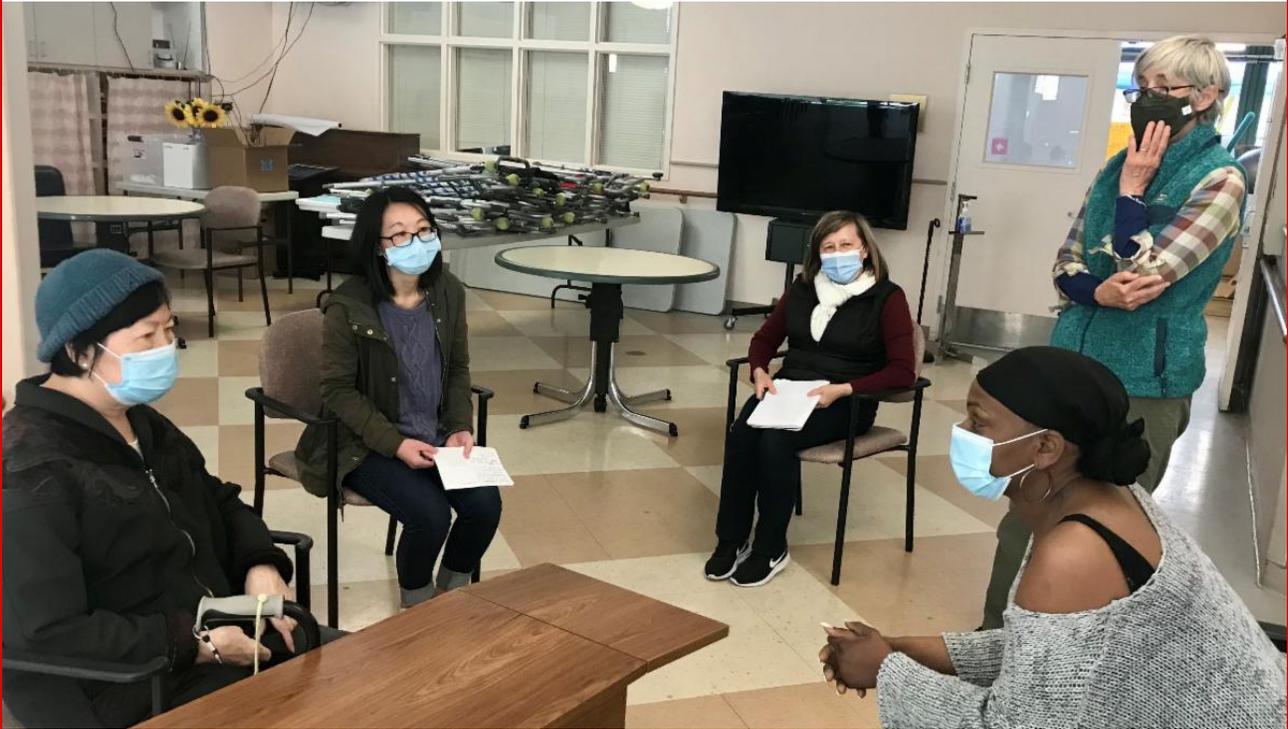


## Participants Have Health Re-Evaluated as Centers Prepare to Reopen



### **Participants Have Health Re-Evaluated as Centers Prepare to Reopen**

SteppingStone is resuming in-Center care activities at all four Centers beginning July 6. This is part of a transition to hybrid services where program participants will receive care through both remote and in-Center services. Though in-Center activities are limited at this time due to continuing COVID restrictions, the return of clients to group activities is an important step with many ramifications. One of the most important is the need to re-evaluate each participant's health and their plan of care. This process of regular health assessments is central to adult day health care (ADHC), but was only able to be done in a limited manner during the pandemic.

Participant health evaluations are normally conducted every six months by each Center's Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT). This team is comprised of each Center's nurse, social worker, physical therapist, occupational therapist and activities coordinator. Ideally, the whole team will meet with each client as a group and create individual assessments based on each clinician's area of expertise. Care plans are then developed with the agreement of the participant and their care providers. This process will be undertaken for all of SteppingStone's program participants - more than three hundred frail elders and adults with disabilities.

