



**AGING IN PLACE DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: SUPPORTIVE FACTORS
AND PERSPECTIVES AMONG SERVICE PROVIDERS AND OLDER ADULTS**

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Aging in place allows older adults to age while remaining in their communities and homes. While many older adults hope to age in place for as long as possible, many supportive factors are necessary to make aging in place successful. The academic literature suggests that these factors include social support, one's home environment and neighborhood, and community-based services. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has limited older adults' access to each of these essential support systems. This study examines older adults' firsthand experiences during the pandemic and the factors that they reported to be supportive to aging in place under pandemic conditions.

Five categories of factors were deemed to be the most supportive to their aging experience during the pandemic: environmental, physical, functional, social, and psychological factors. These supportive elements are not equally available to all older adults during the pandemic, creating significant disparities between demographic groups. As such, it is necessary for policymakers and service providers to focus on extending these supportive factors to all older adults.

This study additionally analyzed service providers' perceptions of the most supportive factors to aging in place during the pandemic through a series of three Knowledge Cafe focus groups. Comparison of the key factors identified by older adults and service providers reveals moderate inconsistencies between what service providers and older adults believe are the most supportive factors to aging in place. Thus, efforts to improve service provision for older adults will likely benefit from reconciling these discrepancies and focusing on the specific needs identified by older adults.