

In January 2023, Action Wellness, opened our new office in Kensington, where we will bring our 35 years of case management experience to the substance abuse crisis. We have been given an amazing opportunity to serve others by setting up this office. We will continue to serve individuals with chronic illness but we will have a emphasis on the disease of addiction.

We want to thank you for your continued support of our work, and as you know, there has been an ever-growing need for the services and programs we provide to individuals who are living with chronic illnesses.



Thanks to everyone who came out for AIDS Walk Philly 2022 on Sunday, October 16th. We had over 50 Action Wellness staff, family and supporters.



Our Fur Babies helped us celebrate WORLD AIDS DAY.



Our Holiday Toy Drive was a huge success!



What Defines Success?

Success looks different to different people. There is no one size fits all for what success looks like in any of our programs. For some, success is finding employment after years of active addiction. For some, success is abstinence from drug use for one day. In the LEAP Program, Action Wellness see lots of successes and recognize success in various ways.

One example of a success stories is a client named Ronald Richardson. Mr. Richardson came to the LEAP program with a history of substance use/opioid use disorder. At one point, he was living on the street in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia. After his release from jail, Mr. Richardson went in to a recovery house.

When Mr. Richardson met with LEAP staff, he often expressed an interest in working in the drug and alcohol/recovery field. His Care Outreach Specialist advised him to start volunteering in the field, as it can be a good way to get your foot in the door and adds to a resume that may have a large time gap in employment history. Once Mr. Richardson had volunteered for a period of time and obtained letters of recommendation, he was able to create a resume that reflected his skills, strengths, and passions.

He worked with his Care Outreach Specialist to submit the resume to various jobs in the recovery field and even received a call from an organization while he was still in the office with the LEAP team! Mr. Richardson set up numerous interviews and was offered several positions with drug & alcohol/recovery organizations. He ultimately accepted a house management position at the recovery house. Mr. Richardson set up numerous interviews and was offered several positions with drug & alcohol/recovery organizations. He ultimately accepted a house management position at the recovery

With the assistance of his Case Manager and Care Outreach Specialist, Mr. Richardson has enrolled in a certified recovery specialist training program starting in January 2023.

Mr. Richardson works in a career where he dedicates his life to helping those that are struggling just as he once was, as we has celebrated almost two years of continuous sobriety. Since his release from jail, he has not had any negative interactions with the legal system. He has become active in his children's lives and is a productive member of his community.

He is heavily involved in the narcotics anonymous program and leans on his sponsor and father for sober support. He is a beacon of hope for others to see that not only is recovery possible, but thriving in recovery and happiness in recovery are also possible sobriety. Since his release from jail, he has not had any negative interactions with the legal system. He has become active in his children's lives and is a productive member of his community.

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***SAVE THE
DATE!!!!!!!
DINING OUT FOR
LIFE
APRIL 27, 2023***

PASS THE WORD: Making donations to Action Wellness has become easier. Contributions can be made by credit card through our website at www.actionwellness.org/donate.

Action Wellness United Way Number is 6777.

Success-One Step At A Time

In Delaware County, we have been working with a client on some of the most basic needs. His case manager was able to secure him housing through Delaware County Housing Authority, specifically the senior building. This particular client has mobility issues and is waiting to be cleared to have hip surgery. Moving into this particular unit has really assisted since he was previously living in an apt that had stairs. His new building does not have stairs. In addition he needed a proper bed to sleep in and our case manager was able to access MTF to acquire him a bed. Other funding was used to obtain sheets, blankets and cleaning products. In addition, Action Wellness case managers set him up with food bank delivery through a local pantry. This client is on a fixed income and the subsidized housing will also help him financially. Since it is so difficult for this client to get around due to the need of hip surgery and age, Action Wellness has also helped with transportation (both Uber and SEPTA passes) to attend specialty medical appointments. The individual has also been assisted through the LIHEAP application process.

