

Adult Day Services

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Recent changes in the reimbursement structure of the healthcare delivery system have provided an opportunity and impetus to develop cost effective, inclusive community based services for people with disabilities as an alternative to institutional care. Adult Day Services is an important component of this continuum for people with chronic neurological conditions, such as multiple sclerosis. Adult day services may facilitate earlier discharge from acute hospital stays or avoidance of institutional placement in the latter stages of the disease process. This article provides an overview of the rational placement of adult day services in the treatment continuum for people with multiple sclerosis and recommends program structure and design. The King Adult Day Enrichment Program is emphasized as an example of model program operation.

Substantiating the Need for Adult Day Services. To adequately address the long-term consequences of a chronic disabling disease or illness, a spectrum of services is necessary. Flexibility of approach is important to span the fluctuating course of multiple sclerosis (MS) and address residual difficulties of the disease process. In 1995 article of *INFORMS* magazine, Karen Wenzel, Executive Director of the Rocky Mountain MS Center (RMMSC) stated "To promote health and well-being, a system must espouse active maintenance. Short-term acute care doesn't fully address the lifelong struggles inherent in MS. People with MS often deal alone with their feelings of isolation, frustration, depression, social stigma, unemployment and strained familiar relationships. Often people face the day-to-day issues and management of their disease with little or no support because community based support is simply not available." Adult day service is part of the answer to this unmet need of people with MS and their caregivers. It is an important component of the service continuum for people who may no longer be capable of employment but are in need of a physically

and cognitively stimulating environment. It also serves as a place where their caregivers can be assured that their family members will have a safe, nurturing environment which provides socialization and recreational opportunities, basic medical oversight and nutritional meals while supporting family members in their quest for additional resources and information. Services also support the caregivers by providing them with an option to continue employment or simply with an opportunity for respite from their rigorous schedule to accomplish the multitude of tasks that comprise their everyday lives.

Although the medical field readily acknowledges the benefits of reducing isolation and preventing secondary disabilities in people with MS and other neurological conditions, most people continue to receive medical care and rehabilitative services primarily directed to the acute care phase of their disease. Consumers are not exposed to or aware of ancillary support services dealing with psychosocial aspects of their lives that become critically important in the management of the lifelong aspects of a



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chronic illness. Adult day care addresses a new and more broadly defined concept of health. This concept is based on the recognition that individuals with MS and other chronic illnesses have health care needs that extend beyond what is considered “medically necessary care” and that reduced isolation and improved emotional health directly contributes to improved cognitive and physical status.

The King Adult Day Enrichment Program (KADEP). The King Adult Day Enrichment Program is a nationally recognized model of adult day care for people with multiple sclerosis and other neurological disabilities operated under the umbrella of care provided by the Rocky Mountain MS Center. KADEP extends the Center’s continuum of care by embracing the concept of maintenance rehabilitation, psychosocial support, independent living and community based support.

The King Adult Day Enrichment Program is located in Northwest Denver on the Marycrest Campus at 2851 West 52nd Street, and provides a home-like setting to more than 138 participants on a monthly basis. KADEP is open Monday through Friday, 7:30 AM - 4:30 PM, and provides opportunities to participate in a dynamic community based program with an extensive selection of 12 to 14 fun and challenging activities each day.

Program Design. The program works in concert with doctors, therapists and other allied health professionals to provide a comprehensive cohesive system of community based care. The program staff is directed by a master’s level rehabilitation counselor and is comprised of 8 therapeutic recreation specialists, 2 master’s level therapeutic recreation specialists, an exercise physiologist,

3 certified nursing assistants, 2 licensed practical nurses, and 2 social service specialists. The nursing staff provides medical oversight and monthly wellness screening in addition to helping clients coordinate their medical care, set appointments and arrange transportation. Social service specialists handle intake and referral and meet with clients and families as needed to provide support and resource guidance. The social worker also offers a monthly caregiver support group.

Additional consultants include a licensed clinical social worker, certified nurse practitioner and a licensed psychologist who conducts a weekly support group for participants around adjustment to disability issues.

The program operates on a 16-week semester in which classes are rotated with differential offerings each semester. Examples of classes include hydrotherapy, bowling, golf, water skiing, discussion and debate groups, fine arts groups, craft groups, and poetry groups. Participants are offered free choice in selection of activities with the stipulation for class enrollment and that adaptations may occasionally limit program flexibility.

The King Adult Day Enrichment Program offers 3 annual camping opportunities to its participants for a small additional fee. Regular community outings are scheduled to a variety of venues at least twice a month and special activity groups such as Aviation Group meet as opportunity arises.

We have an active hydrotherapy program, which integrates with a community hydrotherapy program to offer four days of aquatic classes directed by a registered physical therapist.

Individualized Programming and Evaluation Standards.

Upon admission, the program staff

collaboratively develops individualized care plans with each participant and their family which addresses 18 areas of independent functioning. These care plans are reviewed quarterly and each participant is evaluated for basic functional status changes. Caregivers and case managers are invited to participate in annual care planning review meetings in which their input and goals are solicited with feedback from the participant as to progress and additional goals for the upcoming year.

The King Adult Day Enrichment Program is a unique program meeting a critical need for younger adults with MS and other neurological disabilities. The program is designed to maintain or improve a participant's level of independent function and allow opportunities for socialization and community interaction. The program provides wellness monitoring, nursing oversight for medical issues, adaptive techniques for leisure and recreation and education about support skills specifically for people with neurological disabilities. Each participant truly experiences an enriched life and family caregivers benefit from the much-needed respite that adult day services provide.

Our goal is to have at least 75 percent of program participants maintain or improve their functional status. We are proud of KADEP performance in meeting our mission and goals of keeping people in the mainstream of life and active in their families and community.

The King Adult Day Enrichment Program is a service provider for Colorado Medicaid HCBS programs, the Veteran's Administration, Colorado Developmental Disabilities, and various private insurers. Sliding fee scales are available for those individuals who qualify. For more

information on KADEP, please call (303) 433-6887 ext.17 or ext.18.

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