

Adult Day Health: It's a tough job, and they love it

When you ask those who work at Full Life Care's adult day health locations what they do all day, they talk about their clients, and note the program's tight schedules and busy days.

"I greet clients when they arrive in the morning."

"At lunch, I make sure everyone gets the right plate."

"I lead the day's activities."

"I make sure clients get on the right bus when they go home."

These staff are program assistants, activity coordinators, certified nursing assistants, case managers and others. Their days often feel long and challenging, with some unknowns and frequent stress. They work with individuals who may lack the ability to clearly communicate. They help people go to the bathroom. They feed people who can't lift a spoon for themselves. All this effort for modest pay. Why do it?

"Not all days are glamorous and fun, but it's so rewarding," said Olivia Jokumsen, a health and wellness case manager at South King County Adult Day Health Center. "I create wonderful memories and I get to be the best or funniest part of someone's day."

"My favorite thing is talking to people. I learn how they lived and what they've done," said Joyce O'Malley, a nurse's aide at North Seattle Adult Day Health Center. "Some days I come here and it doesn't feel like work."



Nurse's Aide Joyce O'Malley laughs with clients Todd and Tim.

Clients come to Full Life for a range of services, including exercise, cognitive activities and occupational therapy. In return, they provide the staff with a bevy of benefits. Their smiles and their stories. Their desire to participate in the adult day health program.

"People come here, have fun and then go home," Joyce said. "While they're here, they tease me, they joke with me."

"My favorite thing is to make them smile," said Beth Rullian, program assistant at South Seattle Adult Day Health Center. "When you talk to them and they tell you stories, there is a connection."

The schedules at Full Life's adult day health programs don't change much, but the days are never the same. It's never boring, and that's how most program staff like it.

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New Feature: People of Full Life

Visit our website to see a new feature, the People of Full Life. Participants, employees and others who support Full Life Care share what matters most to them when it comes to Full Life.

See the People of Full Life at www.fulllifecare.org/category/blog/people-of-full-life



MELANIE BEVERLIN
wants exercise and a place to socialize.



Full Life helped
MITCHELL KELLER
reach a big life goal.



Powerful moments
happen, as **MOË POCHA**
experienced.



PATTI BURKLIN
attends adult day health
so she can get stronger.

Do you support Full Life and want to share your stories? Send us a message at communications@fulllifecare.org.

ADH: Some of the People Behind the Programs

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Joyce

“Each person is different,” Joyce said. “I’ve learned a lot working here that I didn’t know before.”

Joyce came to Full Life in March 2018. She became interested in this line of work after helping care for her parents, including her step-mother, who had Alzheimer’s disease. She enrolled in a certified nursing assistant program.

As a nurse’s aide, Joyce does a bit of everything. She helps the nurse and occupational therapists. She helps clients get around, go to the bathroom and helps them eat.

Beth

Beth worked at Full Life’s South King County location for seven years before retiring in 2012. In September 2018, she returned as a program assistant in Full Life’s South Seattle location. Beth provides personal care for clients and facilitates group activities.

“I was looking for a place to volunteer,” Beth said. “But then I came here and started to work part-time. It’s fun. Some of them call me Auntie!”

Bingky

They call Bingky Rodrigo “Mother Goose.” She’s worked at Full Life’s South Seattle location for 19 years.

“It can be challenging,” she said. “It’s never the same. Before I felt I wouldn’t be here long. The first five years, I’m like, ‘This is so wrong for me.’”

In addition to helping clients with lunch and personal care, Bingky helps clients get on and off busses. She arranges transportation for clients attending the North and South Seattle locations. As the day progresses, some clients will look for a quiet spot and stroll out to the front lobby to sit near Bingky’s desk. She makes sure they’re OK and keeps a close watch on them.

Natasha

Natasha Crum started as a program assistant in January 2019, and hopes to gain experience beyond nursing school. Natasha’s grandparents helped raise her, and that molded a deep appreciation for the people she works with now.

“I’ve only been here a little while, but I’m already getting attached to everyone,” Natasha said. “I wanted to work at a non-profit. When I interviewed, it was so cozy. I felt like I needed to be here. There were good vibes.”

AmeriCorps Members Go Above and Beyond in Their Service

AmeriCorps service member Erika Stover stood at the front of the room, leading a small contingent of practitioners through the steps in their weekly Tai Ji Quan class at Blakeley Manor. The movements were slow and easy, with steady reminders to breathe deeply.

The movements are modified for older adults at risk of falling and for individuals with balance disorders. Research shows that this regimen improves movement and balance. Erika went through intensive training to become an instructor in Tai Ji Quan: Moving for Better Balance.

This is one example of the efforts our AmeriCorps service members put forward so they can better serve our clients and partner agencies. We place our members in positions throughout Full Life Care's programs and partner organizations, including Lifelong Recreation, Sound Generations, and at Seattle Housing Authority, which includes Blakeley Manor.

For nearly 15 years, Full Life Care has partnered with Washington Service Corps to sponsor AmeriCorps service member positions. Over the years, more than 100 AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA members have addressed challenges in our community by leading activities to engage isolated and vulnerable adults and introduce them to effective programs that promote health, wellness and independence.

After serving a few weeks as the aging-in-place specialist for 22 senior housing facilities run by the Seattle Housing Authority, service member Sam Parker jumped in to help fill a need at Bitter Lake Manor.

"I was surprised by how many residents expressed an interest in legal topics, like wills, advance directives and power of attorney," he said. "After a few months of reaching out to legal groups, I was able to set up a presentation for Bitter Lake Manor."



AmeriCorps service member Erika Stover leads a group in Tai Ji Quan class.

