Dear Healthier Black Elders Center Member,

We know that many of us are trying to stay informed as the health concerns in our communities are rapidly changing. Due to the rising number of confirmed cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) across the United States, and in response to the recent state of emergency declared by Michigan’s Governor Whitmer, the Healthier Black Elders Center has decided it must cancel all of the Lunch & Learns scheduled for April, May and June of this year in Detroit and Flint. Our Lunch & Learns often attract 50 – 80 older adults. Unfortunately, as this virus is particularly dangerous to older adults, we want to promote the health and well-being of our older Michiganders. We will not reschedule these Lunch & Learns, but hope to see you for our fall series later this year. In addition, the Annual Art of Aging Successfully event is cancelled this year. On behalf of all of us at HBEC, we hope you and your families stay healthy.

Prevention

There is currently no vaccine to prevent Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. The CDC specifically recommends for older adults to:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Make a plan in case you become sick. Know who will take care of you, if you and/or your caregiver, become sick.
Stock up on basic food and supplies at your home to avoid public spaces as much as possible.

Stay updated on what is happening within your community by visiting the state of Michigan website (https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus).

Avoid public spaces and gatherings if there is an outbreak in your community.

Call your healthcare provider if you start experiencing the symptoms of fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

Use a facemask in accordance with CDC guidelines:

- **CDC does not recommend facemasks for people who are well** to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. They are not very effective.

- **Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms** of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. Facemasks are also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

## Reliable Information about the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

**For information specific to Michigan:** [https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/](https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus/)

Gov. Whitmer created this website to detail information specific to Michigan. She also created four task forces on (1) State Operations, (2) Health and Human Services, (3) Education, and (4) the Economy and Workforce to combat the spread of the virus.

**National and international information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC)**

For continuously updated information about the virus, including maps of confirmed cases around the world, visit [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html)

Please note that the Lunch & Learns still appear in the Spring issue of the HBEC newsletter, published before the coronavirus surfaced in the U.S., but these events are **CANCELLED**. If you have any questions, please call the HBEC office at 313-664-2616.

Regards,

The Healthier Black Elders Center