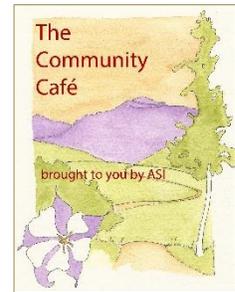


PRESS RELEASE

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NEWS FROM THE COMMUNITY CAFÉ

Resolving Medication Safety Issues for Low Vision Clients

Most older people with vision impairment or blindness are not aware that they can access services or devices that can make daily tasks more straightforward, and in some cases simply safer. Medications – something often prescribed for low vision, vision impairment, or other vision conditions – are one of these areas where a little assistance can go a long way toward providing privacy and independence.

Communicating drug information is a necessity. Blindness and vision impairment increases in adults, especially after age 75 (Prevent Blindness America, 2002). “People age 80 years and older currently make up 8% of the population but account for 69% of blindness (Eye Diseases Prevalence Research Group, 2004).” Safety and nonadherence issues arise for these consumers. The lack of a national standard for labeling for this consumer base compromises their ability to read labels and information sheets, as well as determine color, shape, markings, and measuring devices and the number of refills left on a prescription. This problem is recognized by the [US Veterans Affairs Office](#), which mandates that Audible Prescription Reading Devices are required to be provided for veterans needing this assistance. We could not locate in an online search a local or regional pharmacy that advertises this type of service and the related devices.

Useful sites for those wishing to pursue improved services for loved ones or other individuals in their care:

- [ScripTalk Talking Prescription Labels](#) are designed to help pharmacists better serve low vision or blind patients using a smartphone app or a ScripTalk Station Reader. A tag that uses RFID technology is placed on the bottom of the container that allows patients to hear all their vital prescription information and is available in 25 languages.
- [Accessible Pharmacy](#) is a fairly new service, kicked off in 2020, where accessibility and reduction of barriers are the primary focus combined with a sense of hospitality. The company offers services, including assistance from those who can see and free home delivery for prescriptions, medical devices and over-the-counter medications. [A packaging and labeling menu](#) for prescriptions includes Braille, large print, and audio — all free of charge. Talking medical devices are also available, such as blood pressure cuffs, thermometers, blood glucose meters and monitors.
- The [American Foundation for the Blind](#), and its [component for older consumers](#), have embarked on the [Rx Label Enable campaign](#).
- The [American Society of Consultant Pharmacists Foundation](#) develops practical interventions for improving medication use in the older adult population.
- US Veterans Affairs provides guidance and [fact sheets](#) for all low vision services, including ScripTalk.

ASI’s website provides a wide variety of resources on aging, active engagement, provider and caregiver education, and information about ASI programs in Archuleta County, as well as contact information for making reservations at The Community Café for take-out and for Meals on Wheels at: <http://www.psseniors.org/>.

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