. In response to these two statements, individuals were asked to respond with *always true, sometimes true, never true,* or *refuse to answer*. If they were unable to answer or were unsure, those responses were accepted as well. As reported in Table 1, one out of nineteen clients interviewed was food insecure at the time of their interview.

The second set of quantitative questions consisted of five statements as follows:

(1) My Lori's Hands volunteer makes me feel appreciated,

(2) Lori's Hands helps me live independently,

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[9] Hager, E. R., Quigg, A. M., Black, M. M., Coleman, S. M., Heeren, T., Rose-Jacobs, R., Cook, J. T., Ettinger de Cuba, S. E., Casey, P. H., Chilton, M., Cutts, D. B., Meyers A. F., Frank, D. A. (2010). Development and Validity of a 2-Item Screen to Identify Families at Risk for Food Insecurity. Pediatrics, 126(1), 26-32. doi:10.1542/peds.2009-3146.

(3) I feel as if I have someone at Lori's Hands that will listen to me,

(4) I feel like Lori's Hands students benefit from volunteering, and

(5) I feel like Lori's Hands helps to improve my quality of life.

Clients were asked to rate on a scale of 1-5 how much they agreed with each statement, where 1 is completely disagree and 5 is completely agree. As shown in Table 3, clients unanimously (n=19, 100%) *"completely agreed"* that they felt appreciated by their Lori's Hands volunteer and that Lori's Hands helps to improve their quality of life, while almost all were in complete agreement (ranging from n=16 to n=18, 84% to 95%) that Lori's Hands helps them to live independently, would listen to them, and that their student volunteer benefitted from their experience.

Table 3: Experience with Lori's Hands (n=19)

	Completely Agree[1]	Agree[1]	Neutral[1]	Disagree[1]	Completely Disagree[1]
My Lori's Hands volunteer makes me feel appreciated.	n=19, 100%	n=0, 0%	n=0, 0%	n=0, 0%	n=0, 0%
Lori's Hands helps me live independently.	n=16, 84%	n=1, 5%	n=2, 11%	n=0, 0%	n=0, 0%
I feel as if I have someone at Lori's Hands that will listen to me.	n=18, 95%	n=1, 5%	n=0, 0%	n=0, 0%	n=0, 0%
I feel like Lori's Hands students benefit from volunteering.	n=17, 89%	n=2, 11%	n=0, 0%	n=0, 0%	n=0, 0%
I feel like Lori's Hands helps to improve my quality of life.	n=19, 100%	n=0, 0%	n=0, 0%	n=0, 0%	n=0, 0%

[1] At the time of interview.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Lori's Hands is a valuable program due to its ability to offer clients both tangible task assistance and deep intergenerational relationships with students. Volunteers have the

opportunity to gain personal, professional, and academic experiences that have lasting impact. The organization is well-respected and highly praised by their clients.

Solution-focused problem solving, effective communication, and a strong infrastructure are core strengths that have led to the program's present success. As the organization grows, Lori's Hands could consider suggestions made by clients including increased advertising and extended student visits to expand their impact. With increased advertising and partnerships with healthcare agencies, faith-based organizations, senior housing communities, and local universities, more clients can benefit from the services that Lori's Hands offers. Extending student visits for specific clients could allow for more time to develop the client-student relationship and minimize the pressure students feel towards accomplishing tasks. These expansion ideas of course will depend on resources available to support administrative infrastructure which, to date, is responsible for establishing Lori's Hands' strong reputation in and around the greater Newark community.

Additional opportunities exist for improvement that include making a more specific match between certain clients and students, as well as more interaction among Lori's Hands clients. Some Lori's Hands clients may have unique health needs that could benefit from a student volunteer with a more specialized background; e.g., one who is majoring in nursing or occupational therapy. Furthermore, regular convenings between clients of Lori's Hands can be an important supplemental source of companionship and social-emotional support. Post-COVID-19, small gatherings between clients living in the same geographical area can take place – meeting at a park or for a meal, for instance. Other means of interactions like writing letters and making crafts were also suggested by the interviewed clients as a way to share their skills with the Lori's Hands community; these activities would also help clients achieve the interaction they desire. As the program expands, documenting these practices may also serve as a mechanism to maximize consistency and effectiveness.

Finally, and especially given its expansion efforts beyond Delaware, Lori's Hands leaders and managers plan to measure client outcomes as an indicator of progress towards reaching their goal to provide individuals living with chronic illness with improved well-being and independence through student volunteer visits. To meet this measurement need, and based on

this report's Findings, UD-CRESP will separately recommend a suite of survey questions to Lori's Hands. These questions will consider those surveys that are validated by current research in the field, and/or were examined to support the current evaluation (e.g., the Patient-Reported Outcomes Measurement Information System).

