2022 In Review - Enhancing Care in Uncertain Times

2022 was the third year of the COVID pandemic, a time of great uncertainty and significant health risks for the seniors and adults with disabilities such as SteppingStone serves. Over the course of the year our care programs would change dramatically. We launched new programs to enhance care and led advocacy efforts that informed new state adult day health care (ADHC) regulations.

When COVID struck in early 2020, SteppingStone was providing care to hundreds of program participants at our four Care Centers. Within a matter of weeks all client services within Centers were suspended, and staff used remote care methods to support clients for over a year. Beginning in July 2021, we began providing both remote care and limited in-Center activities (hybrid services). We hoped that a full return to congregate care would occur in early 2022, but this did not happen because of a surge in COVID infections last winter.

At the beginning of 2022, all four centers were providing hybrid care to their clients. Most participants received care days at home and attended their Center an average of two or three days a week. In July, full in-center care was able to resume, and we urged all participants to attend as often as possible. However, some continued to receive remote care multiple days each week and some never returned for in-Center care at all.

On October 1, ADHC remote care programs ended throughout California and all adult day health care services had to be provided within a Care Center. Because many clients are weaker, it has been difficult for them to return for all their care days, and some have not returned at all. Many participants are also experiencing emergencies of different sorts including health and transportation challenges that prevent them from getting to their Centers. As a result, daily attendance is down approximately 15% from pre-COVID levels as of October 2022.

All four of our Centers are fully staffed and working hard to provide support to participants so they can attend and receive the care they need. Recognizing that

2022年回顧 - 在無法預測時期加強護理

2022 年是新冠疫情的第三年，對於以服務的老年人和殘障成為宗旨的磐石來說，是一個無法預測，隱藏著重大健康風險的時期。在這一年中，我們的護理計劃發生了巨大變化。我們啟動了新計劃以加強護理工作，為州成人日間醫療保健 (ADHC) 法規提供訊息。

2020 年初當新冠疫情來襲時，磐石四個護理中心仍然為數百名院友提供護理。但數週後，中心內部即暫停一切服務，後來工作人員採用遠程護理方式為院友提供了一年多的服務。從 2021 年 7 月開始，我們開始改用混合模式，部分院友採用遠程護理，部分院友在中心內活動。在 2022 年初能全面恢復集體護理，但由於去年冬天新冠疫情感染率激增，此一計畫因而擱淺了。

2022 年初，四個中心為院友們提供混合護理。大多數院友接受居家護理為主，每周有兩，三天回到中心。7 月，中心護理全面恢復，我們促請院友盡可能回院參加托護。然而，部分院友繼續每週多天接受遠程護理，部分院友未曾返回中心接受護理。

我們四個中心擁有充足的人員，盡心盡力的為院友服務，人人均能獲得悉心照護。鑑於院友們居家避疫多時，故所有中心都安排了

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most clients had been isolated for months, all Centers are operating a robust schedule of social and recreational activities. Access to mental health and cognitive therapies have also been improved.

SteppingStone’s existing enhanced care programs continued in 2022 including the LGBTQ+ program, which is strengthened through a partnership with the Curry Senior Center. The new Alzheimer’s Day Care Resource Center began full operations this year, based at the Mission Creek Center. Headed by Madeleine Barry, MSW, the new program provides a high level of professional care to SteppingStone clients with dementia.

A significant new initiative, the Outreach Program, began in July. This is an effort to reach isolated seniors and adults with disabilities, particularly those living in SROs (single room occupancy residences). Lead by Jonathan Beavis, MPH, the new program is making presentations at many low-income residency buildings and conducting direct outreach, including mailings, to reach isolated residents.

SteppingStone’s advocacy efforts continued at full throttle throughout 2022 as policy makers considered how to respond to the changing circumstances created by COVID. SteppingStone’s Executive Director, Daniel Gallagher, M.Ed., participated in these deliberations at both the state and local levels. Dan serves as the chair of the Board of Directors of the California Association for Adult Day Services (CAADS) so was able to bring the SteppingStone’s perspective directly to key decision makers. An important issue in these discussions was how to end remote services while creating new policies to provide care during other emergencies either personal or communitywide. The new policy mandating continuing care for clients during an emergency greatly benefits our participants and clarifies how ADHC agencies should respond in public health emergencies.

At the local level, SteppingStone worked to maintain and increase the City’s support of programs to serve older adults and adults with disabilities. The Coalition of Agencies Serving the Elderly (CASE), where Dan serves as Co-Chair, took on a large role in the advocacy efforts for older adults in San Francisco.

Looking ahead to next year, SteppingStone is prioritizing enhancing care and increasing access to services to underserved communities. In addition to strengthening existing programs, multiple Centers plan to repair and upgrade their physical plants. Among the priorities are restrooms, which are essential in providing personal care to adults with disabilities and often require modifications to be fully functional. We also hope to update our kitchens given the importance of food provision within adult day health care.

As participants become accustomed again to attending their Centers and difficulties with transportation are resolved we expect to return to normal attendance. The Outreach Program will expand and help connect San Franciscans that need support to agencies that can assist them, including SteppingStone. Efforts to provide enhanced care will continue and deepen at all Centers as we fully return to normal adult day health care activities.

These efforts will continue in 2023. The four Care Centers will provide robust and expert support to program participants, helping them maintain their health and independence. They will also work to help participants reconnect with their communities, make friends, and have fun. This is what the agency strove to achieve every day in 2022 and will continue in the coming year.

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SteppingStone in 2022

Golden Gate Center Physical Therapist Elaine D. working with a participant on Nu Step machine. Using the exercise machines are many clients’ favorite activity at the Center.

Mission Creek Center participants bowling in the Center’s courtyard. All Centers use outside spaces for a variety of activities if the weather allows.

Alzheimer’s Center Staff (L-R)-Naomi Childs, Madeleine Barry and Maria Fernandez.

Mabini Center participants playing a game of mahjong. Fun with friends is a key part of program activities.

Presentation Center Kitchen Aide Young L. and Activity Coordinator Sandia B. prepare a lunch for a client. A hot, nutritious lunch is provided to all clients every day.

Mabini Center participants in a group exercise class which is among the most popular activities at all Centers.
Golden Gate Center Licensed Vocational Nurse Emma V. checking participant’s blood sugar levels. Continually monitoring each client’s health is a core care activity.

Presentation Center participant painting. Many participants enjoy creating art works while at their Centers.

Mabini Center Activity Coordinator, Mei C. providing a kit to a participant during an earthquake preparedness class.

Mission Creek Center participants posing in masks during a Day of Dead party, one of many holidays celebrated at the Center.
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