

Coastal Opportunities

Annual Report

July 2022–June 2023

Overview

Coastal Opportunities completed its fifty-second year of service in the year 2022–2023. While still living in the shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic, the agency resumed much of its regular activity while remaining vigilant against the virus. Although there were outbreaks, staff members were able to contain illness to a large degree, and agency operations functioned with more regularity.

Coastal Opportunities provides services that enhance skills and promote community involvement for individuals in and around Knox County. The agency strives to build individualized programming around the specific needs of individuals. The array of services provided includes Case Management, Home Supports, Residential Supports, Community Supports, Work Supports, and In-Home Supports.

Our Community Supports programs have continued to expand the hours of support to our participants while adding more community-based groups and activities. Local social-group activities, volunteering, and connections with area businesses were all integral parts of the schedule for Community Supports.

Coastal Opportunities continues to operate facilities and supports in Camden, Rockland, Rockport, Thomaston, and Owls Head. The Thomas Corcoran Center in Camden continues to act as a hub from which mobile

supports are offered in small groups of participants who spend as much time as possible engaged in community-based activities.

Coastal Opportunities continues to uphold its mission and provided services to 95 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023. The mission of Coastal Opportunities is as follows:

Coastal Opportunities assists adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to become participating members in their social and economic community.

In 2022–2023, Coastal Opportunities resumed a large portion of its pre-pandemic activity and saw very little Covid-19–related closures of supports. Although the programs are not back to pre-pandemic levels, the Community and Work Supports programs continue to rebound in relation to hours of service provided and the number of people served. Staffing shortages continue to provide challenges in coverage and hours of service provided. Within the total array of services, Coastal Opportunities has provided Home and Residential supports to 30 residents, and Community and Work Supports for 40 individuals. Coastal Opportunities Case Management Services provided supports to 47 individuals.

With regard to the entire array of services provided, Coastal Opportunities served 95 people in and around Knox County. Those individuals ranged in age between 23 and 83, with an average age of 47. Provision of high-quality services was undertaken by 71 Coastal Opportunities employees at a total cost of \$3,508,772.

Organizational Employment

Work Supports

Work Supports programs continued to provide opportunities for gainful employment for 5 individuals. Some participants are now using only natural supports, instead of paid staff, in some work environments. Hours of Work Supports provided were able to increase as normal business operations resumed and the Covid-19 pandemic repercussions eased.

Employment Objectives

2022–2023

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

We 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.

This goal is met with the continuing use of individualized development of vocational goals as delineated by 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.

Potential placements are made to work programs using a vendor call system through Vocational Rehabilitation services. Individual Case Management makes targeted referrals to work support services.

Community Integration

Community integration is at the heart of all service delivery at Coastal Opportunities. Although the agency has been transitioning toward a more mobile model for several years, this year saw rigorous development of community engagement as it worked toward the requirements of Home and Community Based Services. Participants are regularly offered opportunities to model their own programming toward preferred activities that include engagement with their surrounding communities.

Community Supports

Volunteer Sites

With most traditional volunteer sites back to full operation, participant volunteer activities were vigorous again and increased in some instances. Our participants, with the support and diligence of staff, volunteered at the following sites: Owls Head Transportation Museum, Meals on Wheels, Out Maine, AIO Food and Energy Assistance, Gleaners, Pope Memorial Humane Society, Merryspring Nature Center, Salvation Army, Midcoast Recreation Center, Maine Lobster Festival (Rockland), Union Fairgrounds, Thomaston Fire Station, Rockland Public Library, and Thompson Community Center.

Community-Based Activities

Using an engagement-based model, participants took part in choice-driven activities that incorporated both new and traditional opportunities to connect with local communities. Activities included: hikes on the Coastal Mountains Land Trust trails, visits to local beaches, enjoying picnics and exploration at local State Parks, fishing, tours of museums and historical sites, participation in many outdoor sports (such as basketball, badminton, mini-golf, horseshoes), Arts in the Park, Yoga/Movers and Shakers, local restaurants, Country Inn (swim/spa), and many more points of interest as opportunities arose.

Participants also enjoyed seasonal activities such as visits to local fairs, apple picking, sporting events, sailing on the Schooner *Olad*, Sea Dogs games, and snowshoeing, to name a few.

The Community Supports Program also continued its involvement with Special Olympics, Aktion Club, Spark Dance, Sweet Tree Arts, and the local YMCA.

Facility-Based Supports

For those individuals who have more complex health and safety needs (and may require more intricate supports), Coastal Opportunities provides a more facility-based option that can also act as a starting point for other, offsite, activities. Options are available for participants to build independence skills on site if they so choose, or they can be involved in activities that branch out from that location. Like other Coastal Opportunities programming, engagement with the local

community, and building connections with those who do not receive Home- and Community-Based Services, are always the goals.

Community Support Services Goals and Results for 2022-2023

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

Community Support Services provided 19,969 hours of service, an increase of 2 percent from the previous year.

