



## SteppingStone Prepares to Resume In-Center Care Activities in July



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#### Need

In March of last year, as the COVID pandemic struck, all congregate care programs were shut down in California including adult day health care (ADHC). For the last fourteen months, the clinical teams at our four Centers have provided care remotely using telephone calls, online therapies, doorstep visits and deliveries to keep our participants healthy. During all this time, the number one question asked of staff was, "When can we return to our Center?"

We are aware of the urgent need for clients to return to the Centers. SteppingStone's program participants are all disabled with serious health challenges that threatens their health. Many live alone and have been unable to leave their homes during the pandemic. Isolation is dangerous for seniors and can contribute to profound loneliness and depression. They need to be seen regularly by our clinicians, resume therapy and socialize with other people. They want to see their friends at the Centers and participate in the community they found there.

#### **In-Center Care Activities Resume-Remote Care Will Continue**

We are very pleased to announce that in accordance with new guidelines from the California Department



of Aging, SteppingStone anticipates resuming limited in-Center care activities in early July.

The process of resuming in-Center activities will be phased in over the rest of this year and is being dictated by the course of the pandemic. Because of the need for social distancing, attendance initially will be limited to approximately one-quarter capacity for each care shift. This means that Centers that once had attendance of 50+ participants daily, will now see only 12 or 15 on site.

In-Center activities will augment the remote care currently being provided to all clients, not replace them. Remote care will continue unchanged, providing service to clients not seen at the Center on any particular day. It is our expectation, as the pandemic lessens, our ability to serve more clients in Centers will increase but the timeline for this is yet to be determined. For the near future, we expect to be operating under a hybrid model of care using both remote and in-Center care to serve program participants.

### **In-Center Health Evaluations and Activities Resume**

During normal times, the health of all SteppingStone program participants is evaluated every six months by a multi-disciplinary team of clinicians at each Center including the nurse, social worker, physical therapist and occupational therapist. From these evaluations, individualized care plans are established.

During COVID, this process has been constrained as in-person evaluations were difficult and therapies were provided remotely, often with instruction for activities at home. With the Centers reopening, clients will again be evaluated in person by the multi-disciplinary team and new care plans created. Use of the gym (physical therapy equipment), which has always been the most popular activity for participants, will resume. So will limited group activities.



These evaluations will begin in June, so when participants return their care plan is confirmed. Evaluations will also guide how often clients attend the program with priority given to those in greatest need.

### **Centers Look and Layout Changing**

Because of the need for social distancing, the physical layouts of the Centers are being altered. Tables and equipment are being distanced and signs put up to remind everyone to remain six feet apart. We will be unable to provide lunch at this time, but we will provide snacks, drinks and food for clients to take home.

Safety procedures will be implemented at Centers in addition to social distancing. All staff and clients must



adhere to COVID screening before entering the Center. Everyone will need to wear masks while they are at the Center. All staff, as needed, will use personal protective equipment. We are monitoring COVID guidelines from federal, state and local health officials. We will adjust procedures and protocols as that guidance changes.

All Centers are excited to have clients return and are refreshing their spaces and upgrading equipment. Mabini Center is replacing their kitchen, Mission Creek, Golden Gate and Presentation Centers are painting large sections of their facilities. Many Centers have purchased various pieces of new equipment including HEPA air filters.

SteppingStone is thrilled be able to resume limited in-Center activities as this terrible pandemic lessens. The situation is changing week-by-week and likely our plans will change as our reopening date gets closer. But we are working hard to get clients back to Centers, even on a limited basis, as soon as possible.



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- Photos: **(Masthead)** Repainting the Day Room at Mission Creek Center  
**(Top)** Mabini Center kitchen before remodeling work  
**(Middle 1)** Mabini Center kitchen remodeling work underway  
**(Middle 2)** Masks, air filters and other safety supplies at Presentation Center  
**(Bottom)** Social distancing signage on the floors at Golden Gate Center

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