

ORCHARD VILLAGE
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Orchard Village Principles for Community Healthcare Report

Mission: Orchard Village partners with families and communities to optimize personal outcomes for individuals with developmental disabilities through a community-integrated approach.

I. Introduction and target audience

Approximately 200 million people worldwide, including six and a half million Americans and 200,000 Illinois residents, have intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD). Individuals with I/DD often suffer co-occurring issues such as seizure disorders as well as chronic and pervasive mental health issues such as depression or bipolar conditions. Additionally, due to metabolic and genetic reasons, people with developmental disabilities also experience a high rate of secondary medical problems compared to other populations. For example, the obesity rate for people with I/DD is estimated to be 50%, significantly higher than the normalized population. Similarly, diabetes and hypertension rates for this population exceed that experienced by average citizens.

The average educational level of people with I/DD (and Orchard Village participants) is between first and sixth grade. There is also a corollary relationship between income level and obesity rates – the lower the income level, the higher the incidence of obesity and other medical conditions. Twenty-one percent of working age adults with I/DD are unemployed, compared to less than eight percent of adults without disabilities. Like others with I/DD, the individuals at Orchard Village have an income level that is significantly below the poverty level – approximately \$7,000 per year.

Additionally, inadequate primary care jeopardizes appropriate health care and satisfaction of health services for individuals with I/DD. The combination of poverty and the diagnosis of a developmental disability qualifies consumers for Medicaid. Because of the low reimbursement rate, I/DD care is often provided by clinic residents who change on a yearly basis, resulting in a lack of continuity of care and limited interest in the individual's long-term health. In addition, because people with I/DD only constitute a small percentage of a clinic-based physician's caseload, there is limited opportunity for the physicians to learn about the nuances of health care of people with I/DD. Orchard Village staff works closely with the individuals in our care. Because they spend much more time with them than their doctors, they can help communicate any symptoms to the prescribing doctor to take appropriate actions.

Another critical issue is medication adherence. Individuals with I/DD do not necessarily understand the impact and side effects of the medications they're taking, which can profoundly

affect how condition(s) are treated, especially for chronic conditions. To reduce adverse health outcomes and provide more support for the relationship between doctors and their patients with I/DD, our staff is responsible for frequent contact with the community-based doctors treating the individuals we serve. Residential Program Management staff maintains this communication to ensure medication and dietary orders are updated within our system and relays it to our direct support staff. Staff attains good health outcomes by ensuring medication is given to residents as prescribed by their doctor. Certain conditions such as diabetes and epilepsy are monitored (and treated when necessary) appropriately. Our RN trains staff members working directly with residents to confirm they are fully informed about each individual's medical conditions, are on the lookout for early warning signs of problems, and encourage good practices and preventative behaviors. Such preventive health measures promote a happier, healthier life for our residents, which is one of our guiding principles as an organization.

Orchard Village has developed our own materials to tailor health and nutrition curricula specifically to individuals with I/DD. Orchard Village has also implemented an Electronic Medication Administration Record (eMar) to streamline and automate the medication administration process. eMar is a server-based electronic medication administration system designed for use in institutional pharmacies, assisted living, long-term care, and rehab facilities. The software automates the process of distributing, tracking, and re-ordering medications and treatments safely and efficiently for both facilities and pharmacies.

We decided to move to an eMar to improve the lives of the individuals we support and the community at large. When people with I/DD live in the community (like the individuals we serve do), they are intrinsically a part of that community. The healthier and happier these individuals are, the better they can interact with and integrate into the community in which they reside. In everything we do, we work to increase community integration. Orchard Village is also in the process of implementing StationMD, a telemedicine solution that specializes in delivering care to individuals with I/DD. Like eMar, StationMD streamlines the procedures of providing care to vulnerable populations, and significantly reduces unnecessary hospital visits. StationMD uses a video conferencing system, sophisticated diagnostic tools, and clinical expertise to diagnose and treat patients in their home setting. We will be implementing this platform in nine of our residential homes, serving 64 clients who live in the community. StationMD employs telehealth experts focusing on populations with special needs and has specialized protocols for patients with I/DD.

Additionally, Orchard Village recently started a Behavioral Health Clinic for individuals with I/DD to bridge the gap in available mental health services for this vulnerable population. There is a great need for this program because this population is medically underserved due to being ostracized, not having easy access to services, and having more significant maladaptive behaviors. These individuals are less likely to have developed coping skills due to their adaptive and cognitive disabilities. While some specialized services exist for those with developmental disabilities, there continues to be a significant gap in what is available for behavioral health. Due to a shortage of psychiatrists specializing in patients with I/DD, behavioral therapists and mental health nurses will often take on more responsibility to bridge the gap. Many therapists

do not have the experience or training necessary to serve our population effectively. Individuals served by this program are dually diagnosed with an intellectual and developmental disability (I/DD) and mental illness. Within Orchard Village's residential program, over 60% of the individuals we serve are dually diagnosed with I/DD and mental illness.

