



THE YEAR OF COVID





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# OUR STORY

Since 1982, Family Eldercare has served older adults and adults with disabilities. Our beginnings were small, but our task was enormous. Jackie Lelong and Tina Dublin were experts in the field of gerontology and had a concern for supporting families as they cared for their aging loved ones. With their research and professional backgrounds, the women founded Family Eldercare to serve as a resource in the community. Initially, Family Eldercare hosted public forums throughout Texas discussing aging and disability issues. They disseminated their educational program “As Parents Grow Older” to empower families and caregivers helping older adults to stay at home as long as possible. At that time, Family Eldercare was described as a group of fierce advocates with only a file cabinet, but it eventually became the primary agency in Central Texas directly serving older adults, adults with disabilities, and those who care for them. This emergence began in 1986 when, at the request of the Texas Department of Human Services and the Travis County Probate Court, Family Eldercare developed the Travis County Guardianship and Money Management program. Our mandate is to house clients in the least restrictive environment possible; prevent abuse, neglect, and exploitation; promote health, well-being, and dignity; and support people living on a fixed income.

Throughout our history, Family Eldercare has adapted our services to meet emergent needs from our community. It was no different during the pandemic. Much of our focus was ensuring that the basic needs of clients were met, that they were not evicted, and that they stayed safe and received supportive services during this unprecedented time.

## **Our Vision**

All Texans thrive with dignity and purpose in supportive communities and are financially secure.

## **Our Mission**

We are experts on the journey of aging, providing services tailored to the individual to promote independence and stability.

# 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Smitha Bellur**

Austin, TX

Current Term Ends 2022

**Jen Berbas, Board Chair**

Austin, TX

Current Term ends 2021

**Sam Cockburn, Treasurer**

Austin, TX

Current Term ends 2022

**Charles Colley**

Austin, TX

Current Term ends 2020

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Current Term ends 2020

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Current Term ends 2020

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Current Term ends 2021

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Current Term ends 2020

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Current Term Ends 2022

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Leander, TX

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Current Term ends 2021

**Sandy Morris, Past Board Chair**

Austin, TX

Current Term ends 2020

**Kim Wilson**

Austin, TX

Current Term ends 2021

# 2020 EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

**Kent Herring**

Chief Executive Officer

**Brittany Baize**

Director of Development & Communications

**Sara Clymer**

Director of Guardianship Services

**Tamara Christian**

Director of Human Resources

**Lisa Daly**

Director of In Home Care

**Cheryl Dunn**

Director of Finance & Administration

**Shontell Gauthier**

Director of Money Management Services

**Joyce Hefner**

Director of Housing & Community Services





## LETTER FROM THE CEO

At the start of 2020, Family Eldercare reported that our vision for 2020 was to address the housing shortage crisis among people age 55+. Within a few weeks of our announcement, the COVID-19 pandemic had a grip on our country. At Family Eldercare, the pandemic worsened the existing challenges that already made life difficult for many of the people we serve, including: having enough food to eat, paying rent and utilities, affording the cost of prescriptions, and getting medical care. For clients who were homeless, the pandemic made access to care increasingly difficult as our city shut down.

We had to suspend all volunteer activities. For older persons we served, sheltering-in-place to reduce exposure to the virus further isolated them. Our clients who lived in assisted living facilities, nursing care facilities, and state-funded facilities were suddenly cut off from visitors and were at increased risk of a super-spreader event.

For everyone we served, the pandemic was potentially life-threatening, catastrophic, and lonely.

**This report describes the ways Family Eldercare temporarily shifted our focus away from some of our longer-term goals in order to focus on meeting our community's basic needs during the COVID crisis.**

Kent Herring  
CEO, Family Eldercare

# WHAT WE DID

01

## **We went remote.**

Invested in remote technology and robust digital security tools so we could keep working for the people we serve.

02

## **We shared.**

Created a COVID resource and information page on the Family Eldercare website.

03

## **We triaged.**

Surveyed our clients to determine individual, immediate, and emerging needs during this time.

04

## **We informed.**

Directly contacted our clients to keep them informed about the rapidly evolving health crisis.

05

## **We adapted.**

Quickly shifted to providing remote services to the people we served wherever possible.

# WHAT WE DID

06

## **We were safe.**

Distributed personal protective equipment to employees and created sanitizing stations around the office.

07

## **We were focused.**

Adapted some of our services to help meet basic needs such as food, housing, and utility assistance.

08

## **We grew.**

Hired additional employees to meet the increased demands of our community.

09

## **We delivered.**

Delivered 1,476 fresh-prepared meals to clients without enough food by partnering with Keep Austin Together.

10

## **We listened.**

Offered Coping with COVID sessions through our Counseling & Lifetime Connections Without Walls (LCWW).



# WHAT WE DID

11

## **We connected.**

Offered free, virtual LCWW sessions to combat isolation & loneliness among people age 55+

12

## **We educated.**

Added COVID-focused LCWW informational sessions with Austin Geriatric Specialists and Austin Public Health.

