

Strategic Plan for Community Based Day Services – Draft

Introduction

Sunshine Communities is a multifaceted organization that serves individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). In its effort to meet the needs of the underserved, Sunshine has evolved to support a diverse client mix. Supports range from caring for some of the most medically complex individuals living in Intermediate Care Facilities to helping people with limited support needs find and maintain their own home.

Supporting individuals to live and work in their communities has been a Sunshine commitment since 1978 when its first group home opened. Since that time, Sunshine has opened 15 homes in neighborhoods throughout Lucas and Fulton Counties that support 85 individuals. In addition, a robust supported living program has helped many individuals find their own place to live, and has offered flexible supports adapted to individual needs. In its latest effort to enhance community living opportunities, Sunshine is developing five more homes that will allow 32 individuals from its large ICF to move into community neighborhoods in 2016/2017.

Creating community opportunities is a theme that shapes Sunshine's array of day supports as well as residential. In an effort to offer community employment during a time of limited job opportunities, Sunshine developed jobs for individuals and provided the supports to help them succeed in those jobs. Laundry services, housekeeping, animal care and a greenhouse operation were all developed in order to offer paid employment. Sunshine opened a coffee shop in uptown Maumee, now a thriving business and a Northwest Ohio icon which employs 20 individuals with IDD. In 2014 Sunshine established a Community Employment division designed to focus specifically on helping individuals find employment with local business owners. At the current time, approximately 20 individuals are being supported in various stages of employment from job seeking to successful employment with several employers in our area.

In 2006, Sunshine developed a large congregate day activity center out of necessity when funding changes forced it to support individuals living in the ICF previously served by Lott Industries in Lucas County. While the program offers many community activities throughout the day, its location on campus is not ideal for creating the community integration that characterizes other Sunshine supports. The program also serves individuals who are harder to employ given their physical and/or behavioral challenges. As Sunshine envisions the future, it is clear that there is a need to create community day and employment opportunities for those with more severe disabilities. It has been difficult to find good models or demonstration programs to guide the way.

Creating a model of support in community settings is the current challenge being addressed with support from the DODD grant. The following offers vision and strategy for creating meaningful community opportunities for those with significant physical and behavioral challenges.

Background and History

Sunshine Children's Home began in 1949 when Roy and Georgette Engler, parents of five children with mental retardation, wanted to share a little sunshine with other children who had disabilities and their families. In 1952, Sunshine Children's Home was incorporated as a non-profit organization. The home became affiliated with the Mennonite Church in 1960 and continues today as a member of Mennonite Health Service Alliance. Today, Sunshine serves 1,000 individuals with developmental disabilities and their families through our base residential facility in Maumee, 15 Family Care Homes, Supported Living, and Vocational Services. In addition, programs such as therapeutic riding, recreational opportunities, and spiritual life activities are also offered.

The Engler's gift to our community in 1949 is today a dynamic and multi-faceted organization. In the intervening 65 plus years, Sunshine has expanded to accommodate the growing and changing needs of people living with developmental disabilities in our regional community.

Mission

Sunshine's mission is to create community among people with developmental disabilities, their families, friends and staff. We do this by offering services that enable all of us to build relationships that enhance our lives through mutual caring and growth.

In pursuit of this mission:

- We practice Christian values in the tradition of the Mennonite faith
- We embrace the vision of our founders, Roy and Georgette Engler
- We strengthen our community by serving the underserved

Vision

Our unique role in the lives of those we serve will be fully realized when:

- All individuals have relationships and a natural system of support in their lives that is supplemented only as needed with compensated care
- All individuals participate in the natural flow of the community, giving and receiving in turn
- All individuals have opportunity to grow and enjoy new experiences that may enhance their lives

Core Values

We give expression to our values by practicing teachings that come from the Mennonite faith tradition. Our values are:

- **Tenderness**
Tenderness governs our relationship with the people of our community. It gives expression to love, the quality that creates true family, the quality that accepts our differences and honors them in the course of our daily lives. It guides us to use gentle teaching when presented with challenging behaviors and to treat each other with dignity especially when we are most vulnerable.
- **Mutuality**
Community offers opportunity for us to join together in both giving and receiving, in both teaching and learning. Community teaches us that more can be accomplished together than alone; it leads us to commitment in our work and relationships. It guides us to reach out to people whose needs are unmet or unnoticed and embrace them.
- **Spirituality**
As a Christian ministry we reach out to all people and honor the faith traditions of all. We support each other in our exploration and expression of faith. We hold firm the belief that all are created in the image of God and this guides us to treat each person with dignity as we would wish to be treated ourselves.
- **Integrity**
We are committed to be open and honest with each member of our community, providing a mirror of truth. We value the trust placed in us by families, governments and donors. We work to maintain this trust by using resources wisely and practicing the highest standards of care.
- **Stewardship**
We are committed to using all resources available to us in the best interest of those we serve. We recognize the limits of earth's resources and act to preserve them for the future. We advocate for people

to be part of their community and experience opportunity to express their gifts. Through innovation and new solutions, we strive to maintain our role as good stewards.

