San Francisco’s mental health safety net
Message to Our Community

When people ask me to describe the work of Access Institute, I often say that we are a local, grassroots solution to a big, national problem. In 2019, Access Institute increased its efforts to confront the mental health crisis in our midst. Nationally, 56% of people who still need mental health treatment are not getting it. That percentage is much higher for those, like most of the people we serve, who are extremely low-income and un- or marginally-insured. Rates of anxiety, depression, and substance dependence are rising, as is the death rate from mental illness. Suicide and drug overdose combined is now the leading cause of death among young adults.

We need to change how we think about mental health. As a society, we have ignored mental health problems, hoping they will go away on their own. It doesn’t work that way. It works in the opposite way. Prevention and early intervention make the biggest difference.

Fifty percent of all mental illness starts by age 14. That’s why we prioritize early intervention, focusing our efforts on helping young children. Our In-school Mental Health Program, serving children in elementary schools, provides individual therapy and school-wide collaboration, saving these children from lifetimes of pain.

Even when problems become more serious in adulthood, mental health treatment works. Over 30% of the adults who come to our clinic have recently been suicidal. Because our treatments address underlying problems and respond effectively when crises emerge, people recover and their mental health and well-being is restored.

We need greater investments in training our mental health professionals. Right now, California is facing a massive gap – up to 50% – in the number of providers needed in the next decade to meet the demand. Which is why we are working overtime to strengthen and expand our training programs.

We owe all of 2019’s success to the support of our community. Thank you!

Bart Magee, Ph.D.
Founder and Executive Director
Healing Our Community, at Our Clinic and Beyond

At Access Institute we value all members of our community and believe that everyone deserves access to high-quality mental health care. We understand that mental health is a critical part of overall wellness at any age. This past year, we provided 12,611 hours of services to more than 700 people who have the greatest need and the least access to care.

At our Hayes Valley Clinic we offer crisis support, psychotherapy, psychological assessments, psychiatric medication, and intensive case management services at affordable sliding-scale rates. Because the barriers to treatment are not only financial, we also offer care beyond the walls of our clinic. We provide free mental health services at the Bayview Hunters Point Adult Day Health Center so that vulnerable seniors have access to individual and group therapy. And our early intervention mental health services are free to at-risk children at seven public elementary schools through our partnership with the San Francisco Unified School District.

Our commitment to healing our community is unshakable and can only continue to flourish through generous financial support from hundreds of individuals, foundations, and corporations.
About Our Clients

• 519 individuals and couples received treatment at the Hayes Valley Clinic in 2019

• 83% of patients at the clinic are in individual treatment; the rest are in couple, family or child treatment, or are receiving Clinical Case Management (ASAP) services

• 90% of patients are low-income and more than half of those are extremely low-income

• 22% of patients are uninsured and the rest have only limited coverage

• 45% of patients report significant levels of childhood trauma (ACE score greater than 4) and 28% report very high levels of trauma in their early lives (ACE score of 5 to 9); less than half of 1% report no childhood trauma (ACE score = 0)

• 50% of patients report experiencing moderate to severe levels of depression and associated symptoms

• 30% of patients have histories of serious suicidal thinking or past attempts

Our Services

Psychotherapy
Provided for adolescents, adults, couples, and families. A minimum of one weekly session, with additional, more intensive sessions, as needed.

Play Therapy for Children Ages 4-12
Therapy that includes adjunct sessions with parents and/or caregivers.

Medication Services
Medication evaluation and ongoing care. Medication treatment is coordinated with therapy and/or case management services.

Comprehensive Psychological and Neuropsychological Assessment and Testing
Assessment for learning differences, cognitive problems, and the full range of diagnostic and psychological issues. Thorough reports and treatment recommendations are provided.

Clinical Case Management
Provided as a stand-alone service or integrated with psychotherapy.
At Access Institute we are all about accessibility, and our Hayes Valley Clinic is where that starts. At our centrally-located home, we offer comprehensive mental health services to people of all ages on an income-based sliding scale. Services include individual and couple psychotherapy, medication evaluation and ongoing care, psychological and neuropsychological assessment and testing, and intensive case management services. In 2019, we provided care to hundreds of individuals, couples, children and families who had no other option to access these vital treatments.

Our model is intensive, comprehensive, long-term, and serves people who need help recovering from serious psychological difficulties. We never impose eligibility requirements or time limits. Treatments are tailored to client needs and coordinated to achieve the best outcomes.

**Individual Psychotherapy**

Individual therapy provides patients with responsive, attentive, and in-depth treatments. Therapy always starts with a comprehensive assessment of the individual’s history, current stressors, social contexts and treatment goals. If additional services are needed, such as couples treatment, psychiatric medication, or case management, they can be added within our collaborative model of care. We provide individual therapy services for children, teens, adults, and seniors.

