

# Charities USA

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**Catholic Charities USA  
Launches Campaign to  
Reduce Poverty in America**

**Mississippi Gulf Coast  
Families Return Home  
with Help of Biloxi Diocese**

**Cause-Related Marketing  
Is a Win-Win  
for Arizona Agency**

## **Protecting the Health of America's Most Vulnerable**

**Catholic Charities' Vital Contribution to America's Health Services**

# Community Living Program

Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona, Tucson, AZ



**T**ucson's Community Living Program (CLP) provides residential supports and services to individuals with developmental disabilities. These include mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, mental illness, sensory deficits or a combination of such conditions. With such a wide range of disabilities, clients have varying medical and behavioral support needs. CLP works with each individual to develop a home that works best for each person's needs, preferences, and lifestyle.

CLP staff members strive to ensure ongoing quality care and services and meet the various contractual and licensing requirements. However, staff turnover, low wages, and atypical hours have created difficulty in providing consistent care. Realizing the impact of these challenges, CLP implemented some unique management tools that have enhanced the program, reduced staff turnover, and increased the morale and efficiency of all program employees.

Five years ago, CLP administrators learned about the "Great Game of Business/Open Books Management" model, the basic philosophy of which is to involve all employees in each aspect of the agency's operations. The tenets are simple: share information; train all staff on agency operations and financial processes; set financial, program, and agency goals with all staff's input; share progress regularly; identify problems along the way as a group; and

celebrate success together, rewarding employees individually and as a group.

CLP has adapted the model to their work, organizing a staff advisory council to meet regularly with the administrative staff to provide input, discuss issues and concerns, and develop various incentives for the staff; setting and tracking goals program-wide in the areas of finances, programs, operations and human resources; and recognizing the work of employees through parties, prizes, and awards.

The new management style has set a positive tone and engaged staff members as stake holders in the agency. They want to see the program succeed and understand the vital role they play in that success. Staff turnover has decreased each year since the model was implemented, and program monitoring scores have improved. The new approach has given the agency a needed boost of energy and enthusiasm.

To facilitate communication throughout the agency, in 2005, CLP began using Therap Services, a web-based comprehensive documentation and communication system that is tailored to the specific needs of service providers, health professionals, and regulators serving people with developmental disabilities.

Therap is a reliable and secure online reporting tool that is accessed by every CLP staff member working with individuals at the residential sites. The reporting tools make for faster and more accurate documentation, which makes it easier to manage health, medication and incident reports, track behavior and individual service plans. It is HIPAA compliant and confidentiality is ensured by assigning users with specific client access.

The use of Therap has also greatly improved client care by facilitating communication between the actual care providers, managers, administrators, case managers, parents and guardians. Staff can also develop and track behavior plans and data and graph data required for program reviews. Staff members find the system easy to use, making the paperwork process much less cumbersome and time consuming, thus allowing them more time to spend directly with the individuals they support.

"Implementing these tools has been a very positive step for our program," said Sue Henning-Mitchell, program director. "Our clients have only benefited." ❧