13

## **We went contact-free.**

Created a Contact-Free version of the Summer Fan Drive and started the season earlier than usual.

14

## **We partnered.**

Assisted formerly homeless Austinites via a partnership with Mobile Loaves & Fishes' Community First! Village.

15

## **We protected.**

Visited 450 persons under our guardianship in-person and virtually every month to ensure their health & safety.

# WHAT WE DID

16

## **We demanded eviction relief.**

Advocated for eviction relief by helping our clients share their stories with local press and decision makers.

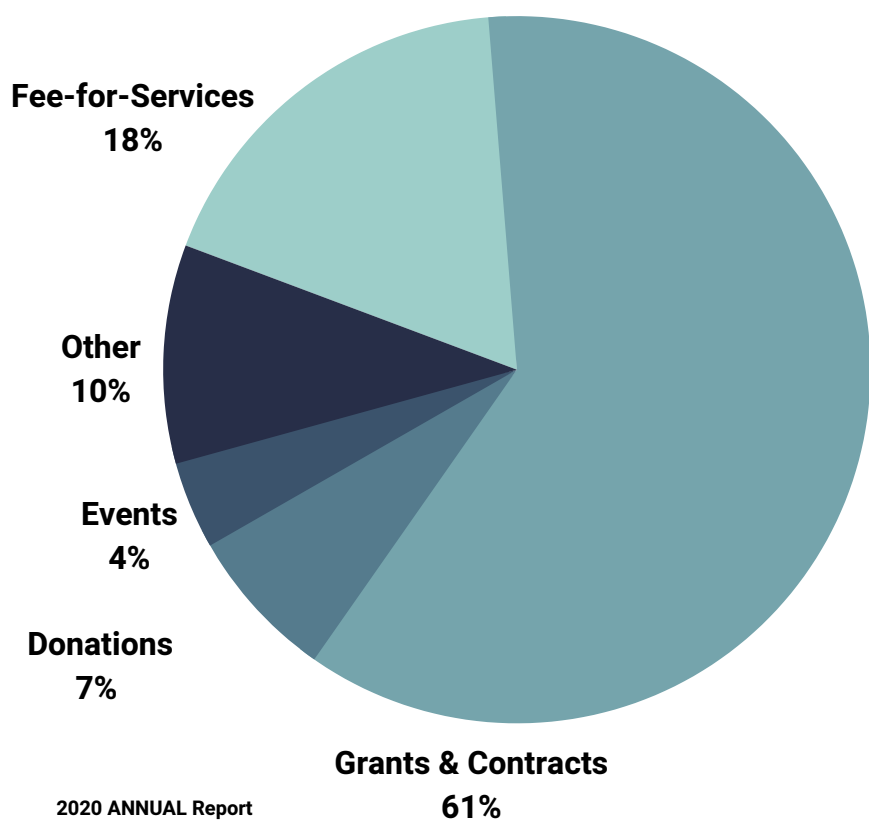
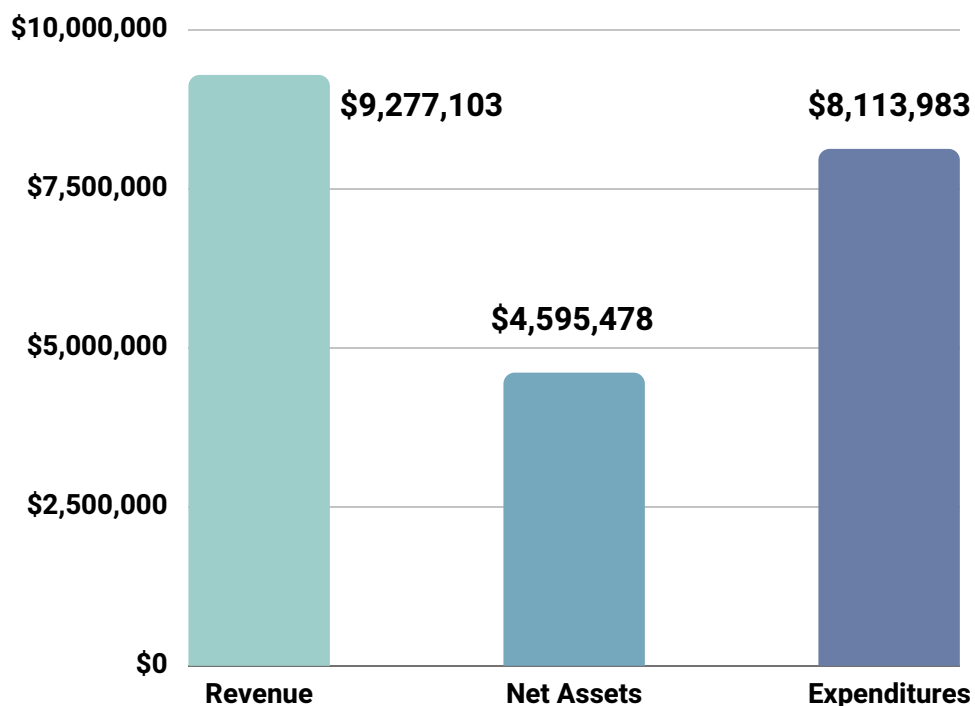
17

## **We invested in housing.**

Distributed over \$2 million in emergency COVID relief funds to keep our community housed.