**Couples Psychotherapy**

Our treatments help couples build their communication skills, understand their relationship needs, create deeper emotional ties, and explore shared values and goals. By strengthening their relationships, individuals within the couple also gain personal insights and find new avenues for growth. If needed, couples in treatment can also be referred for individual psychotherapy, medication and/or case management services.
Psychiatric Medication Services

Access Institute provides psychiatric care as an addition to the psychotherapy and intensive case management services available to patients at our Hayes Valley Clinic. The psychiatry staff provides diagnostic and medication evaluations and monitoring on a sliding-scale basis. This model, in which the psychiatrist serves both as specialty provider and as treatment team collaborator, creates the conditions for a mutualistic, dynamically-informed model that enhances patient care. Patients referred for medication not only have the benefit of being evaluated both by a therapist and a psychiatrist, but the follow-up care also occurs in collaboration between the psychiatry team and within the more frequent therapy sessions. With this model, feedback about the response to medication can be more rapidly incorporated into the patient’s treatment plan.
Assertive Social Assistance Program (ASAP)

In 2019, we successfully completed the first year of our Assertive Social Assistance Program (ASAP). This innovative program is unlike anything offered in San Francisco today. Comprehensive mental health care is integrated with a program that connects clients to vital social and economic supports. This year, we served more than 45 clients helping them maintain their housing, healthcare, and independent living.

ASAP provides very low-fee clinical case management services to clients who require assistance with issues including:

- Managing care for health issues (multiple appointments, medication management, or insurance coverage)
- Securing government benefits (Social Security Disability Income, Supplemental Security Income, State Disability Insurance, Medicare, or In-Home Support Services)
- Eviction or other housing issues
- Job training/returning to work
- Starting/returning to school
- Community support groups (e.g., AA, cancer support, new mother groups)
- Legal assistance
- Substance use treatment and support services
- Accessing low-cost dental and vision care

Mary Beth Majoros, LCSW, our Director of Clinical Case Management, provides integrated social work and mental health services to clients.

“San Francisco’s large social service system is a challenge for anyone to navigate. Just imagine what it’s like for those who are also struggling with a serious mental health issue. ASAP ensures that mental illness does not create an additional barrier to the community resources people need and deserve.”

Mary Beth Majoros, LCSW Director of Clinical Case Management
Psychological Assessment

Access Institute offers affordable psychological testing for all ages, from children to seniors. By using reliable testing instruments and employing extensive interviewing, information gathering, and test batteries, we are able to clarify the different ways in which psychological processes can affect one’s capacities related to work, school, and interpersonal relationships.

At Access Institute, psychological assessment is used to take an in-depth look at issues related to attention, executive functions, memory, emotions, and other aspects of psychological well-being. We also offer psychoeducational assessments for students that include tests of achievement, cognitive ability, and learning in order to identify their patterns of strengths and weaknesses. Our thorough assessments result in a comprehensive written report that includes practical and sensible recommendations.

“Our psychological evaluations are both comprehensive and affordable, and, as such, they fill an important gap in the field of testing in the Bay Area. Through our work, we are able to help answer difficult diagnostic questions and better understand academic problems, behavioral issues, or questions about relationship patterns.”

Gergely Földesi, Psy.D. Associate Director of Training
Psychoanalytic Community Mental Health Training Program

Access Institute’s post-graduate fellowship program trains the next generation of mental health professionals in treatment approaches that integrate socio-cultural learning and instill an ethic of community service. Our intensive program trains postgraduate psychology fellows for up to two years during which time they provide clinical services and receive training and supervision from some of the Bay Area’s top clinicians.

Our postgraduate fellows are a dedicated and passionate group of clinicians whose commitment to serving marginalized populations has resulted in the provision of the highest quality psychotherapy, psychological assessments, and consultation to hundreds of children, adults, couples, and families at our clinic and at our nine community partnership locations. The program is renowned for its rigor and depth and provides far more hours in training and supervision than is typical in post-graduate training. Our 13 fellows participated in a
training curriculum comprised of three hours of weekly individual supervision and a broad array of classes that provided them with the theoretical foundations and clinical skills to develop into socially-conscious, ethically-responsible, clinically-sensitive psychotherapists. This year a faculty of 50 professionals taught didactic seminars, led case conferences, and provided individual supervision. Our volunteer faculty devoted over 1,550 hours or $310,000 worth of volunteer services this past year.