II. Promoting overall health in the community

Orchard Village enhances the quality of life for people with disabilities by protecting and nurturing their right to control their outcomes. Our mission is to partner with families, community members, and area businesses to create the best lives possible for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities by making them active participants in their choices. Our clients have a range of developmental, intellectual, and physical challenges, and our programs provide them with the tools and resources to achieve independence and fulfilling, community-integrated lives. Founded in 1972, we offer a full range of services to 300 people with disabilities annually, including:

- Housing: community-based residential options that include 24-hour group homes, transitional living options, and intermittently supported independent living arrangements
- Employment: job readiness and job placement day-program services
- InnOVations: a vocationally focused day program centered on work experiences, vocational training, skill-building, and therapeutic recreation
- DiscOVer: a day program for individuals interested in active and fulfilling community-based programs without a goal of employment
- Orchard Academy: an Illinois State Board of Education-approved, special-education, therapeutic high school for students ages 17 – 21
- Behavioral Health Clinic: a therapy clinic that provides individual and group mental health services for people with disabilities
- Supportive services, including nursing, physical therapy, therapeutic recreation, and more

III. Community partnerships promoting continuity of health care for high risk/underserved and disadvantaged populations

Orchard Village is a member of the Intersect for Ability Network, a collaborative of fifteen agencies serving individuals with developmental disabilities in the Greater Chicago Metropolitan area. Intersect for Ability was created to address the unmet needs of the developmental disability population. Orchard Village is affiliated with the Skokie Chamber of Commerce, Niles Chamber of Commerce, and the Arc of Illinois.

Orchard Village is also affiliated with the Illinois Association for Rehabilitation Facilities (IARF) and the Institute on Public Policy for People with Disabilities, and is accredited by the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Developmental Disabilities (Bureau of Accreditation, Licensure and Certification & Bureau of Quality Management); the Illinois Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services; and is CARF Accreditation awarded for Administration and Employment Services. State Representatives often visit Orchard Village to

learn more about individuals with developmental disabilities and the political issues involving disability and support in Illinois.

For Employment Services, Orchard Village partners with over 80 employers to create job opportunities for individuals with disabilities. In addition, Orchard Village partners with over ten different local organizations for volunteer internship sites (such as the Niles Food Pantry, Emily Oakes Nature Center & the Skokie Library). Orchard Academy also partners with several internship sites in the community to build students' soft skills and improve socialization.

IV. Community-oriented approach to program development

Orchard Village takes a person-centered approach to all programming and includes participants' input and interests in all stages of the planning process. Each program is highly community-focused, intending to integrate clients into their communities and empower them to achieve independence. One example of how we have used the community-oriented approach for program development is **InnOVations**, our non-traditional day program, which addresses a long-standing "missed opportunity" within the population of adults with developmental disabilities. A significant percentage of clients attending sheltered workshops or day programs are regarded as "unemployable" by some governmental and other nonprofit agencies. We believe these clients have great potential to succeed at paid, community-integrated jobs. Our client demographics contain no age or ability limits, and we work based on each individual's abilities. The **InnOVations** program is a unique alternative to other day programs. We focus on advancing our clients' vocational skills, with a mind toward increased workforce integration in the community. This relatively new program model (which began in July 2017) currently serves a maximum of 35 clients—most of whom were previously at large sheltered workshops or other congregate day programs. **InnOVations** partners with many businesses in the community to provide clients with vocational skills training. These training and internship worksites enable **InnOVations** staff to help clients learn fundamental workplace skills while interacting with supervisors, coworkers, and customers in the community. These partnerships include the Skokie Library, Emily Oakes Nature Center, Chicago Park District parks, Bunker Hill Flatlands, Skokie Lagoons, Wagner Farm, White Eagle Banquet Hall, Cradles to Crayons, Five Below, The Skatium, Habitat ReStore, River Trails Nature Center, the Niles Food Pantry, and more. We have successfully secured new local partnerships, all dictated by **InnOVations** clients' desires and skillsets, even during the ongoing pandemic.

Another newer program to Orchard Village is our farm and gardening initiative. In 2013, Orchard Village planted a quarter-acre urban farm on its main campus for residential clients. After partnering with *The Talking Farm* in 2016, Orchard Village has grown and harvested a consistent, predictable, well-planned crop of vegetables and herbs each year, yielding more than 2,500 lbs. of produce last season alone. Orchard Village has been a regular vendor at the Skokie Farmers' Market, selling about 500 lbs. of produce each year to help fund our Farm's operation. In addition to the Skokie Farmers' Market, we provided nearly 300 lbs. of produce to our residents' homes this past year. We donated the remaining 126 lbs. to The Niles Township Food Pantry for free distribution to their patrons. Orchard Village also provides Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscription boxes each year, through which 25 families or

individuals receive a box of fresh produce from our farm each week for twelve weeks. Orchard Village clients help harvest, bag, weigh, and sell the produce at the markets, teaching them valuable skills and giving them real-life experiences. Working at the farmers' markets allows clients to interact with the public and provides them with skills transferrable to competitive, community-based employment. Orchard Village's programs serve anywhere from 15-300 individuals with developmental disabilities each year; 87% of Orchard Village's operating expenses go directly towards programs, and 13% of our revenue comes from public and private support, while 10% comes from program fees.