

**Friends Foundation for the Aging  
Year-End Report & Reapplication Proposal Form**

**Date:** March 15, 2024

**Organization:** Center in the Park

**TIN & Formal organization name:** 23-1919016

**Contact name, phone, email:** David Griffith, Director of Development, 215-848-7722 x301,  
dgriffith@centerinthepark.org

**Amount requested:** \$40,000

**Project title:** In-Home Support Program

**1. What is the problem you identified? Has it changed?**

Center in the Park (CIP) successfully administered an In-Home Support Program (IHSP) for 26 years through a contract with the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA). IHSP social workers assisted thousands of homebound older adults with home delivered meals, adaptive equipment, minor home repairs, and the referrals and community support needed to remain independent in their homes and communities. The program filled a critical gap in serving older adults who did not meet the stringent guidelines of other PCA-funded programs, needed immediate support before a PCA assessment could be completed, or only required short-term interventions to regain independence.

When CIP's IHSP funding was eliminated by PCA in 2022 due to changes to the Department of Aging's Intrastate Funding Formula, a grant from the Friends Foundation for the Aging allowed CIP to pilot a revised IHSP unaffiliated with PCA. This pilot focused on providing community referrals, assistance in navigating the aging services network, and brief interventions helping older adults to maintain their independence. Of the six Philadelphia senior centers that previously operated the IHSP under PCA's funding, CIP is the only one that has continued providing these services with an independently run IHSP.

**2. What actions did you take to address the problem?**

In its first year, CIP's pilot supported 349 older adults in Northwest Philadelphia with information, referrals, emergency financial relief, and coordinating the provision of short-term services. The IHSP has provided community-dwelling older adults with services including:

- Referrals for home-delivered meals, transportation assistance, and home health services
- Covering the costs of short-term homemaker services (i.e. cleaning, shopping, meal preparation)
- Supporting individuals to navigate CCT for their transportation needs
- Replacing broken appliances including stoves and refrigerators
- Providing utility assistance to prevent utility shut-offs
- Helping older adults to apply for benefits
- Purchasing adaptive medical equipment not covered by insurance

In approximately 60% of the cases, CIP has been able to use its own resources to directly address an older adult's needs, utilizing its Emergency Assistance Fund to help cover the costs of short-term housekeeping services, adaptive medical equipment, minor home repairs, appliances, and utility and rental assistance for older adults experiencing critical needs. Additionally, the IHSP social worker has often been able to make referrals within CIP to the Housing Counseling Department, the Neighborhood Energy Center, and the Center Counselor. In these cases, the IHSP has been a point of entry into CIP for older adults to receive support with benefits enrollment, food access, financial counseling, foreclosure prevention, and utility assistance.

In the other 40% of the cases, the IHSP social worker has made referrals to collaborating organizations who could better meet an individual's needs, including the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) for care management, transportation assistance, caregiver support, and home-delivered meals.

### **3. What did you learn? Will you make any changes in the coming year?**

The pilot demonstrated that there remains a large population of community-dwelling older adults who need supportive services in order to age in place, but who are not connected with sufficient services from PCA or a Community HealthChoices (CHC) managed care organization. When PCA eliminated its funding for the IHSP, they did so on the premise that the IHSP was duplicative with services available from CHC and PCA's Care Management. However, throughout the pilot, CIP consistently saw older adults whose needs extended beyond the scope of what was offered by PCA and CHC. In some cases, individuals didn't meet the strict eligibility criteria for these programs or needed services beyond what they qualified for through PCA. Others had urgent needs and couldn't spare the time on a waiting list for a PCA assessment to be completed. In other cases, older adults were eligible for services but were overwhelmed by the application process and needed assistance completing the required paperwork. The IHSP even received referrals from PCA this year, suggesting they too now recognize the service gaps being filled by this program.

