

GANDARA CENTER OUTPATIENT CLINIC

ACCESSIBILITY PLAN

Summary

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandates, among other things, accessibility to services, goods, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations for individuals with disabilities in the United States. It is the intention of Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act in the provision of an accessible facility and safe environment for persons served, staff, visitors and the community.

This plan describes the measures that the Outpatient Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers for people with or without disabilities who work, use, visit or lives in our facilities.

Objectives

- Describe initiatives that will remove and prevent barriers for people with or without disabilities.
- Describe the process by which House of Freedom will identify, remove, and prevent barriers.
- Describe the measures to be taken in the coming year (2016) to identify, remove, and prevent barriers.
- Describes how this accessibility plan will be made available to the public.

Definitions

Barrier - anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability - physical, architectural, information or communication, attitudinal, technological, a policy or practice, any condition that makes it difficult to make progress, or to achieve an objective.

Disability

a) Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness – includes diabetes, epilepsy, brain injury, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impairment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impairment.

b) Mental impairment or development disability

c) Learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more process involved in understanding or using symbols of spoken language

d) Mental disorder

e) The assessment of the disability of any person served or employee will be assessed and evaluated through applications for employment and development of Psycho-social assessments. As the need arises for reasonable accommodations, this will be immediately addressed by the Division Director and Clinical Director. A disability may be a temporary or a permanent infirmity.

The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic is committed to:

- Consulting with people with disabilities and/or persons served and employees in the development and review of its annual accessibility plan.
- Ensuring that policies and procedures are consistent with the principles of accessibility.
- Improving access to facilities, policies, programs, treatment, and services for persons served, parents/guardians and other members of the community.

The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic Committee will prepare the annual accessibility plans that will enable the Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic to meet these commitments.

Our Goal:

The primary goal of the Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic is to provide each client with the opportunity to obtain the highest level of their physical, psychological and spiritual well-being; through the core principles of Caring, Compassion, and Commitment with which each individual will be cared for in a safe and trusting environment.

Preventing New Barriers

The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic is committed to creating an environment that is accessible to all people, regardless of ability. Through the annual accessibility planning process, the

Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic's practices, policies, services and programs will be assessed to ensure continuous improvement in accessibility.

Services

The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic offers outpatient services, a less intensive level of care, targeting adults, adolescents, and pregnant females needing anything from individual, group, and family counseling, drug and alcohol treatment, aftercare groups, case management, and drug screening services. In addition to our regular outpatient services we offer intensive outpatient substance abuse treatment programming. These programs provide accessibility to individuals who need a more intense level of treatment but are unable to participate of residential treatment. The formation of these programs also allows residential clients to have step down programs in order to increase their ability to sustain their recovery process.

The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic will provide through a grant from the Department of Public Health/Bureau of Substance Abuse Services " Telephone Support Services" which allows individuals who not only are unable to come to our facilities due to lack of transportation, but also for those who might be ill, for senior citizen, among other different situations.

The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic has extended to families that are recovering from the effects of addiction and outpatient services for substance abusing clients in our catchment area. In this center, we offer psycho-therapy and educational groups in order to increase knowledge about addiction and the hope that recovery from drugs is a possibility.

Architectural Design

There are wheelchair accessible restrooms throughout the building as well as a wheelchair ramp allowing access to the building. The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic is accessible to individuals with disabilities. The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic will continue to evaluate the premises, including the reception area to ensure that the needs of individuals with disabilities are met.

Our clinic offices have clear signage to direct persons in the event of an emergency situation. The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic has been renovated throughout the years to comply with requirements and meet the needs of our consumers. All staff members are charged with the responsibility for evaluating the accessibility needs of those we provide services to.

Environmental

The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic is located near the entrance to downtown in the North End of Springfield, MA and less than a quarter of a mile from Baystate Medical Center in Springfield, MA.

The décor of the Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic will be continually evaluated to ensure that there is comfort level for the persons served.

Attitudinal

Input from consumers has been established through satisfaction surveys and a suggestion box that is located in the reception office area. The exclusionary criterion for services does not include people with disabilities. Each visitor, consumer and/or staff member is to be treated with the same respect and dignity with the goal of increasing the quality of life for the consumer.

