

12-2022

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**Multipurpose Senior Service Program: Creating Connections With Community Partners**

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09/01/2022

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**Abstract**

The Health Projects Center is a non-profit organization in Monterey County that provides a wide range of resources and support through its Multipurpose Senior Service Program (MSSP) to senior citizens of age 65 and older who have Medi-Cal benefits. This program helps seniors age people stay comfortably in their own homes. The main problem is that clients are not using the MSSP resources and support, to their advantage, in order to be healthy and safe in the comfort of their own homes. The agency's problem is the lack of marketing their services to community partners, which does not allow them to maintain the required number of referrals they need to receive per month to stay open. The objective of this project was to market the program and establish connections with local physicians and agencies that can refer clients to the program. The expected outcome was successful, and more community partners are aware of the program. The program should build a list of all the updated community partners of Monterey County, so they can stay in touch with them every other month for new possible references.

*Keywords: Seniors, Medi-Cal, Monterey County, Services, Nonprofit*

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### **Agency & Communities Served**

The Health Projects Center is an agency that provides different programs for those with appropriate MediCal eligibility and who are 65 years of age or older. The client must live in the counties of Santa Cruz or Monterey and be willing to participate in an individual health care plan with one of the social workers. With the services and programs, the Health Projects Center offers, people can live safely at home as they age. According to the HPC (2020), their goal is to keep their clients in the comfort of their own homes and prevent them from transitioning to nursing homes. An article by Homehelpers (2022) reported seniors who stay in their homes live longer than those in nursing homes and are physically and mentally healthier. Families of seniors are now opting more for in-home care because their parents will be provided with one on one help and will have more attention from caregivers.

The agency has different programs and services that they provide for their clients. One of the newest programs is their Multipurpose Senior Services Program(MSSP). The program had 320 clients who are receiving services. MSSP helps clients stay safe at home by providing products and services such as shower chairs, incontinence supplies, in-home care, home appliances, counseling, hospital beds, and more for no cost. The Health Projects Center also had the AIDS Medi-Cal Waiver Program, which helps seniors with AIDS. The name of this program is subject to change into a name that is more discreet (MSSP, 2020).

### **Problem Model Background and Literature Review**

#### **Problem Statement**

Senior residents are not using any of these resources provided by the state or their community as a result of failing to take advantage of these resources while residing at the Health Projects Center. They are likely not taking advantage of these programs because of the lack of

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knowledge that these types of assistance exist. The National Library of Medicine (2015) mentions that physicians lack knowledge of these community-based programs. During the first term of the internship at the MSSP program, only two or three clients have been referred by their PCP, the rest have been referred by social workers or friends. The National Library of Medicine (2014) stated if seniors took advantage of more community programs, their lives would be prolonged and their health overall would be better. Some seniors may need a companion once a week or twice to go out and do an activity. That companion could help the elderly person's mental health and overall health. The mind is very powerful and can speed up the process of death (ScienceDaily, 2019). Any provider who visits for physical or mental health care should be aware of all the resources that are available to seniors.

### **Contributing Factors**

According to Edgewood Health Care (2019), giving too much information frequently can cause seniors to develop anxiety and get overwhelmed. Clients at the Health Projects Center have voiced to staff that they become overwhelmed with the questions they were asked because HPC calls every month and the questions are very similar each time. Deterioration of the mind is common for older adults and they can feel overwhelmed when forming the words or phrases they need to use during a conversation (National Institute of Aging, 2020).

The organization's care plan notes allow HPC to help them get the suitable resources they need based on what the client reports. If the program calls the client and they mention they are having a hard time doing activities of daily living, the program can support them by sending a caregiver. If a client can not afford incontinence supplies, the program can send a prescription approval for those supplies to the client's primary care physician and provide them with free supplies. Community partners such as care providers, social services, and religious organizations are

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often unaware of programs like the Multipurpose Senior Services Program. As helpers and healers, they need to be knowledgeable of the programs that serve the populations they work with. With up-to-date education on community programs, seniors would safely stay at home and would be able to use all the resources that are available to them for free.

