



Respite Program Case Study *Respite in the Time of COVID-19*

Centennial Adultcare Center – Tennessee

Program Description

Centennial Adultcare Centers (CAC) are privately owned [adult day health care programs](#)¹ that provide integrated day care, respite and health care services for families of adults with cognitive or physical disabilities (dementia, CVA, developmental, intellectual, brain injury, etc.) who are 18 years and older. Approximately 60% of adult day care participants are over the age of 60. The [adult day health care program](#)² is the heart of the program and provides an opportunity for families to receive respite breaks and for adults needing care to socialize and engage in meaningful activities. CAC is licensed through the Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS) through [Adult Day Care licensing](#).³ Centennial's respite services are predominately center-based with some in-home respite provided for around 80+ clients across its locations.

Tennessee identified adult day care services as an *essential service* which allowed services to continue. Tennessee left other service closures up to the discretion of local jurisdictions and provided guidance on the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including wearing masks, symptom screening and testing, social distancing, and education around pandemic issues. Tennessee implemented a Safer at Home order between March 12th and April 30th that urged residents to stay at home to prevent spread of the coronavirus. [General COVID-19 guidelines](#)⁴ were provided for individuals, families, workplaces, and businesses.

Planning and Guidance for Respite Services

- **Coordinated needed adult day care program changes internally** based on [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)⁵ (CDC) and [Tennessee state guidance](#)⁶ for local areas. Followed ongoing Tennessee Governor [guidance](#)⁷ aligned with CDC recommendations.
- **Researched and gathered COVID-19 information and resources** through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA), Tennessee Association of Adult Day Services (TAADS), Tennessee Department of Human Services (DHS), Tennessee Department of Health (TDH), local/regional health departments, and networking with other adult day programs.
- **Used resources from the National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA)** including their [Important Information on COVID-19](#)⁸ page with articles, links, and resources, and the [NADSA Facebook group](#).⁹
- **CEO/Executive Director accessed university level information and resources** due to ongoing research involvement and connections.
- **Applied for and received a CARES Act [Paycheck Protection Program \(PPP\)](#)**¹⁰ loan from the federal government to address additional costs associated with providing respite during the pandemic.
- **Communicated with staff and families regularly through emails, memos, and phone calls.** Provided an opportunity to address individual and family needs and to talk through fears about participating in the program for families.
- **Secured Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).** Difficult in the spring as PPE was scarce and expensive; however due to already providing medical and direct care, had masks and gloves available. In July were given Tennessee Emergency Management Association (TEMA) access and were able to access PPE and supplies (masks, gloves, sanitizer).
- **Planned for adult day care respite service continuation:**
 - Followed existing staff and client protocols for providing health and personal assistance services including activities of daily living (ADLs).
 - Communicated with families to determine their needs and willingness to use adult day care vs. home based services.
 - Asked families to monitor loved ones symptoms and health. Adult day health care participants who had a temperature or other COVID-19 symptoms had to stay home and report symptoms to primary care physician as per CDC guidance.

- Planned for PPE usage, screening, and symptom monitoring. All staff required to wear masks. Assisted clients with wearing masks, but not all were able to wear masks for various reasons.
- For adult day health care site, planned for use of existing space to allow for social distancing during mealtime and socialization. However, for direct personal care, this was not always possible. In those instances, followed CDC guidance on close contact, including staying 6 feet or more apart. When assisting with ADLs, within 6 feet, limited contact to less than 15 minutes.
- **Recommended that all direct care staff get COVID-19 testing every two weeks** for additional health, safety and risk management. The Tennessee Department of Health put in place extensive [testing options](#)¹¹ through a partnership with Kroger and CVS for testing and drive-thru testing.

COVID-19 Staff Training and Resource Dissemination

- **Continued to support and train staff to follow Tennessee Department of Health and CDC infectious disease protocols** already in place. Followed [Guidance for U.S. Healthcare Facilities about Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).¹²
- **Conducted on-site training with more than 40 adult day health care staff to enhance existing health and safety protocols** due to the pandemic, including consistent mask use, social distancing, and when to use a gown and face shield.
- **Trained adult day health care staff on daily COVID-19 screening protocols**, including entry temperature checks using infrared thermometers; sanitizing hands at the door using alcohol based sanitizer; initial restroom use and re-sanitizing; ongoing assistance with sanitation and mask use; social distancing throughout the day; and facility sanitation during operation and at the end of each day.
- **Held two infectious disease virtual webinars for all staff** through the Tennessee Association of Adult Day Services (TAADS) and the National Adult Day Services Association (NADSA) hosted by infectious disease experts.

Challenges and Opportunities

- **Initial challenge with quickly securing needed information and resources** from key state agencies providing guidance and support (Department of Human Services; Department of Health).
- **Lack of financial support for adult day services from state and federal agencies** had implications for fiscal support

for providing respite services. As a private business, CAC was not eligible for other human/health service grants like community funding streams.

- **Addressing COVID-19 outbreaks with families and staff members** due to large family/friend gatherings. CAC quickly responded with symptom testing, contact tracing, contacting other families/staff, and program closing decisions until resolved. To date there have been more than a dozen COVID-19 cases, none of which have been through community spread at CAC.
- **Tracking asymptomatic COVID-19 cases was a challenge with client populations** (older adults, individuals with disabilities) who have other health issues and concerns. Tracked closely and followed Tennessee Department of Health procedures.
- **Inability to do on-site COVID-19 testing** due to lack of testing supplies and needed planning to refer out to physicians. Even though adult day health care programs serve same population as assisted living/skilled nursing facilities, they have been excluded from having testing supplies. Up to local jurisdictions on how to disseminate testing supplies.
- **Had to make some programmatic changes** due to the pandemic such as suspending bathing services for medically fragile adults.

Respite Service Continuation

- **Continuing adult day health care services and all pandemic-related respite program changes** will stay in place for the foreseeable future (e.g., screening, social distancing at site, health monitoring and follow up).
- **Committed to remaining flexible** as CAC responds to the expected day-to-day changes and the evolution of the pandemic.
- **Continuing enhanced communication with staff and families** to be responsive when providing respite services and to provide support to families who are opting to keep their loved ones at home. [COVID-19 letter 11.16.2020](#)¹³
- **Explore providing home-based adult day services** for the future.

Respite Contact, Email and Phone Number

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[Adult Day Care Brochure](#)¹⁴

Website Link URLs

1. <http://centennialadultcare.com/adult-day-health-care/>
2. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1oBVZLYBwSHspyUb9GRvfH8rHNzDmgsaD/view?usp=sharing>
3. <https://www.tn.gov/humanservices/adults/aps-adult-day-care.html>
4. <https://www.tn.gov/governor/covid-19/economic-recovery/general-guidelines-for-businesses.html>
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
6. <https://covid19.tn.gov/>
7. <https://www.tn.gov/governor/covid-19/economic-recovery/general-guidelines-for-businesses.html>
8. <https://www.nadsa.org/important-information-on-coronavirus/>
9. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1209589275917546>
10. <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/coronavirus-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program>
11. <https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html>
12. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/us-healthcare-facilities.html>
13. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w3TfNtdqInchHwI0w4k19d1JEDRAD-A_D/view?usp=sharing
14. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JbIkITDADor5iQcnXu5aEZ7PzhSfIOg/view?usp=sharing>