

Empowering Seniors Through Community Engagement

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Background

- The Heights Inn, an elderly home located La Habra, California (Figure 1), was founded on principles of warmth, compassion, and personalized care.
- Internship under the supervision of Cynthia Lopez (owner).
- Opportunity to connect socially and emotionally, helping the elderly avoid experiencing social isolation (Figure 2).
 - Became aware of the disconnect between generations.
- Through volunteering we can provide much needed social connections and emotional support, which significantly improves the overall well-being and quality of life of the elderly.



Figure 1: Outdoor gazebo where events were hosted at The Heights Inn., La Habra, California.

Activities

- Numerous planned activities hosted at the residential home allowed me to observe how my time spent with senior residents was beneficial.
 - Weekly meetings exploring and discussing relevant topics around world.
 - Multicultural Dinner Nights
 - Bingo
 - Movie Nights

Personal Growth

- Further developed empathy and compassion for those who are nearing end-of-life.
- Practiced patience and understanding when working with elderly.
- Insight on different topics offered me a unique perspective on complex issues.
- Engaged in meaningful conversations and created important memories during our time spent together (Figure 3).
- Developed cultural sensitivity working with underserved population.

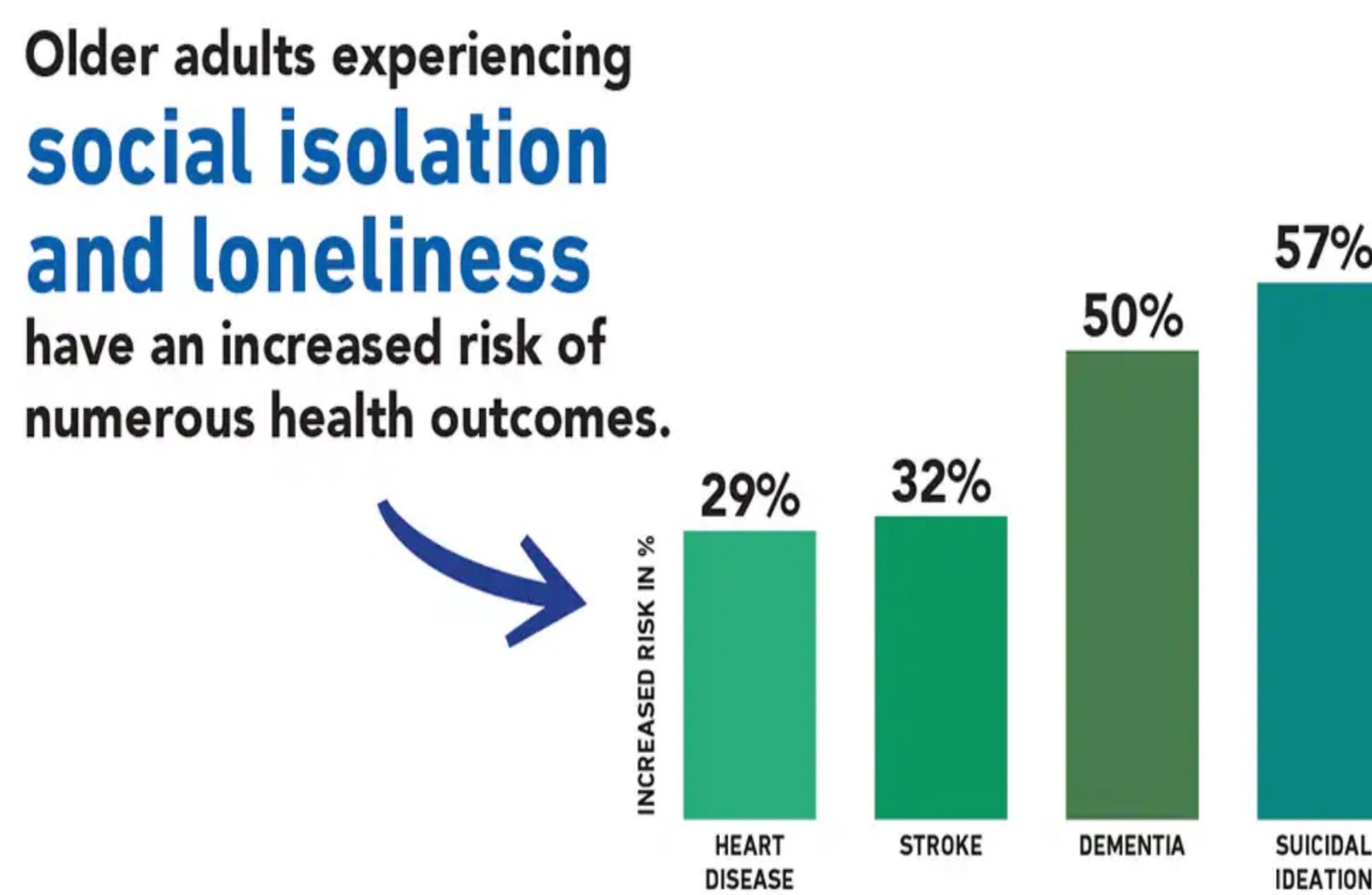


Figure 2: Health risks associated with social isolation in older adults. Graph from National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2020).



Figure 3: Resident at the Heights Inn, Bea Marie.

Acknowledgments

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References

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