### **Consequences**

Without the help of programs like the Multipurpose Senior Services Program, seniors may be at risk of entering nursing homes prematurely because their living conditions have deteriorated. According to Homehelpers (2022), programs like these help save money, get high-quality care, relieve stress for the family, and promote independence, safety, and comfort. CNBC (2019) reported that 50% of adults 50 years and older would rather die than live in a care facility which could cost up to a hundred thousand dollars a year.

The MSSP is at risk of losing the funding if it can not contain the 250 clients they have been asked to maintain. In January 2022, they had a long waitlist to be accepted. They had accepted everyone in the program by August 2022. The MSSP has formed three years ago and is very new to the Health Projects Center. It can be unfunded if the program does not meet all the requirements (DHCS, 2019). If the MSSP disintegrated all of the seniors in the program would be left without the assistance they are being provided with and the community would suffer from the lack of resources.

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Contributing Factors	Problem	Consequences
Deteriorating physical State due to age	Clients are not using the resources, for their benefit, and their health	Will need to go to nursing home
Community partners are unaware of community resources		Resources are not being used by most seniors, and if not enough people are using them they will take the program away

**Project Description**

**Working Title:** Caseworker Intern

**Project Description**

The project would be to promote the Multipurpose Senior Service Program at the Health Projects Center. It has been advised that the program needs to keep 150 clients all year round, but it has been struggling to keep the necessary number of members who will promote the program through churches, nonprofit organizations, senior centers, and other venues. During this research and promotion, clients that are already part of the MSSP will continue to receive phone calls to conduct a brief review of their health, and be offered the resources HPC provides for free.

**Project Justification**

The objective of this project is to market the program to those who are 65 years and older and establish connections with local physicians and agencies that can refer clients to the program. One of the problems the project has encountered as a program is that a lot of doctors, Senior centers, churches, etc. do not know this program exists, nor that the program is free of charge. With this being said the project will consist of educating the community about the resources being provided

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for seniors. Reaching out to different places and promoting the program through social media, is one of the most used outlets to advertise any type of program or job.

### **Benefits**

There are positive benefits for the agency and the elderly after educating the community and promoting the Multipurpose Senior Service Program. More seniors in Monterey County will be referred to the MSSP program, which will benefit the program by surpassing the 150 clients the program should contain throughout the year. It will also help senior citizens, get the help they need personally, mentally and at home with the different resources, the program offers. The program will also be recommended by doctors, churches, senior centers, and other organizations. With time other programs such as the AIDS program can also benefit from this promotion, and help even more seniors suffering from AIDS with a lack of resources.

### **Implementation Process**

In order for the project to be successful promotion had to be the first step. Flyers were taken on to Prundale's senior center, and they were posted on bulletin boards in various locations in Salinas, Ca in September. This project started on September 12, 2022, the promotion started through a Monterey County Facebook group. The group itself is intended for individuals to post their ADs about different things. It continued to get refreshed every week in order for new people to see it. On the same day, La Casa Adult Day Health Center in Salinas, Ca was contacted to promote the program. They asked for an appointment to talk with the person in charge of sending referrals or even a Social worker, but they showed no interest. Different senior centers were called throughout Salinas, Ca on the same day, without luck. On September 22, 2022, Em Bowman (classmate) offered to help with the project by putting Xiomara in contact with their mentor Corinee Barret from Aging and Adult Services of Monterey county. Via zoom meeting and she explained a little bit about the

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MSSP program that she knew of already. There continued contact with her until November and sent her the current reference documenter for the MSSP. On October 24, 2022, Rita, a representative of Alliance On Aging, was reached and through multiple correspondences was informed of the services MSSP provides. She was sent pamphlets and referral documents so their Social worker can fax any referrals. Since La Casa had not called back an email was sent to them with all the information about the program on October 24, 2022. The initial date to have a total number of successful recruiters for the project was on October 31, 2022, but it was pushed until November 28, 2022. All of the activities were supported by mentor Claudia or her staff.