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

Community Supports increased time at the existing 14 volunteer sites.

Goal 3. To maintain participation in small group outings at 100 percent in the upcoming year.

All groups maintained a 1-to-3 (or less) staff-to-participant ratio 100 percent of the time for outings.

Goal 4. To maintain enough staff to ensure integration in the community-based small groups by maintaining staff turnover at 10 percent (or better) and reducing our vacancy rate to 15 percent.

The Community Supports turnover rate was 10 percent, while the vacancy rate was 17 percent.

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

All outings were scheduled for community-based activities.

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

Participants increased time spent in existing volunteer activities to 14 percent.

Community Supports Services Goals for 2023–2024

Community Supports have successfully morphed into a mobile and community-based program model. The schedules of each individual have been catered to their specific needs and desires for continued growth and community engagement. Hours of service continue to increase as the leadership and staff of the program become more efficient and innovative in service delivery. Expansion of service delivery has greatly strengthened and augmented community ties and relationships.

Goal 1. To increase Community Support hour 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 in small-group community outings at 100 percent in the upcoming year.

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 strives to offer a variety of settings that are designed to meet the specific needs of individuals. Our residential services offer a wide range of options with that goal in mind. Residential options include settings that are designed to support individuals with a high level of various needs, as well as settings that are appropriate for those who require very little assistance to maintain the most independent lifestyle possible.

Twenty-four-hour staffing is provided at 8 different residential settings in Knox County. These staffed locations serve 27 individuals. Coastal Opportunities also has two locations that have the capacity to support 5 individuals who live independently and receive minimal and periodic in-home support by qualified Direct Support Professionals.

Always in line with promoting choice and independence, each of these residential settings offers individualized assistance that allows the people we serve to complete tasks with as little help as necessary to

achieve success. These skill-building activities could take the form of menu planning, meal preparation, money management, social awareness, activities of daily living and healthy habits, mobility, and behavioral management.

Residential Services Goals and Results for 2021–2022

With most programming provided with minimal Covid-19 interruptions and restrictions, Coastal Opportunities Residential Programs worked toward meeting the following goals.

Goal 1. To decrease medication errors in our residences.

There was a slight decrease in medication errors in residential services.

Goal 2. To enhance community interaction.

Residential Services saw a marked increase in community interaction as normal routines were established and staffing patterns improved.

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

Residential Services increased the frequency of meeting approved hours as staffing patterns stabilized slightly and scheduling became more efficient.

Residential Services Goals for 2022–2023

Coastal Opportunities will continue to improve upon its progress as Residential Services embrace the new Home- and Community-Based Services rules. With increased access to the surrounding communities and with gradual improvement in the job market, work will continue on the following 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

Case Management Services are an integral part of the diverse array of services offered at Coastal Opportunities. This service coordinates and facilitates the Person-Centered Planning process for each person receiving services, as defined by the DHHS Office of Aging and Disability Services. Case Management Services are instrumental in making sure that people have access to a multitude of available programs and service options while also acting as the point person for the development of goals and objectives, as determined by the individual and their respective team. The oversight of service delivery by Case

Management could include models and programs such as Work Supports, Representative Payee Services, Community Supports, adult protective services, guardianship, Residential Services, and quality assurance, to name a few. A vendor call system is utilized by the Office of Aging and Disability Services to ensure access to Case Management Services. These services are only provided to those who do not receive any other services from Coastal Opportunities.

In 2022–2023, Coastal Opportunities provided 928 hours of Case Management Services to 45 individuals in Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, and Waldo Counties.

Within the caseloads of the Case Managers, some individuals also receive Representative Payee Services, which are used in conjunction with the entire service provision profile for each individual. Representative Payee Services are also a resource to provide management and oversight of expenditures and overall monitoring of finances.

Coastal Opportunities provided Representative Payee Services to 12 of the 45 individuals receiving Case Management Services.

The results of the most recent Case Management Satisfaction Survey are as follows: Of the approximately 30 surveys sent (reflecting current caseloads), 8 were returned. Of the 8 respondents, one was a home provider, one was an individual receiving services, and 6 were guardians/family members.

1. 8 respondents relayed that Case Managers conducted themselves in a professional manner.
2. 8 respondents stated that Case Managers were responsive to individual, staff, and family needs.

3. 8 respondents felt that Case Management promoted choice and independence.
4. 8 respondents were extremely satisfied with Case Management Services.
5. Respondents noted no areas they felt could be improved.
6. Respondents included many words of praise for Case Managers.

Goals for the Upcoming Year

Goal 1. To determine individual/guardian/parent satisfaction with Case Management Services. Target: 100 percent satisfaction.

Goal 2. To determine whether Community and Home Supports providers are satisfied with our Case Management Services. Target: 100 percent satisfaction.

Goal 3. To stabilize and maintain caseloads for both Case Managers.