Presentation Center's Social Worker, Anna Wu, explains the process.

*"A lot of our participants and their family members have told us that they have declined during this past year. With these changes, reevaluation is important to understand where they are now. If we do not address their current needs and struggles, we will not be able to work effectively together with them to maintain their overall wellbeing."*

*"On the day of evaluation each member of the multi-disciplinary team assesses any changes to their previous needs and any new emerging needs. If needed, we coordinate for them to see our mental health consultant, nutritionist, or speech therapist. It is a lot of work especially since we will need to change our care plans to fit their needs and goals now." Anna Wu, Social Worker-Presentation Center*



Centers are prioritizing the most vulnerable participants for evaluation to create an updated care plan for them as soon as possible. In addition, there are some clients admitted during the pandemic who would now be having a full evaluation for the first time. Mission Creek Physical Therapist, Deirdre O'Bryan, comments,

*"For the high-risk participants I need to evaluate if they can tolerate the transportation, walking in the Center, or just being up in a chair for 3-4 hours. I check for balance using the Tinetti fall-risk tool, manual muscle test for strength and check their range of motion and pain to see what has changed and if adjustments to their schedule is recommended." Deirdre O'Bryan, Mission Creek Center Physical Therapist*

*The clinical teams are seeing different evaluation results among SteppingStone's hundreds of clients, but some general observations can be made. George Wu, the nurse at Golden Gate Center, explains.*



*"Many participants are physically weaker after months of being isolated in their homes. Many are depressed, as depression is an ongoing issue for many seniors. For clients with dementia, in many cases the disease has worsened due to months of relative inactivity and lack of engagement." George Wu, Nurse-Golden Gate Center.*

*Physical Therapist, Deirdre O'Bryan, adds-*

*"Many participants have been falling more due to weakness. Virtually all of them have simply been less active during the pandemic, which affects their health. In*

general, more disabled clients are suffering the greatest loss of function, which we will now strive to restore." Deirdre O'Bryan, Mission Creek Physical Therapist

*For each program participant new care plans will need to be created, as the old plans were restricted to remote services only. Now that clients will be receiving both virtual services at home and in-Center services, care plans will need to reflect this based on the new MDT evaluations. Social worker Anna Wu explains:*

*"With these emerging needs such as increased depression, substance use, etc., we have to include those needs in their care plan. We have to address in the plan both in-center services and remote care for participants that may not come to the Center for scheduled care days. Therefore we will continue to use zoom for participants to join our exercise groups, do weekly phone checks, mailings, and offer support groups over skype." Anna Wu, Social Worker-Presentation Center.*



*Because of continuing restrictions due to COVID, most participants will get significant care services at home, attending their Center once or twice a week. This will change depending on the pandemic and the wishes of the participant on how they want to get care. The new care plans will reflect activities in both elements of the hybrid care program that will begin in early July for all SteppingStone clients. As they begin to return to the Centers and begin post pandemic life, our team will be ready to provide them the care they need to maintain their health.*

*"In one sense this is a reboot for both our teams and our clients. We will begin with lower levels of exercises and other activities, but we will begin. The health reassessments are the start of that process, outlining the path forward. After the long shutdown, we are all eager to get going and excited to see participants in-person once again." Deirdre O'Bryan, Mission Creek Physical Therapist*

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Photos: **(Masthead)** Presentation Center Multi-Disciplinary Team meeting with client: Anna Wu, Social Worker; Urszula Munka, Registered Nurse; Karen Ande, Physical Therapist; Sandia Bruno, Activities Coordinator

**(Top)** Mission Creek Multi-Disciplinary Team meeting with client: Jimmy Gho, Registered Nurse; Deirdre O'Bryan, Physical Therapist; Naomi Childs, Social Work Assistant; Verna Chapman, Social Work Assistant;

Maria Martinez Activities Coordinator

**(Middle)** Golden Gate Center Registered Nurse George Wu and Activities Coordinator Roy Yang meet with participant in the Center's courtyard

**(Bottom)** Mabini Center Registered Nurse Wendy Zhou meeting with participant

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