When Sue was newly diagnosed with HIV at the age of 19, she reached out to Action Wellness for help with services. Sue is an immigrant from Africa, and has faced many struggles due to her citizenship status and an intellectual disability. In addition Sue's family felt like she was a burden to the family and asked her to leave the home without any income or any anywhere to live. Sue's youth case manager was able to refer her to a shelter which provided her with support needed. In addition, the Action Wellness case manager has assisted Sue in applying for citizenship status. This case manager helped establish citizenship over a three year period. This has assisted Sue in receiving social security benefits. Sue is currently residing in an assisted living program that has assisted her in meeting all her needs. The Action Wellness case manager is currently assisting Sue in looking for and applying for part-time positions with a job coach. Sue also has a desire to visit family in Africa so her case manager is assisting in applying for a passport.

Please note unless permission was given all client names are fictional.

An Interview with Jay Johnson, Director of Volunteers

Action Wellness (ActionAIDS) was created by a small group of volunteers and has remained an important aspect of our agency.

AW: Why volunteer with Action Wellness?

JJ: People volunteer for a myriad of reasons. Many of our volunteers decided they want to be a "Buddy" for someone we support. Buddies offer limited emotional support to our clients with a phone call two times a week and maybe an outing two or three times per month. Buddies make such an impact on the services we provide. So many times they are the eyes and ears for our case managers and share viable information with the care team.

AW: What kind of training do volunteers receive?

JJ: All volunteers receive extensive training and additional support throughout their volunteering with Action Wellness. Once they have completed their origination and learn more about AW and the many volunteer opportunities, they will be asked to go through clearances. Once the orientation and clearances are completed, they can decide on how they want to volunteer.

AW: What kind of schedule do volunteers have to maintain?

JJ: While there are some opportunities that are not so flexible, volunteering as a Buddy offers a great deal of flexibility. One volunteering opportunities, which is not so flexible is AW's Immediate Seating Program. Our Immediate Seating program assist in providing free tickets to sporting events, shows or visits to museums. This program plays such an important role in the agency's Buddy program, as it supports the role of Buddies helping to provide our client with the socialization they so need. Many times there aren't extra funds to see that show, attending a sporting event, or visit a museum. Our Immediate Seating volunteers work on a schedule and in our Arch St Office.

AW: What kind of challenges did Covid present to the volunteer program?

JJ: While Covid-19 presented a challenge for our program, it survived. Like everyone else we needed to pivot the way we offered the services provided by volunteers. Not only did the Volunteer Programs survive the Covid years but the program grew even stronger! In the fiscal year 2021 (July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022) Action Wellness volunteers clocked in 6025 hours, which are the largest service hours ever.

AW: How do we find out more about volunteer opportunities with AW?

JJ: To find an opportunity that fits your interest, skills, and availability, please go to our website, www.actionwellness.org, and click on Volunteer Opportunities. You can also call me at 215-981-3353 or email at ejohnson@actionwellness.org.

Jay with some of our volunteers



Action Wellness' Perinatal Programs.

The Perinatal Program at Action Wellness provides medical case management to pregnant women living with chronic illness. Perinatal Medical Case Managers (PMCMs) are trained in the specific needs of pregnant women and are available for any pregnant client regardless of where she receives care. PMCMs work with clients throughout their pregnancy and up to 12 months postpartum.

Laura is a single mother of 4 children and receives \$587 in Cash Assistance (TANF) as her only source of income. Even with family support Laura had still reached out to the Action Wellness Perinatal Medical Case Managers for additional assistance with her needs. Laura had immediate needs for both the new baby, her other children, and herself. The Action Wellness team secured a bassinet for the baby, as well as some clothing. The older children

needed school supplies and winter clothing so they could attend school. Our case manager has linked Laura with Cradles to Crayons to assist with the children's needs.

There were also general family support that was needed for all of them. Some of these issues were back rent, eviction prevention, food resources and gathering duplicates for the children's birth certificates and social security cards. Laura has been linked to the resources to obtain the children's documents, and connections to resources such as local food banks to assist with food insecurity. One of the biggest successes was Laura's successful linkage to The Law Project, where an attorney prevented eviction, and secured a new and discounted rental agreement for 2023.

Laura and her family are looking forward to a better 2023 and continual steps towards self-sufficiency.



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