In closing, the clients in this program hold Lori's Hands near and dear in their hearts, as exhibited through this client quote: *"Well, I think my goal is now, with Lori's Hands, is the same thing, is try to get young people, old people, middle-aged people, to learn how to appreciate each other. I think that's the whole aim of Lori's Hands, is to try to get folks to love each other, how to know each other, and to appreciate. I think that's the ultimate gain, the game plan."*

Appendix A: Final Interview Protocol

Participation in Lori's Hands

1) How did you find out about Lori's Hands?
2) What was the enrollment process like?
3) What kind of information did you receive from Lori's Hands about the program?
4) What was your initial meeting like with the Lori's Hands staff person?
5) How long have you been a Lori's Hands client?
6) Are you still interacting with Lori's Hands student volunteers now, during COVID?
7) How are you connecting with Lori's Hands during COVID?

Types of activities

8) Is someone currently available to pick up groceries for you if you need them?
   a) Pre-COVID? (*pre-COVID means "has this changed because of COVID?"*)
9) Is someone currently available to help you cook, or prepare meals when needed?
   a) Pre-COVID?
10) Is someone currently available to help you clean up around the home when you need it?
    a) Pre-COVID?
11) Do you currently have support to stay active throughout the week?
    a) Pre-COVID?
12) Do you currently have someone to pick up a prescription for you if you need it?
    a) Pre-COVID?
13) Do you currently have someone who will listen to you when you need to talk?
    a) Pre-COVID?
14) How often are you currently communicating with people outside of your home?
    a) Pre-COVID?
15) Are you currently happy with the amount of communication you have?
    a) Pre-COVID?
16) What is the primary way you currently connect with others?
    a) Has this changed because of COVID?
17) If Lori's Hands could help you with one thing, what would be most valuable to you?
18) What are the reasons that you currently leave your home and how often?
    a) What were the reasons that you left your home pre-COVID and how often did you do so?

Student Volunteer

19) What can you tell me about the student volunteers who currently visit you from Lori's Hands?
    a) Pre-COVID?
20) Now I want to ask you about visits from the students.

a) What kind of things do the students do when they visit you in person?

b) What do you discuss during your virtual visits? (i.e. phone calls, texts, or emails?)

21) Are your Lori's Hands volunteers people you can relate to?

a) If so, how?

b) If not, what are the reasons?

22) In what way or ways does Lori's Hands provide you with companionship?

23) Can you share any specific memories or experiences that stand out to you with student volunteers?

24) What is one thing you hope the student volunteers might get out of this program?

25) Has your perspective on young people changed as a result of Lori's Hands?

a) Why or why not?

Benefits/Drawbacks of the Program

26) If you had to choose just one or two things, what do you think the main benefits are for you and other Lori's Hands clients?

27) Was there anything you had hoped that you would get out of your experience with Lori's Hands that you haven't?

a) How has your experience been similar to or different from those expectations?

b) *Probe if needed: is there anything you've gotten out of your experience with Lori's Hands that you hadn't anticipated?*

28) Would you recommend a friend to participate in this program?

a) Why or why not?

29) Lori's Hands is working on expanding in Delaware and elsewhere to include more clients and student volunteers. What would you say to someone who is thinking about supporting the organization?

30) I want to also be sure to get your ideas on how the program can be improved. What are one or two things that Lori's Hands could do to make the program even more beneficial for you or for other people

Appendix B: Code Definitions

Code	Child codes	Grandchild codes	Definition
Feedback on Lori's Hands Operations	- Communication with Lori's Hands - More interaction with other clients/community engagement - Knowledge of what the student can and cannot do - Expectation of what the student can and cannot do - Enrollment process - Improvements - Praise - Would recommend LH to a friend - Participation in the Pen Pal program		General feedback for how the program is run - **Communication with Lori's Hands:** includes scheduling: client provides feedback on how effective communication is between them and their student partner or Maggie. Also includes how visits are scheduled and any issues with that. - **More Interaction with other clients**: client speaks about whether they like the level of interaction with other clients or not. Client provides ideas, feedback, criticisms for how much interaction there is between clients and gives suggestions for how this could be improved. -**Knowledge of what the student can and cannot do**: Prior knowledge about what the student can and cannot do. - **Expectation of what the student can and cannot do:** Things that the client may or may not have anticipated the student does during visits. - **Enrollment process**: client discusses how they found out about Lori's Hands and how easy/difficult the process was to join -**Improvements:** includes things clients believe could be made better within LH (including general improvements that do not fit into other categories) - **Praise**: client recommending the program and sharing why the program is valuable
Great Quote			A quote that is particularly moving, emotional, or well-articulated which you think could be useful later
Client Experience	- Personality observations related	- Intergenerational understanding	What it is like to participate with LH.