Staff regularly will involve themselves in courses, programs and sensitivity training related to treatment programs. This will assure an environment that respects the privacy of all persons served, regardless of any limitation.

Policy, Practice and Procedures

Improvements to our policies and procedures are continuously being reviewed to reflect specific changes pertaining to consumers such as those related with psychiatric, mental health and substance abuse disorders. Our commitment to improving lives for a healthy community focuses on the ability of individuals to recognize the supportive role of the family which promotes individualized choices by the consumer and their families.

Communication

As a Department of Public Health/Bureau of Substance Abuse Services Licensed Outpatient Clinic, The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic has access to receive interpreter services for people who are deaf or hard of hearing.

In addition, all of our staff are bi-lingual, including counselors and those who provide direct services to the consumers. The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic has eliminated barriers and has worked towards providing barrier-free access to communications. We strive to ensure that the consumer being served is able to understand information presented to them - this will continually be assessed.

Transportation

The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic makes every effort necessary to increase the opportunities of success for our consumers by helping to identify and correct those transportation barriers that exist within our community. The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic conveniently located near public bus transportation stops.

Financial

The Gandara Center Clinic monitors financial growth. We have procedures to ensure that all legal issues are addressed. Certified Public Accountant services are retained to manage financial accounting and financial audits are completed yearly.

The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic promotes activities to raise financial support and awareness of treatment programs and the consumers being served.

For individuals that are requesting and needing our services and are unable to pay for the cost, the Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic has a sliding fee scale that significantly reduces service fees.

The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic is contracted with the Department of Public and the Bureau of Substance Services and is authorized to provide services to individuals who qualify for this exemption.

Insurance

In order to increase accessibility to our services, we at the Gandara Center actively seek out insurance carriers to credential and contract with our services. As of now our psychotherapist are credentialed for outpatient services with Medicare, Tufts Secure Horizon, Tufts HMO, Children's Medical Security Plan/Magellan, Health New England, Tufts Medicare Preferred, GIC Unicare, Network Health, Commonwealth Care Alliance, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Medicaid, MBHP, MBHP/HNE, BMC/Beacon, NHP/Beacon, Celticare, Fallon/Beacon, Tufts Navigator, and Tufts Spirit. For residential substance abuse services we are currently contracted by the Department of Public Health and The Bureau of Substance Abuse Services.

Marketing

Gándara Center Outpatient Clinic Marketing Approaches to Accessibility to Services

Gándara Center Outpatient Clinic has invested marketing time in both radio, television and print ads, as well as sponsoring events in which benefits include advertising and promotion.

The agency is very active on social media. The Public Relations/Marketing department's policy includes posting on Facebook 1-2 times/day, Twitter once a day, LinkedIn 2-3/week. Analytics are examined and tracked bi-weekly to optimize organic reach.

A website has been created and is consistently updated as programs become available or details surrounding eligibility change. Special attention is paid to search engine optimization in order for individuals who are seeking our services via the internet to find us with more ease. In an ongoing attempt to reach the populations we serve, we are in the process of having our entire website translated into Spanish.

We are currently in a rebranding process which includes new signage at all applicable program sites, as well as an agency-wide brochure launch.

The Gandara Center as an agency has created a signature annual fundraising event. The Frozen Yogurt 5K engages the community in raising awareness of mental illness and substance use services available through the Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic.

Monthly external newsletters are emailed out via a listserv which currently reaches approximately 750 people and we are finding that it is growing daily.

Attendance at various networking events and health/job fairs is consistent year round, while adding new events to broaden our reach.

Facilitated staff meetings are held monthly to include educational and interactive workshops to train staff on the scope of programs/services available throughout our agency to aid in the referral process.

The marketing department sits on various committees regarding data, outcomes and integration.

Gandara Center has recently increased its marketing capacity by hiring an assistant to the Director of Public Relations to aid with its overall marketing strategy and public accessibility.

Communication of the Plan

This accessibility plan will be available upon request and is posted on the organization's website. The Gandara Center Outpatient Clinic will explore other accessible formats and alternative communication strategies to distribute future accessibility plans.