



Hello!

Providing Veterans with Adult Day Health Care

Since our founding nearly four decades ago SteppingStone has provided adult day health care to veterans. These include participants from all branches of service who vary in age and health condition. This newsletter looks at this service from the perspective of three veterans who attend Mabini, Mission Creek and Golden Gate Centers.

"My name is Mariano Consul. I am 95 years old and a US Veteran. I have been attending SteppingStone Day Center for two years. I am proud of being a Veteran and a citizen of this country. I belong to the Arciaga Battalion Company A, Sector 42 in the Army and fought with American soldiers during the war (WW2)."

"SteppingStone gives me the respite that I needed from taking care of my wife after her caregiver leaves in the afternoon. I also like the opportunity to exercise and access the social worker services and nursing staff. But the most important thing for me is being with friends at the Center and playing bingo together."
Mariano Consul, participant Mabini Center.



Veterans come to SteppingStone from many different sources such as referrals from other providers and recommendations from other vets. Some are referred by the VA itself, which refers clients that need adult day health care to multiple ADHC agencies including SteppingStone.

Michelle Tapia, a licensed clinical social worker at the Veterans Administration explains.

"Referrals to ADHC could occur different ways, such as by the VA Social Worker at the CLC or Inpatient Units or by our out-patient team through their follow-up efforts. We value that adult day health care is a collaborative multi-disciplinary program that can meet the needs of our veterans." Michelle

Tapia, LCSW-Veterans Administration

William Langley, 78, served in the navy from 1963 until 1969. He attends the Mission Creek Center.

"When the Centers were open, I appreciated using the exercise equipment and participating in the LGBTQ program. I did find transportation to the Center to be too long sometimes and hope that will improve when the Centers reopen." William Langley, participant Mission Creek Center.

Like all program participants veterans receive core adult day health care including health monitoring by nurses, physical therapy, occupational therapy and, when the Centers are open, a nutritious hot lunch. There are also multiple special programs, such as the LGBTQ program at Mission Creek Center that William attends. All participants attend multiple times each week, most daily.

Like most participants, veterans often value the connection to other attendees as much as the health care. Vets often sit together for lunch or recreational activities with friends they have met at the Center. Veterans are also recognized for their service, notably on Veterans Day when all Centers organize special activities to honor them.

During the COVID pandemic, activities at the Centers have been suspended and care is provided through remote services. This includes wellness calls and other monitoring by SteppingStone nurses, social workers and therapists. It also includes doorstep visits and evaluations so staff can "put their eyes on" clients on a regular basis. Many participants have requested and receive deliveries of food and other essential supplies, usually weekly.



Thomas J., age 72, has been a participant at Golden Gate Center for several years.

Thomas is an army veteran, having served in Vietnam. He has lived in California for many years and was a taxi driver in San Francisco.

"SteppingStone has been good to me. They let me be myself and have taught me about how to take care of myself. What I like most is getting to know other veterans that attend the program. We enjoy ourselves." Thomas J, Golden Gate Center participant.



Michelle Tapia, the LCSW with the Veterans Administration emphasizes the important of socialization for vets:

"It is important for many reasons that our clients not become isolated. We want them to live independently and connected to their communities. Having an opportunity to socialize, which adult day health care provides, is important, particularly if they can connect to other vets. The sense of community that can

develop in adult day health centers such as SteppingStone can improve their health and quality of life." Michelle Tapia, LCSW-Veterans Administration

SteppingStone is honored and proud to serve veterans. We do our best to help them maintain their health and continue to live independently as well an opportunity to socialize. We know that often vets reach out to each other and provide peer-to-peer support, which is invaluable. We look forward to seeing Mariano, William and Thomas back at their respective Centers in the near future and welcome veterans who need our services.

Photos: (Masthead) Veterans being recognized on Veterans Day 2019 at Mabini Center. Mariano Consul is on the right of the image.

(Top) Mariano Consul, Mabini Center participant

(Middle) Thomas J, Golden Gate Center participant

(Bottom) Michelle Tapia, LCSW-Veterans Administration

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