Code	Child codes	Grandchild codes	Definition
	to student - Thoughts & feelings toward student - Client perspective of student benefit - What clients gain - Unique story that captured interest - Outside support - Ongoing communication with student	- Student credit hours - Compassion - Career experience or training - Unconditional relationship - Emotional fulfillment - Appreciation - Someone to talk to - Close connection to someone else you might not ordinarily connect with - Mental Acuity - Support received and not received outside of LH	- **Personality Observations Related to Student**: Clients observed differences in personality. - **Thoughts & Feelings Toward Student:** client talks about their attitude towards their student volunteer, including but not limited to an emotional connection - **Client Perspective of Student Benefit**: client talks about what they believe the student gains from LH ● **Intergenerational understanding**: client has new knowledge and understanding of their student's life, abilities, and beliefs or vice versa. ● **Student credit hours:** Student gains credit hours. ● **Compassion:** Student's ability to take the perspective of and feel the emotions and hardships of their client. ● **Career experience or training:** Students gain experience for the purpose of their career development. -**What Clients Gain**: different benefits of being a client in LH. ● **Unconditional Relationship:** a relationship not based on obligation or family relationship ● **Emotional Fulfillment**: a deep human connection that leads to fulfilling emotional needs such as feeling loved, appreciated, etc. ● **Appreciation**: clients display gratitude for the support that they receive ● **Someone to talk to:** client enjoys having dialogue with student ● **Close connection to someone else you might not ordinarily connect with**: client builds a close relationship with their student that goes deeper than just volunteer/ client; companionship ● **Mental Acuity:** the increased ability to keep the mind sharp in responding to a stimulus through conversation or action

Code	Child codes	Grandchild codes	Definition
			- **Unique Story that Captured Interest**: story that shows an interesting or different type of experience that they had during their time with LH. - **Outside Support:** support systems outside of Lori's Hands • **Support received and not received outside of LH program:** Client needs met, or not met, without help from LH. - **Ongoing Communication with Student**: client and student continue communication beyond scheduled visits **Key words:** benefits, companionship, perspective, "during my visits", usually, client, help, ability/disability, support
COVID-19 Impact	- Going Virtual - Mental Health Impact - Changes in outside support - Frequency of engagement with others	- Going virtual as positive - Going virtual as negative	Apply this code when the client discusses if/how they are doing visits since being off-campus due to COVID-19. - **Going Virtual**: Virtual visits & interaction with family through phone, video chat, etc. - **Mental Health Impact**: Positive and/or negative changes in emotion and perspective due to COVID-19. - **Changes in outside support:** Any impact or shift in resources clients had outside of Lori's Hands due to COVID-19. - **Frequency of engagement with others:** Client discusses how often they interact with other people both in-person and/or virtually. **Keywords**: Phone call, check-in, Zoom, facetime, keeping in touch

Code	Child codes	Grandchild codes	Definition
Client Needs	- Services or help needed related to COVID-19 - Services or help needed not related to COVID-19 - Helped with social support - Needs help with social support - Helped with physical activity - Needs help with physical activity - Helped with home environment - Needs help with home environment - Helped with nutrition - Needs help with nutrition - Helped with access to coordination & care	- Needs help with frequency of engagement - Helped with frequency of engagement	Client discusses various needs and supports required. - **Services or help needed related to COVID-19:** client discusses any form of assistance required as a result of COVID-19 - **Services or help needed not related to COVID-19:** client discusses any form of assistance required but it is not related to COVID-19 - **Helped with social support:** through visits/calls/letters, tech help, engaging in hobbies together - **Needs help with social support:** needs assistance with visits/calls/letters, tech help, engaging in hobbies together - **Helped with physical activity:** by going for walks together and by doing household activities together - **Needs help with physical activity:** needs help going for walks together and doing household activities together - **Helped with home environment:** through assistance with housework, yard work and pet care - **Needs help with home environment:** needs assistance with housework, yard work and pet care - **Helped with nutrition:** through help with grocery shopping and meal preparation - **Needs help with nutrition:** needs help with grocery shopping and meal preparation - **Helped with access to coordination & care:** through prescription pick-up, clerical/paperwork help, support with self-management activities,

Code	Child codes	Grandchild codes	Definition
	- Needs help with access to coordination & care - Frequency of engagement - Other		assistance navigating community resources - **Needs help with access to coordination & care:** needs help with prescription pick-up, clerical/paperwork help, support with self-management activities, assistance navigating community resources - **Frequency of engagement:** leaving the house, engaging with the community. - **Other:** any need that doesn't fit the other child codes under "Client Needs."