Sunshine Organizational Strategic Plan

Sunshine as an organization has set strategic direction through its Board as well as senior leadership staff. Critical in this is our commitment to building sustainable community participation and contribution. To do this Sunshine will adapt and/or develop quality services to meet changing needs and preferences, cultivate nonpaid systems of support, create greater awareness of Sunshine, support and enhance a committed workforce, and ensure a sustainable business model. Our overall emphasis is on community engagement and development of relationships.

Within this context we are establishing a strategic plan for supporting individuals from our ICF programs to experience enhanced integration into the flow of community life. We began with an environmental scan to assist us in determining what existing strengths we should capitalize on and where we needed to focus our attention.

Environmental Scan

There are many factors, both internal and external, that will impact our strategy, direction, and service delivery in the coming years. The following SWOT Analysis gives an overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that we believe to be most relevant.

Strengths

- Solid community presence and reputation for quality services
- Flexibility
- Organizational infrastructure
- Creative/Innovative thinking
- Entrepreneurial culture
- Open mindedness
- Strong volunteer base
- Organizational amenities /resources
- Transportation capacity
- Embrace partnerships
- Proven track record with supported employment and job creation
- Proven track record with meaningful engagement opportunities

Weaknesses

- Resistance to change at some levels of the organization
- Organizational amenities/resources are all on our campus
- Large – can lose personal touch
- Internal communication/networking gaps
- Lack of consistency
- Comfortable/confident with what we do/how we do it
- Don't always fully utilizes internal resources

Opportunities

- Connections in the community
- ICF Pilot Grant
- State and Federal support for community integration and person-centered approaches
- Outside impetus to push ourselves

- Support purpose and meaning in people’s lives
- Support people in ways that allow for a “typical” looking life experience
- Improved acceptance by community
- More resources/best practice information readily accessible via technology

Threats

- Staff turnover
- Shrinking/changing workforce in general
- DSP low wage job
- Regulations coming from a variety of places such as DOL which result in unfunded mandates
- Funding gaps for meeting certain needs, indirect costs
- Resistance from individuals, families, others
- With individualization and smaller sites comes more dispersed supports which are harder to monitor and ensure quality of service
- Accessibility in the community inconsistent
- Aging individuals and staff
- Good economy
- Complexity of supporting individuals with medical and behavioral challenges without facility based supports/infrastructure

In summary, we feel good about many of our strengths and believe they will serve us well in moving forward with the continuing evolution of the way supports for day services and employment need to be offered. Sunshine has a history of innovation and willingness to support a wide range of needs in a wide range of ways. We believe we have built a solid foundation for taking the next steps.

Over time, we have developed good resources in terms of human capital, relationships with other agencies, and physical locations. At the same time, sometimes our strengths can become weaknesses as it is tempting to rely on what is comfortable and known including the way we offer services and supports and the skills and competencies of certain staff members to develop them.

One of our greatest concerns is with workforce related threats. There is no question that the workforce is changing, aging, and shrinking. Effectively managing today’s workforce habits and expectations is a challenge for managers. Competition and the lower wages paid for direct support all lead to a high rate of turnover which has a direct impact on capacity to offer services and supports as well as to assure quality.

Direction and Outcomes

Sunshine is actively pursuing a strategic direction that is driven by things in the external environment such as the CMS rule, DODD’s strategic direction, and feedback from our customers. We believe it is a continuation of the direction we are already headed, but recognize that there is much work to be done to achieve the kind of flexibility, purpose, and community integration that is needed.

The period of this plan is looking out over the next three years. However we recognize that it will extend well beyond that and will need review and revision on an ongoing basis for the foreseeable future. The following is an overview of our strategic direction:

- Build a flexible system of support driven by person centered planning and utilization of consumer feedback for improvement
- Enhance community partnerships to increase opportunities for individuals with significant physical, behavioral, and intellectual disabilities to engage in community life and develop meaningful relationships

- Continue moving towards a more community based model of day service support, thereby reducing the size of campus based services
- Build competency within our workforce for developing community connections and opportunities for community integration