Based on these persisting community needs and the response to this successful pilot, CIP will continue to grow the IHSP in Year 2. Priorities for the upcoming year will include solidifying the structure for the program, expanding the depth of the services offered, and strengthening community outreach efforts. CIP operated its pilot with just one 11 hour/week IHSP employee. For the upcoming year, CIP plans to increase this role to an 18 hour/week position. The increased staff time devoted to this project will allow the IHSP social worker to conduct home visits to homebound older adults, an important component of the original PCA-funded IHSP. Additionally, the increase in staff time will enable the IHSP social worker to provide more frequent follow-up beyond the initial engagement to ensure that an individual's needs have been sufficiently met.

### **4. How have you engaged any partners/collaborators in implementation or funding? Have you considered how to sustain the program?**

The collaborators on this project have primarily been the organizations to whom CIP sends referrals. The IHSP social worker frequently refers individuals to PCA if they would be eligible for services such as home-delivered meals, transportation assistance, or the Senior Housing Assistance Repair Program. CIP has relationships with the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC) and Habitat for Humanity when major home repairs are needed, as well as with several providers of adaptive medical equipment and homecare services. The IHSP also frequently receives referrals from findhelp.org, a web-based platform designed to connect community members with healthcare, social services, and financial resources.

The Friends Foundation for the Aging was the largest funder of the IHSP pilot and would be again in Year 2 should this request be granted. CIP has other funding sources confirmed (or expected) for its Emergency Assistance Fund, including the Combined Baker Trust, W.W. Smith Foundation, and Grandom Institution. As the IHSP continues to develop, CIP will seek additional foundation support to sustain this program longer-term.

**5. How do you know your actions had an impact? Please describe those who participated, outputs and outcomes. Stories or photos are welcome.**

The current measures of impact are primarily the quantitative numbers of people served, referrals made, and the funds dispersed from the Emergency Assistance Fund. The IHSP social worker maintains a spreadsheet that tracks all individuals who engage with the program and the intervention, referral, or support provided. Developing the capacity for stronger tracking of longer-term client outcomes will be areas of focus for the IHSP in Year 2. The 349 individuals served in the pilot were primarily lower-income older adults of color residing in Northwest Philadelphia.

The following cases are examples of the services provided by the IHSP in the past year:

- A 66-year-old CIP member had been sleeping on blankets on the floor of her apartment. She learned about the IHSP through an announcement shared by staff in CIP's Dining Room during lunch. CIP was able to purchase her a new boxspring and mattress to alleviate the back pain she was experiencing from sleeping on the floor.
- An 81-year-old woman contacted CIP directly as she was having difficulty showering after experiencing a recent fall. CIP was able to purchase a shower seat and coordinate having grab bars installed in her bathroom so that she could safely shower independently.
- The IHSP supported an 80-year-old woman on multiple occasions this year after she had fractured her foot. Among the assistance provided by the IHSP was to coordinate and pay for light housekeeping services to help her maintain a clean and safe living environment.

**6. Is there anything else you would like FFA to know about this project?**

Of this \$40,000 request, \$7,500 will be applied to CIP's Emergency Assistance Fund and used to directly cover the costs of interventions for older adults facing critical needs. The \$7,500 allocated to emergency assistance in the 2022 grant provided direct financial support to 24 older adults to cover the costs of housekeeping services, utility expenses, household appliances, rental assistance, accessibility modifications, and adaptive medical equipment.

**7. Feedback on your interaction with FFA would be helpful. Are there ways we can help beyond the grant?**

CIP is extremely grateful for the support of FFA, especially for coming in at such a critical time following the loss of PCA funding in 2022. Moving forward, CIP will appreciate any further connections that would help to publicize the IHSP, provide referrals to the program, or provide services to which the IHSP social worker could refer IHSP clients.

**Include a simple program budget/actual with income and expenses (e.g. staff, program supplies, travel, etc.) for both last year and next.**

The 2022-23 budget/actual and 2024 funding request is attached.

**Has your 501c3 status changed?** No.