### **Assessment Plan & Expected Outcomes**

The Multipurpose Senior Service Program offered a wide variety of resources and services for hundreds of seniors with Medi-cal in the Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties. For the state to continue funding the program, the company must maintain 150+ clients. Marketing development and awareness will help MSSP achieve this goal. It is intended to target physicians, seniors, social workers, and any other organizations whose clients may benefit from the MSSP. Marketing the program will get them to refer their patients to our program because they might need something the program offers such as a new hospital bed, appliances, transportation services, or companionship. The program will also be offering its services through social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Phone calls and dropping off pamphlets to doctor offices, and different organizations are ways to reach the targeted number of clients. In-person meetings or Zoom meetings will also be possible for a short introduction to the program if anyone is interested. It is estimated that out of the 6 people that have the program's information only 2 or 3 will send referrals. By the end of November, the project hopes to gain 4 clients in two months. In summary, some professionals will

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not have clients to refer to during those two months, but whether the program gains clients or not, the project will at least be known in Monterey county.

### **Project Results**

As a result of the project, the overall outcome would be to continue helping more seniors age comfortably and safely stay in their own homes. It was expected that the program would add four new clients within two months, as well as inform more community partners of the services it offers. When the program was introduced to some community partners, they mentioned they were aware of it but believed it had a long waiting list. Reintroducing the program and informing them that there is no waiting list would help the MSSP get referrals. The program was considered successful if it attracted more clients to maintain the number of people required and the funding to keep providing services. To determine how many referrals have been made with the promotion of the program, keeping in touch with Naomi was necessary because she was in charge of any referrals that came in. Checking the referral files in the office was another way to determine the number of referrals made. Additionally, staying in contact with the community partners who showed greater interest in the program when it was promoted, to determine if it was successful.

This project reached the expected short-term result, which was marketing the program to community partners such as doctors, senior centers, and agencies. There are now more people aware of the Multipurpose Senior Service Program, and the program will eventually receive referrals from some of the partners contacted. The long-term result was to add new clients into the program for the number of clients to increase and for the program to keep the funding. Unfortunately, no referrals were received throughout the duration of this project, but referrals may come in from the community members after the completion of this project. No matter when the referrals come in, it will keep the program's client-base high, allowing it to continue providing care and services to older adults.

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### **Conclusion & Recommendations**

As a result, more marketing of the program is needed in order to gain more clients in the short timeframe available. The 3 months given to market this program were not adequate for it to become successful. The recommendation for the Multipurpose Senior Service Program and any new interns is to keep advertising their services to the established clients, and community partners. Their existing clients should be reminded of the services the program offers because some did not realize the program offered such a variety of resources or services when phone calls were being made and care plans were discussed. It is also good to advertise to them because they may have family members who needed these services too and they could refer them to the program. It would be useful for the next intern to create a list of community partners they find, so that HPC-MSSP and future interns may continue to promote the organization.

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**Appendix A****Project Implementation Plan**

Activities	Timeline/Deadlines	Supporting Staff
Take flyers to Prundale's Senior Center and introduce the Multipurpose Senior Service Project	Sep 15, 2022	Student
Pamphlets on bulletin boards in various locations	September 15, 2022- October 31, 2022	Student
Calling and potentially setting up an appointment with La Casa Adult Day Health Center	Sep 12, 2022	Student, Mentor
Using social media to promote the program	Sep 12, 2022 (Ongoing)	Student
Calling different senior programs in Monterey county to recruit seniors	Sep 12, 2022 (Ongoing)	Student, Mentor
Zoom meeting with Aging and Adult Services of Monterey County, Corinne Barret	Sep 22, 2022	Mentor, student, Corinne, and Em
Emailing alliance on again information about the program and a referrals doc.	October 24, 2022	Student, Mentor
Contacting La Casa Adult Day Health center through email, and sending information plus the referral doc.	October 24, 2022	Student, Mentor
Analyzing the number of recruits	Oct 31, 2022	Mentor and student
Final Capstone project reviews to finish it up and be done by Nov 4th, 2022	Oct 31, 2022	Mentor and student (possibly Teacher)
Continuing to analyze the number of recruiters	November 01-28, 2022	Noemi, Mentor and Student

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