

Coastal Opportunities

Annual Report

July 2021–June 2022

Overview

Coastal Opportunities completed its fifty-first year of service in the 2021–2022 year. The year was one of transition, as the agency saw some pandemic-related restrictions begin to ease while staff creatively sought ways to re-engage with the community. Like so many others, Coastal Opportunities adapted to service provision in a world where Covid-19 concerns were “here to stay.” Despite outbreaks, Coastal managed to mitigate contagion and to limit the spread of the virus from one location to another. Trying to resume some degree of normalcy while keeping everyone safe was the main theme of service provision.

Coastal Opportunities assists individuals in and around Knox County in accessing local communities. Our organization engages individuals by providing an array of services designed to meet specific needs. These services include Case Management, Home Supports, Residential Supports, Community Supports, Work Supports, and In-Home Supports.

Coastal Opportunities continues to use small-group activities in its Day Program/Community Support services as efforts are made to re-establish routines with existing and former collaborators. As pandemic-related restrictions have eased, volunteer groups, local social groups, and businesses have resumed activities. This has allowed groups to re-engage with existing community members as well as to create and build upon new relationships within the Knox County area. While using existing protocols and following the latest Covid-19 guidance, Coastal strove to maintain contact with the community to the best of its ability

while using utmost caution. This allowed for resumption of many meaningful contacts when restrictions were eased.

Coastal Opportunities maintains its presence with facilities and programs in Camden, Rockport, Rockland, Thomaston, and Owls Head. Our Community Support programs maintain a mobile, community-based model that seeks full integration while using facilities as a hub of operations.

Continuing its mission, Coastal Opportunities provided supports and services to 101 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022. The mission of Coastal Opportunities is as follows:

To assist adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to become participating members in their social and economic community.

Again, in 2021–2022, Coastal Opportunities has been largely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Fortunately, this year saw fewer mandated shutdowns of Community and Work Support programs, but there has still been a substantial overall impact on hours of service provided. Efforts to get back, or near, to pre-pandemic hours of service have been hampered by staffing shortages exacerbated by the pandemic. Within its array of services, Coastal Opportunities has provided Residential and Home Supports for 34 residents, and Community and Work Supports for 42 individuals. Coastal Opportunities Case Management served 48 individuals.

Counting the entire array of services provided, Coastal Opportunities served 101 people in and around Knox County. The participants of Coastal range in age from 22 to 82, with an average age of 48. Coastal

Opportunities provided employment to 61 staff in support of individuals, at a total cost of \$3,556,016.

Organizational Employment

Work Supports

Coastal Opportunities maintained its Work Supports programs through the second year of the pandemic. With protocols in place, one site was still consistently able to support employment for 5 individuals. Coastal also worked with individuals to move to independent work with natural supports in place.

Employment Objectives

2021–2022

1. To maintain Vocational Rehabilitation certification for agency-operated vocational services.

We have met this objective and continue to offer Work Support services.

2. To develop a functional work-intake screening process that explores applicants' interests, strengths, self-assessments, and career development.

We have met this objective through development of individualized vocational goal procedures to satisfy the Home- and Community-Based Services rule.

3. To develop a transition plan for students with Intellectual / Developmental Disabilities. As part of this goal, we will continue to reach out to local school systems in the spring of every year to make them aware of services we can offer to their graduating seniors.

There is a vendor call system in place for placement into any adult services; openings in our programs are limited due to program size as it relates to staffing.

Community Integration

Coastal Opportunities incorporates community involvement and participation into its service delivery and incorporates it into its mission. Through planning procedures and awareness of opportunities in the surrounding communities, participants are assisted to develop community-based relationships and collaborations. Coastal's participants strive to build skills and abilities that assist in sustaining meaningful connections.

Community Supports

Volunteer Sites

As restrictions began to ease and establishments resumed operations that had been curtailed by the pandemic, volunteer activities saw an increase from last year's levels. Sites where participants provided volunteer support: Owls Head Transportation Museum, Meals on Wheels, Out Maine, AIO Food Pantry, Merryspring Nature Center, Gleaners, Pope Memorial Humane Society, Salvation Army, Midcoast Recreation Center, Maine Lobster Festival (Rockland), Union Fairgrounds, Thomaston Fire Station, Rockland Public Library, and Thompson Community Center.

Community-Based Activities

Coastal participants continued with a mobile programming model while incorporating traditionally popular activities. The Covid-19 pandemic

necessitated the development of new and innovative pursuits where social distancing was achievable. Participants also had the opportunity to be involved with “pre-pandemic” established routines. Participants bowled at Oakland Lanes, played Tennis For Fun, enjoyed hikes on Coastal Mountains Land Trust trails, took advantage of the local State Parks and beaches, toured local museums and libraries, and participated in many outdoor sports (such as basketball, volleyball, badminton, horseshoes, mini-golf, and kickball) at local recreation areas and facilities. Small groups toured businesses of individual interests. Individuals participated in Arts in the Park, Yoga/Movers and Shakers in the Park, gardening, and lots of hiking and fishing. Groups visited Wiscasset Speedway, car/plane shows, antiques malls, farmers’ markets, Wiscasset Train Station, local restaurants, performing arts venues, and the Country Inn (swim/spa).

Seasonal activities included pumpkin/apple picking and corn-maze fun at local farms (Beth’s Farm Market, Hope Orchards, County Fair Farm), exploring Fort Knox in Bucksport, attending concerts, Snow Bowl sledding, skiing, toboggan races, ice fishing, and smelting. Participants enjoyed a sailboat trip on the Schooner *Olad*, Sea Dogs games, Black Bears football, Maine Mariners hockey, picnics, and many more activities of choice.

The Community Supports Program was also able to re-establish activities with Special Olympics, Aktion Club, Spark Dance, Sweet Tree Arts, YMCA, and Dancing Elephant Studio.