In 2019, Access Institute embarked on a major expansion of its mental health training program. Under the leadership of Director of Training, Milena Edwards, Psy.D., we began building a Doctoral Internship in Clinical Psychology designed to be accredited by the American Psychological Association. The process of seeking APA accreditation is part of our commitment to the quality of our education and services. The goal for the new program is to enhance the training environment and add to our capacity to provide the highest quality mental health care. The Doctoral Internship is specifically designed to train psychologists to meet the complex mental health needs of our diverse community and will replace a dwindling number of local internship training positions. Four doctoral interns will have a separate training curriculum but will work alongside nine postgraduate fellows. We hired Gergely Földesi, Psy.D. as Associate Director of Training to focus on the development of the new program, which will launch in August 2020.

The training experience we offer at Access Institute builds the foundation for a lifelong commitment to engaging in socially responsible work.

“Our trainees not only contribute to lasting change in the lives of the individuals they treat, but also recognize the value and importance of contributing to ongoing social change in the communities they serve.”

Milena Edwards, Psy.D. Director of Training
In 2019 the In-School Mental Health program transformed the lives of more than 60 children and their families. Our outcome measures demonstrated that 82% of the children we served made significant progress academically, socially, and emotionally. Kids who hadn’t been speaking in the classroom are now participating; kids who had been running from difficulties started to use the tools they developed in therapy to manage overwhelming feelings; and teachers who were throwing their hands up and feeling at an impasse with their struggling
students are employing the strategies we helped them develop to understand and become better advocates for their students. The teachers and our therapists are sharing their insights with parents, helping to build a stronger community that emotionally supports the children.

This year we saw how the core of our program – the weekly play therapy time with the children and everything that happens within that hour – is developed, extended, and shared with the key adults that can make the greatest difference in these children’s lives. One hour per week in the therapy room translates to much more outside: engagement in the classroom, collaboration on the playground, mutual respect in the hallways, self-reflection on the car ride home, and curiosity at the dinner table.

Our therapists worked two days per week on-site at seven public elementary schools in San Francisco, providing play therapy to students, consultation to their families and coaching for teachers and other school staff. Services are provided free of charge to the children and families.

2019 Program Highlights

• 60 children and their families served

• 85% of families served were living at or below the poverty level

• 75% of households were headed by a single parent or parents were separated

• Over 2,400 sessions of individual therapy provided on-site at the schools

• Over 1,200 hours of classroom observation, teacher and staff consultations

• 82% of students showed improvements in behavior, grades, class participation, and social skills
Elder Mental Health Program
at Bayview Adult Day Health Center

Access Institute’s Elder Mental Health Program at the Bayview Hunters Point Adult Day Health Center (ADHC) serves vulnerable seniors, most of whom have never received needed mental health care due to shame and stigma. These seniors grew up with the ethos of taking care of oneself and the belief that depending on another means shameful weakness or failure. Our method of therapeutic engagement has been developed and refined to address stigma by meeting dependency needs with a respect for resilience and autonomy. The individual and group therapy we provide frames reaching out for help as a courageous step and the desire for connection as a strength.

The therapy process also honors our seniors as we listen intently to their stories, their experiences, wisdom, and the collective histories they hold for us. By doing this, we bring seniors in from the margins. We hear their voices and respect their essential place in our community.
We also recognize the importance of racial and cultural factors as we engage with African American seniors who came of age in the pre-civil rights era. We recognize that there is both a therapeutic and social value of bearing witness to stories of racialized trauma. In telling individual stories of our shared history, elders leave a meaningful legacy.

In 2019, as we helped seniors come out of shame-based isolation and restore their social connections, we saw them become more engaged in the ADHC community. They forged new relationships and they deepened bonds of friendship. Our therapists were intimately involved in facilitating their natural desires to connect.

Our engagement and training with the ADHC nursing and social work staff led to increased understanding of the social and emotional needs of their patients, which helped the staff further support the seniors in the healing process.

Surveys of ADHC staff indicated that program participants “gained more independence as they got a better grasp on managing big emotions such as anger and frustration.” Staff also observed participants “opening up and revealing more of their personality and more positive expressions such as happiness and joy with each other.”

About our senior program participants:

- 100% of the seniors served this year were extremely low-income
- 79% are African American, mostly residing in Bayview Hunters Point
- 22% are veterans
- All lack the resources to pay for mental health care
- All have chronic medical conditions and 39% suffer from severe mental illness
- 67% have histories of childhood abuse, neglect or other trauma
- 55% have mild to severe cognitive impairment
Financial Highlights

July 2018 - June 2019
Fiscal Year

Revenue

- Donations from Individuals $541,252
- Donations from Foundations and Corporations $445,700
- Patient Fees $342,223
- Contributed Services $310,000
- Contract Income $178,300

Total $1,817,475

Expenses

- Program Services $1,324,304
- Fundraising $378,098
- Administrative $84,166

Total $1,786,568
Thank you for supporting Access Institute
Donations received January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019

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