Goals/Strategies

1. Reduce the number of individuals currently attending our campus-based Vocational Center for all their services by increasing the community-based options we offer for day services
 - Success will be defined by a 25% reduction in campus based service days when comparing the same starting month, one year after launch. In addition, we intend on developing 50% more community based options for individuals to choose from. Our strategy will be (in-part, but not limited) to continue seeking out partnerships with churches or other locations in the community that provide an accessible place in the community for individuals to go to rather than our campus.
 - **Baseline – October, 2015** -- 95 ICF individuals served with 8 in pilot community sites; 2 community sites. (Note: Total number of ICF varies due to variety of factors, including conversion to waiver, open beds, intakes, etc.)
 - **April, 2016** -- 95 ICF individuals served with 8 in pilot community sites; 2 community sites.
 - **October, 2016** – 88 ICF individuals served with 19 in pilot community sites; 3 community sites.
 - **April, 2017** – 81 ICF individuals served with 21 in pilot community sites; 4 community sites.
 - **Contract End - July, 2017** – 81 ICF individuals served with 24 in pilot community sites; 5 community sites.
2. Adapt and utilize a process that helps identify individual interests and skills which can be translated into meaningful services or employment with the appropriate level of support needed by the end of 2017.
 - The success of this goal will be measured by our ability to diversify programming options.
 - Actively develop Community Based Assessment sites with local employers.
 - Develop individualized life skills programs and classes.
 - Explore use of SME for adapting a career discovery type process for individuals with significant physical and/or behavioral disabilities.
 - **Baseline – October, 2015** – CBA sites = 0; Individualized programming = 0; Lifecoaching Center concept developed.
 - **April, 2016** – CBA sites = 1; Lifecoaching Center location and manager secured; SME list obtained.
 - **October, 2016** – CBA sites = 3; Lifecoaching Center programming developed and tours given; development of process for community based individualized supports for 3 individuals, 2 in ICF pilot; SME list narrowed to 2 potential experts.
 - **April, 2017** – CBA sites = 3; Lifecoaching Center operating; evaluation of use and costs of SME complete; fully developed process for use for assessing community based individualized supports.
 - **Contract End – July, 2017** – CBA sites = 4; consultative services of SME if determined to be beneficial; continued reduction of campus based services and supports.
3. Identify ways to diversify financial support for community based programs
 - Success implementation of this goal will result in Sunshine identifying at least one reoccurring funding resources for community programming that does not currently provide funding to our existing service array.
 - Explore grant opportunities that support community integration.
 - Internal involvement and support from Volunteer Department, Foundation, Vocational Board, and support services.

- Externally, partner with churches, schools, and community resources for space, activities, and other in-kind supports.
 - **Baseline – October, 2015** – Partnership with 2 churches for community sites.
 - **April, 2016** – 2 community church sites operating with discussions with 2 additional churches; donations requested for Lifecoaching Center from internal/external sources.
 - **October, 2016** – Partnership with and operation of 3 church community sites; identify with Development Dept. potential grant opportunities for diversification of financial support for community integration; identify and explore at least 2 additional church community sites.
 - **April, 2017** – Partnership and operation of 4 community sites; assess requirements of and apply for applicable grants; develop at least 3 volunteer opportunities for community sites.
 - **Contract End – July, 2017** – Secure 1 grant; explore additional community sites in Lucas and surrounding counties.
4. Develop internal and external resources for staff training and acquisition of skills to better support individuals pursuit of meaningful connections in their community for social and employment purposes
- Implementation and completion of this goal will require Sunshine to research successful community-based programs, understand the skills and training requirements for successful launch and continuing education, and subsequent implementation of a curriculum developed to meet the needs of the individuals (and their staff) served.
 - Focus on DODD required vocational annual training on PCP, competitive employment, and community integration.
 - Explore use of SME for community connection building for individuals with significant disabilities.
 - **Baseline – October, 2015** – Orientation training for new DSP's for community sites.
 - **April, 2016** – Orientation training for new DSP's for community sites; SME list obtained.
 - **October, 2016** – Narrow SME list and evaluate benefit and enhancement for vocational annual training; assess training needs for staff and managers residentially and vocationally.
 - **April, 2017** – Use of SME if determined beneficial for vocational annual training; evaluate training opportunities through Lifecoaching Center for staff and individuals in integrated employment job search process.
 - **Contract End – July, 2017** – Continued assessment, development, and training opportunities for all staff and managers.
5. Identify outreach strategies with internal and external customers.
- Internally, communicate with our individuals, families, staff, and boards our opportunities for community experiences on a quarterly basis.
 - Externally, engage the community at large into our community based and campus opportunities.
 - **Baseline – October, 2015** – Develop action plan for transition to community sites.
 - **April, 2016** – Use of and adaptation as needed of transition action plan; obtain family feedback from individuals in community sites; update Vocational Board; monthly meetings with Communications Director to explore effective use of social media and other communication strategies.
 - **October, 2016** – Explore opportunities for engagement of volunteers and staff members in the community sites; update Vocational Board; assess Satisfaction Surveys sent to individuals, families, and guardians.
 - **April, 2017** – Engage donors, families, county board, and community at large at Lifecoaching Center open house; communications through internal newsletters, family meetings, etc.

- **Contract End – July, 2017** – Minimum of 1 article on integration into the community in a local newspaper; fully developed communications plan for effective outreach to internal and external stakeholders.