



SteppingStone Accelerates Efforts to Reach Isolated Residents

SteppingStone Accelerates Efforts to Reach Isolated Residents

San Francisco is home to over 200,000 older adults and adults with disabilities. Many individuals within this population face significant barriers to accessing essential and affordable health services – which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, SteppingStone Adult Day Health has created an Outreach Project targeting the city's most vulnerable populations.

"The purpose of the Outreach Project is to connect isolated older adults and adults with disabilities to services. We are focusing on single-room occupancy residences (SRO) and permanent supported housing facilities because we know that many people who live there are isolated or need additional services."
Diana Almanza, Director of Services and Outreach.



There are over 150 Permanent Supportive Housing facilities in San Francisco. This type of housing is operated through partnerships between the city and various community-based organizations. Most residents are formerly homeless and many need ongoing support to maintain their health and remain housed. Each building has a team of case managers and supporting staff to assist residents. Some of these are further supported by mobile health team from the Department of Public Health: The Permanent Supportive Housing Advanced Clinical Services team (PHACS team).



"Our team helps each building's support staff to provide care to residents that need health support. Though the buildings can seem busy and crowded, in fact, many residents are profoundly isolated and need both health care and opportunities to socialize. Adult day health care (ADHC), such as the services SteppingStone provides, can help them and is a longer-term intervention, which is often what is needed.

"Many potential clients face significant barriers to getting care, including health issues like depression or addiction. For good candidates for adult day health care, it can sometimes seem like we are looking for a "Goldie Locks" person who both wants to socialize and needs the type of health support that ADHC provides."
Elisabeth Goldstein, NP, Permanent Supportive Housing Advanced Clinical Services (PHACS) team, SFDPH.

Given the PHACS team's outreach efforts, SteppingStone has been fortunate to partner with their team to conduct door-to-door wellness checks on residents living in SROs. These outreach efforts, and the broad knowledge of the PHACS team, have been extremely beneficial in supporting SteppingStone as the organization ramps up their outreach program.

"The outreach program is actively working to connect one of the city's most vulnerable populations living in SROs to the supportive services available to them – which includes Adult Day Health Care. To increase our reach in the community, we partnered with the PHACS team to support our ongoing outreach efforts. Aside from our direct outreach to residents, we have begun a series of presentations in the community to explain SteppingStone's care model and the services we provide. We are also in the first stages of our mailing campaign – which will provide direct outreach to residents through mailings. These first activities are just the beginning as we learn to reach these isolated residents. Based on the results of these efforts, we will modify and expand our efforts in the coming months." Jonathan Beavis, MPH, Outreach Program Coordinator.



SteppingStone has also begun integrating two data management systems to address the anticipated influx of new referrals and inquiries. One of the new systems is the Unite Us platform that allows SteppingStone to quickly and simply provide referrals to other agencies. Program staff anticipates that many people will have immediate needs, so having the ability to make rapid referrals, sometimes during the first conversation with isolated residents, is essential. The second program is a customer relationship management system (CRM). For people interested in the services that SteppingStone provides, the addition of the CRM will help to support the in-take and referral process by having a more organized and automated system.

"COVID has had a harsh effect on many residents of the buildings we serve. Looking at their medical records I will often see that the last time they accessed health services was spring 2020, when the pandemic shut things down. We need to connect them to services and help them socialize and rejoin their communities. For some, adult day health care, can provide both and do so over the long term." Elisabeth Goldstein, NP, Permanent Supportive Housing Advanced Clinical Services (PHACS) team, SFDPH.



"These are just the first steps of our outreach program, which will grow as we focus more on SRO residences, particularly in the Tenderloin and Chinatown, while continuing our efforts in DPH's Permanent Supportive Housing buildings. We know there are many isolated older adults and adults with disabilities that would benefit from being connected to services, including some that need adult day health care. We intend to increase our efforts in the next few months and throughout next year." Daniel Gallagher, Executive Director.

SteppingStone is the oldest and largest adult day health care provider in San Francisco. Our four Centers provide care to hundreds of people every day and are all our currently accepting new program participants.

For more information on the Outreach Program or the agency's services contact Jonathan Beavis, MPH, at JonathanBeavis@SteppingStoneHealth.org.

Photos: (Top) Diana Almanza, Director of Services and Outreach, SteppingStone
(Middle 1) Elisabeth Goldstein, NP, Permanent Supportive Housing Advanced Clinical Services (PHACS) team, SFDPH
(Middle 2) Jonathan Beavis, MPH, Outreach Program Coordinator
(Bottom) Daniel Gallagher, Executive Director, SteppingStone

Donate

Contact Us

www.steppingstonehealth.org

SteppingStone Health | 930 Fourth St | San Francisco, CA | 415-974-6784