



Office for
the Aging

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW YORK STATE OFFICE FOR THE AGING ANNOUNCES

LAUNCH OF NEW ONLINE TOOL TO HELP OLDER NEW YORKERS AND OTHER HIGH-RISK INDIVIDUALS PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM COVID-19

Public-Private Partnership between New York State Office for the Aging, BellAge, Inc., and Association on Aging in New York

CV19 CheckUp

Tool Developed by BellAge Offers Individualized Support Options to Help Reduce Risk and Enhance Quality of Life for High Risk New Yorkers of All Ages: newyork.cv19checkup.org

The New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA), in partnership with BellAge, Inc., and the Association on Aging in New York (AgingNY) has announced the launch of CV19 CheckUp in New York State, a free, anonymous, personalized online tool that evaluates an individual's risks associated with COVID-19 based on their life situation and individual behavior and provides recommendations and resources to reduce those risks.

"There has been a lot of misinformation about COVID-19 and the risks associated with contracting and spreading the virus," **said NYSOFA Acting Director Greg Olsen**. "This tool, which we will make available to all New Yorkers, helps individuals understand their risk based on their life situation and personal behavior and offers recommendations to reduce those risks while also connecting people to services, if needed."

The tool was developed by BellAge to help people be safer, healthier, and ensure their individual needs are met during the pandemic. CV19 CheckUp fills a critical need for a comprehensive resource that educates, advises, and empowers individuals to help protect themselves from COVID-19.

CV19 CheckUp employs artificial intelligence to analyze data each person provides by completing an online questionnaire. It is designed for those who are considered high risk, including older adults, low income individuals, ethnic and racial minorities, and LGBTQ communities. The tool's algorithms are driven by science and medicine, using data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO). CV19 CheckUp is free to users. It is anonymous and does not require a name, email address, or identifier of any type.

Upon completion of the anonymous questionnaire, CV19 CheckUp immediately delivers a personalized report.

The report answers questions such as:

- How likely am I to get COVID-19 or spread it to others?
- If I get COVID-19, how severe would it likely be?
- What steps can I take to reduce my risks of getting COVID-19?
- Where can I find help to ensure my needs are met during the pandemic?

The individualized approach that defines CV19 CheckUp will deliver much needed support to those who are hardest hit by COVID-19, including the more than 4.3 million New Yorkers age 60 and older, as well as those with underlying health conditions and/or compromised immune systems. The CDC has described these people as being at higher risk of severe or fatal consequences if they are infected with COVID-19.

Some high-risk individuals are not following all the recommended behaviors to lessen their chances of becoming infected, and some may be experiencing unmet service needs due to Matilda's Law. And as New York State continues to move forward with reopening, some lower-risk individuals have begun to relax social distancing and practice unsafe behaviors, which threaten the health and well-being of those who are at higher risk.

CV19 CheckUp assesses each person's unique situation and presents options to help reduce risk and enhance quality of life.

Jim Firman, Chief Innovation Officer, BellAge, Inc., said, "CV19 CheckUp was developed to fill an urgent public need. Our team realized that although there are many resources with information about the virus, all of them require a lot of effort by the user. The average person has to spend considerable time on numerous websites, digging through pages of information looking for answers that are relevant to their specific situation. CV19 CheckUp does the work for them. We developed a hyper-personalized tool that makes it easy for anyone to understand their level of risk and take steps to reduce those risks."

Becky Preve, Executive Director, Association on Aging in New York said, "The ability to provide this tool to older New Yorkers, their families, and caregivers will ensure accurate information and screening of those at risk. We are extremely excited for this partnership, and for our network to continue to provide such vital services to New York State. The Association on AgingNY is thankful to NYSOFA and BellAge for this innovative new approach to combating the spread of COVID-19."

Prabhjot Singh, M.D., Ph.D., Chief Medical & Scientific Advisor, BellAge, Inc., said, "As New York continues reopening, at-risk residents need personalized and scientifically sound information to stay safe during the ongoing pandemic. CV19 CheckUp was developed to ensure that every New Yorker has access to guidance that fits their circumstance."

In addition, through CV19 CheckUp, governments and health organizations also receive data that will help facilitate developing methods to help target populations that are at high risk for COVID-19. Data

are completely anonymous, and findings can be used to gain insights on:

- What people know and believe about the pandemic
- Compliance levels with recommended safety protocols
- Behaviors by location, race, ethnicity, economic status, etc.
- Unmet needs for health care, social services, financial support

To learn more, please visit newyork.cv19checkup.org.

About the New York State Office for the Aging and Health Across All Policies/Age-Friendly New York

The New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) continuously works to help the state's 4.3 million older adults be as independent as possible for as long as possible through advocacy, development and delivery of person-centered, consumer-oriented, and cost-effective policies, programs, and services that support and empower older adults and their families, in partnership with the network of public and private organizations that serve them.

New York is nationally recognized for being the [first age-friendly state](#) in the nation. Using the state's [Prevention Agenda](#) as the overarching framework, in 2017, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo launched a [Health Across All Policies](#) approach, where public and private partners work together to positively impact population health by marrying health care, preventive health, and community design, in concert with addressing [social determinants of health](#), to improve the lives of all New Yorkers, young and old.

Stay connected—download the NYSOFA mobile app for [iOS](#) or [Android](#); visit the NYSOFA [Facebook](#) page; follow [@NYSAGING](#) on Twitter and [NYSAging](#) on Instagram; or visit aging.ny.gov.

About BellAge, Inc.

BellAge, Inc. is a public benefit company founded in April 2020 by nationally recognized leaders in aging, technology and artificial intelligence. The company's mission is to help millions of older adults across the world age better through systems that use artificial intelligence and emerging technologies. BellAge's first expert system, [CV19 CheckUp](#), was developed to provide hyper-personalized assistance by educating and informing people of their risk levels associated with COVID-19, and offering recommendations about how to mitigate those risks. More information is at <https://bellage.org>.

About the Association on Aging in New York

The Association on Aging in New York (AgingNY) supports and advocates for New York's 59 mostly county-based Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and works collaboratively with a network of organizations that exist to promote independence, preserve dignity, and provide support for residents of New York State as they age. For more information, visit www.agingny.org or call 518-449-7080.