Facility-Based Supports

Coastal Opportunities provides a center of operations to act as a “hub” for its community-based activities and to provide a place for activities

for those who may have health and safety concerns, and those who may need additional, more intensive, supports. Outings branch out from the facility to engage people with the surrounding community and provide instruction and skill building on site in order to improve opportunities for success in building community relationships and to maximize independence.

Community Support Services Goals and Results for 2021–2022

Goal 1. To increase Community Support hours by at least 5 percent in the upcoming year.

This goal was met, as there were fewer Covid-19 related interruptions of service. Total hours of service for Community Supports increased to 19,523 in 2021–2022 (an increase of almost 10 percent).

Goal 2. To find at least five more regularly scheduled community and/or volunteer activities for Olive Coates Center program participants.

Participants returned to the Olive Coates Center this year and exercised CDC and regulatory precautions related to the Covid-19 pandemic and latest guidance. Regulation and guidance for this group of participants was very stringent and precluded many community-based opportunities.

Goal 3. To increase participant time in small-group community outings by 5 percent in the coming year. Target: 60 percent.

Community Support services became completely mobile, and participants spent 100 percent of their programming time in small-group community-based outings.

Goal 4. To maintain enough staff to ensure integration in the community-based small groups by reducing staff turnover to 20 percent and reducing our vacancy rate to 15 percent.

1.5 full-time employees were added to the program, reducing turnover but still missing the 15 percent target.

Goal 5. To maintain or increase the amount of time spent in integrated community settings to 70 percent.

All scheduled activities are currently community-based.

Goal 6. To have participants spend 15 percent of their time in community volunteer activities.

The number of available sites increased to 14 different locations. This allowed for a significant increase to 12 percent of Community Support time participating in volunteer activities.

Community Support Services Goals for 2022–2023

As Community Support Services saw its second year of pandemic-related restrictions of available activities, support staff and leadership found innovative ways to streamline services and enhance community engagement. While still maintaining safety, Community Support Services re-established community-based engagement and explored/developed new relationships. Hours of service provided have seen an increase as Community Support teams have sought to enhance the number of service hours provided to existing participants, and to offer service to additional individuals.

Goal 1. To increase Community Support hours of service by at least 5 percent in the upcoming year.

Goal 2. To find at least five more regularly scheduled community and/or volunteer activities for participants.

Goal 3. To maintain participation time in small-group community outings at 100 percent in the upcoming year. Target: 65 percent.

Goal 4. To maintain enough staff to ensure integration in the community in small groups by reducing staff turnover to 20 percent and our vacancy rate to 15 percent.

Goal 5. To maintain the amount of time spent in integrated community settings at 100 percent.

Goal 6. To have participants spend 15 percent of their time in community volunteer activities.

Residential Services

Coastal Opportunities endeavors to offer a variety of settings in its residential programming. The people whom Coastal Opportunities serves have diverse and varied support needs, so a range of support options and settings is necessary to meet those needs successfully. Coastal's residential options range from settings where almost complete physical assistance is required—as in our ICF-IID in Rockland—to supported-living apartments where very little assistance is necessary for individuals to live independently.

Twenty-four-hour staffing is provided for 8 residential settings that currently serve 27 residents. Two residential settings have the capacity to support 5 individuals to live independently with minimal supports on an intermittent and “as needed” basis.

In each of these residential settings, independence is promoted in all aspects of support provision. The goal of direct support is to offer just as much assistance as necessary to accomplish skill-building tasks in the areas of money management, community awareness and connectivity, medical and hygiene practices, and menu planning and meal preparation. Some individuals in some settings receive more in-depth support as needed for mobility, access, social awareness, and hygiene.

Residential Services Goals and Results for 2021–2022

As Coastal Opportunities worked through its second full year of the Covid-19 pandemic and its subsequent protocols, guidelines, and restrictions, the agency continued to strive toward its Residential Services goals while always prioritizing safety.

Goal 1. To decrease medication errors in our residences.

Residential services saw a decrease in medication errors across all of the agency residential sites.

Goal 2. To enhance community interaction.

Community-based activities increased greatly as more venues became available again.

Goal 3. To increase the number of times that residential programs meet their approved hours overall.

As some staffing vacancies were filled, Residential Programs saw a slight increase in meeting approved hours.

Residential Services Goals for 2022–2023

The agency continues to resume some semblance of normalcy while Pandemic related restrictions ease and more opportunities become available. Coastal Opportunities will strive to achieve the following Residential Service goals:

Goal 1. To decrease medication errors in our residences.

Goal 2. To enhance community interaction.

Goal 3. To increase the number of times that residential programs meet their approved hours overall.

Case Management Services

Coastal Opportunities provides comprehensive Case Management Services to individuals as part of its array of services. It is the job of case managers to connect and coordinate services for individuals and to ensure that each client's Person-Centered Planning team is working together to reach personalized goals and needs. Case Management Services act as an overall facilitator of many different service options and assists in helping them work together. These coordinated services include Representative Payee services, Person-Centered Planning, housing, employment, Community Supports, Work Supports, guardianship, adult protective services, and quality assurance. Referral to Case Management Services is done through a vendor call system developed by DHHS Office of Aging and Disability Services. Case Management Services are provided only to individuals who are not receiving other services from Coastal Opportunities.

In 2021–2022, Coastal Opportunities provided 4,180 hours of Case Management Services to 48 individuals in Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, and Waldo Counties.

Case Management provides Representative Payee Services that work hand-in-hand with coordinating the entire array of services.

Representative Payee Services ensure oversight of finances and monitoring of expenditures.

Coastal Opportunities provided Representative Payee Services to 12 of the 48 individuals receiving Case Management Services.