Nearly 20 percent of the residents attended to hear cost-effective recommendations and tips on these issues.

Every day at Full Life, service members engage clients in various exercise programs, art studios and even gardening. Service members Molly Corwin and Kieme Eligwe went through training to lead a six-week Chronic Disease Self-Management Course to help individuals, caregivers and family members manage symptoms of those conditions and to improve quality of life.

These are just a few examples of the outstanding efforts this year's team has undertaken to better serve clients at Full Life and those of our partner agencies.

Are you interested in serving? Visit our website to learn more about the AmeriCorps team. We'll start accepting applications for the 2019 team in the spring.

Visit www.fulllifecare.org/ameri-corps-team



Volunteer Receives Highest Honor

Congratulations to Cheryl Swartz, a longtime volunteer at Full Life Care.

Cheryl received the prestigious AARP Washington State Andrus Award for Community Service for her years of dedication to our ElderFriends volunteer companionship program. Read more about Cheryl on the AARP Washington website: tinyurl.com/ElderFriendsVolunteer

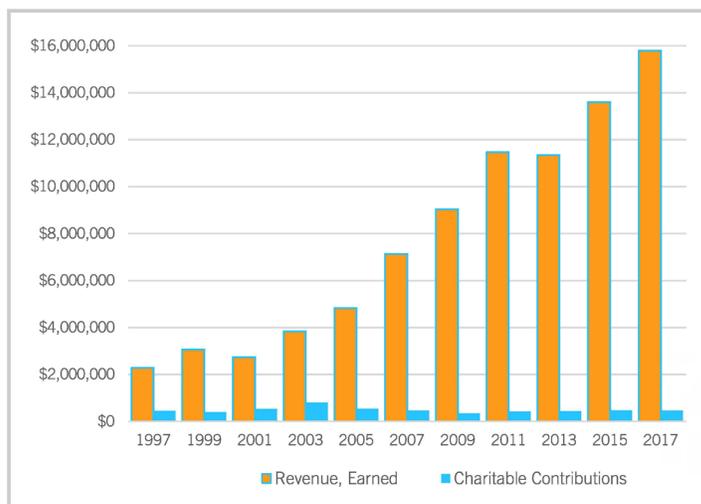
Full Life grows as needs increase

In the course of our nearly 40-year history, Full Life Care has grown from a single adult day health program serving a handful of individuals to become a multifaceted agency with a range of programs that meets the needs of more people than ever.

We now operate four adult day health centers in two counties, serving hundreds of people every day. We also offer behavioral health counseling, care management and housing support services. Our Home Care Aides travel to an average of 500 homes every month to care for clients who can continue to live independently.

As a result of these broadening services, our budget has increased more than sixfold over the past 20 years. The bulging budget represents increasing needs in our community, and Full Life's commitment to meet them.

Each year, we provide care and compassion to more than 4,000 adults who live with chronic health conditions and disabilities. Their loved ones receive respite. We aim to continue our work to provide care and services to more people for years to come.



Your continued generosity is vital. Charitable contributions help our most vulnerable clients—those who have low income and no other way to pay for the services they both need and deserve—to continue to live their fullest life possible, and be treated with dignity and respect. At Full Life Care, we never give up on people.

Please join us. Invest to boost charitable support now and in the years ahead.

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Making it Through the Storm

By Dave Budd, Executive Director

By the time you read this, the winter storms will be a memory. But now, as I look out the window, the first snowflakes are starting to come down. People are rushing home from work or heading to the grocery store to pick up provisions. Who knows if we will be able to reach the store tomorrow? There is a sense of uncertainty in the air.

Here at Full Life, there is also a sense of unease, as we learned that two wonderful caregivers with our Home Care program passed away in recent days. Steve Adams and Jon Tobin. Both were excellent men who gave so much of themselves. Their deaths were unrelated to each other and unrelated to the weather, but they were special people and they are heavy on our minds as we share the news within the agency and remember the wonderful work that they did for our clients.

Team members from our Solstice Behavioral Health program offered to meet with the Home Care team for grief counselling. It is such a remarkable group of people we have working at Full Life, graciously taking care of each other even as they take care of the individuals in their charge.

We also learned that a longtime volunteer, Mary Andersen, passed away. You may remember Mary from our video that premiered at our benefit luncheon in October. Mary has volunteered since January 2015 at our

Snohomish County Adult Day Health Center, where her son Nick is a participant.

As the snow continues to pile up, there are hundreds of our colleagues out in the field, helping our clients in their homes, keeping them safe during the storm. They buy food, prepare meals, help with personal care—all the things that need to be done to help people remain living independently. And there will be days of this ahead.

My photo appears with this article, but our employees are the real-deal heroes of Full Life Care. The ones going out into the storm, doing the hands-on work. Right now employees in our day health centers are helping clients onto vans for their trips back home after a day in which they were able to get nursing care, rehabilitative therapy and a hot meal, as well as a sense of friendship and community. Belonging to a community: Such a powerful, life-affirming force.

In times of uncertainty and loss, it is an uplifting feeling to be surrounded by people you can depend on. People who will do whatever needs to be done. And they will do it with love in their hearts. This sense of connection binds together our family of co-workers and clients, and to our wider group friends and supporters—of which you are valuable part.

We are here for each other to help make it through life's storms. There's nothing else more valuable than that.

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TOPICS INCLUDE

Creative Tools for Better Caregiving
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MORE INFO

<http://tinyurl.com/GivingCareTakingCare>
or call (360) 725-2544 or 1-800-422-3263 to
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EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE: May 13, 2019 • Limited Space • Preregistration Required

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DATE!

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Sunday, July 21, 2019

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