

Senior Support Services

Annual Report -- Year 2014

Brief History of Organization

Senior Support Services (SSS) was established in 1976 when six churches in downtown Denver came together to assist low-income and homeless seniors who were being displaced by downtown redevelopment. As the need grew, our services expanded. In 1979, we began to provide day shelter, coffee, one hot meal per day and case management services to assist seniors in obtaining government benefits and finding affordable housing. In 1995, SSS bought a building at 18th Avenue & Emerson Street where the full range of services – one-stop shopping – are provided for hungry and homeless seniors.

Mission

Our mission is to make each day better and safer for Denver's low-income and homeless seniors by providing the resources and support they need to lead more self-sufficient and fulfilling lives.

Programs

Our overall goal each year is to meet the full range of needs of more than 2000 hungry and homeless seniors.

We successfully operate the only day center catering to the needs of the hungry and homeless seniors of the Denver area. Clients get meals, emergency food and clothing, individualized case management, medical care, housing, government benefits, socialization, and activities. We provide:

- Safe daytime shelter
 - Open 12 hours each weekday and 5 hours on Sundays
- Three meals served every weekday for 200 seniors
- Emergency food and clothing banks
- Access to medical care, health screenings and health insurance
- Transportation or escort to government offices, work, medical care, etc
- Access to computers and Internet for word processing, email, etc.
- Individualized case management and advocacy including:
 - Government benefits obtainment
 - Assistance in obtaining and retaining low-income housing
 - Rent and utility payment assistance
 - Tenant-landlord dispute mediation
 - Financial management counseling to prevent homelessness.

2014 Accomplishments

Overall

Provided services to 2,242 hungry and homeless seniors¹

Nutrition

Served 64,500 individual meals²

Distributed 1650 emergency food bags

Other Basic Needs

Distributed 7300 clothing items

Distributed 5000 hygiene items

Housing

Obtained or retained housing on 1404 occasions³

Made direct utility payments on behalf of 150 seniors⁴

Moved the belongings of 60 seniors

Provided onsite storage for 152 homeless seniors

Government Benefits

Obtained or retained government benefits on 992 occasions.⁵

Transportation

Distributed, free of charge, 1375 roundtrip, local, bus tickets

Sold 384 monthly bus passes at half the market price⁶

Transported or escorted clients by car to 475 medical appointments, government offices, shopping trips, home, etc

Health

Weekly visits by an outreach worker who assisted or enrolled 235 clients in a health insurance program (CICP or Medicaid).

Monthly visits by a nurse who provided inoculations, foot care, health screenings and checkups

Employment and Life Skills

Clients benefited from 13,500 computer hours (word processing, email, Internet)

Obtained jobs for 20 seniors

Socialization

¹These are unduplicated individuals.

²Meals were served to 1,525 unduplicated clients.

³Here our efforts were critical to the obtaining or retaining of housing thanks to a direct rent payment, tenant-landlord mediation, or persistent advocacy on behalf of the client. 936 clients benefited.

⁴The average payment to Xcel on behalf of each household was \$525.

⁵It can take an enormous amount of staff time and persistence to obtain government benefits sometimes because the initial application is denied requiring the filing of one or more appeals. Monthly government payments including Aid to the Needy & Disabled, Old Age Pension, Supplemental Security Income, Social Security, veterans' benefits, food stamps, and one-time payments including LEAP or rent & utility rebates are all included here. 775 clients benefited.

⁶As Senior Support Services and RTD subsidize our bus pass program, clients only have to pay \$20 (half the standard senior rate) for each monthly bus pass.

TV Room

Parties to celebrate all major holidays with a special meal and gifts distributed.

Demographics of clients

(Each client is at least 55 years of age)

Physical Condition and Health

80% -- mentally ill or impaired

75% -- challenges due to alcohol or drug use

70% -- physically frail or disabled

25% -- Veterans

Housing

48% -- homeless

80% -- homeless or at risk of homelessness

90% -- live alone or are homeless alone

Gender

26% -- women

74% -- men

Ethnicity

42% -- African-American

37% -- White (non-Latino)

16% -- Latino

3% -- Native American

2% -- Asian / Pacific Islander

Income Level

82% -- living below the federal poverty level⁷

\$625 per month is the average income of our clients

⁷The federal Poverty Guidelines are used to determine the federal poverty level here. The 2015 federal Poverty Guideline for one person is \$981 per month. (90% of our clients live alone or are homeless alone.)