# 2020 STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES



*More than half of  
revenue, support, and  
gains came from  
grants and contracts.*



# OUR PROGRAMS

**In 2020, Family Eldercare celebrated 38 years of service to Central Texans. We continue to meet the urgent needs of our community through strong leadership, innovative partnerships, and generous community support.**

## **Counseling**

Provided to older adults at home or virtually, by Licensed Clinical Social Workers to support patients' mental health and help them cope with depression, anxiety, stress, conflict, trauma, and crisis.

## **Financial & Housing Stability**

Formerly known as Money Management, FHS provides case management and support services to support individuals with their journeys toward self-sufficiency and stable housing.

## **Guardianship**

Appointed by local courts to make decisions and exercise the legal rights of people—often the most vulnerable in the community—who lack the capacity to manage their property, health, and safety.

## **Lifetime Connections Without Walls**

A telephone program that provides opportunities for isolated or lonely older adults to connect with others in their community and across the country. We offer social and educational sessions, support groups, and friendly conversation – all over the phone – all from the comfort of home.

## **Service Coordination**

Guided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to connect people living in affordable housing with supportive services that help them remain independent in their homes. Service Coordinators are found in affordable housing properties throughout Austin, including the Family Eldercare-owned Lyons Gardens.

# 2020 MILESTONES

**9,867**

**PEOPLE**

RECEIVED FAMILY  
ELDERCARE SERVICES



**7,342**

**FANS**

ACROSS 13  
COUNTIES

**662**

**VIRTUAL SESSIONS**

WITH ISOLATED  
OLDER ADULTS



**96**

**CHANGED LIVES**

THRU RAPID  
REHOUSING

**\$2 MM+**

**IN BENEFITS**

SECURED FOR FHS  
CLIENTS



**65,518**

**INTERACTIONS**

WITH CLIENTS  
ACROSS PROGRAMS

**160,000**

**HOURS**

OF PROFESSIONAL  
SERVICES



# SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## **Community First! Village**

Family Eldercare began a partnership with Mobile Loaves & Fishes' Community First! Village. Austinites who have experienced homelessness receive housing through Mobile Loaves & Fishes as well as service coordination and case management through Family Eldercare.

## **COVID-19 Pandemic & In-Home Care**

The COVID-19 pandemic hit many of our clients particularly hard, especially those already at risk for financial and housing instability and social isolation. In 2020, after 25 years, we made the difficult and necessary decision to transition out of in-home care and shifted our focus to serving as advocates for persons who need this service and those who provide it. [Read why we did this.](#)

Family Eldercare participated in multiple government programs designed to help people who had been financially affected by COVID-19. We successfully distributed millions of dollars in relief funding to Central Texans of all ages, provided case management to households at greater risk of housing instability, and expanded our phone-based Lifetime Connections Without Walls program to combat social isolation. Learn more about Lifetime Connections Without Walls.



# SUCCESS STORIES

## **Sandy, late 80's, Counseling**

Sandy, in her late 80s, was referred for in-home counseling by the social worker at her doctor's office. Sandy was experiencing depression related to her failing health and the aging process. As someone who was not interested in anti-depressants, she welcomed a counselor into her home to help address her symptoms and concerns. Sandy was a well-educated woman who herself had spent much of her career helping older adults and had been extremely active in her community. Sandy received counseling for nearly a year before she passed away from a degenerative disease. In that time, Sandy was able to engage in extensive life review and process the feelings she had about her life's joys and triumphs, but also her regrets and pain. *"I'll miss you when I am gone. . . . Thank you and I love you,"* she said to her counselor in their final session. Sandy and her counselor formed a true therapeutic relationship in the final year of her life, providing her an outlet to share parts of herself she was not comfortable addressing with anyone else.

## **Chris, age 62+, Financial & Housing Stability- Rapid ReHousing Program**

Before being enrolled in Family Eldercare's Rapid Rehousing Program for Older Adults, Chris was homeless for 20 years -- alternating between sleeping in a park and staying in an abandoned house. Chris's financial and housing stability plan involved overcoming several obstacles, including a lack of ID and not receiving Social Security benefits. With the assistance of Family Eldercare's rapid rehousing services and financial assistance funds, he and his case manager were able to obtain a birth certificate, and later a state ID. After two months of working with Family Eldercare, he was able to move into his own apartment at Lyons Gardens.

## **Doug, age 53, Guardianship**

In 2019, Family Eldercare received an urgent phone call from a judge. It was a case of medical neglect and immediate action needed to be taken to save this man's life. Doug, age 52 at the time, had been under his mother's guardianship for more than 30 years and was now in poor health. She discharged him from the hospital against medical advice while he was in critical condition for kidney failure likely caused by her medical mismanagement. The judge removed his mother as guardian and appointed Family Eldercare.

As a result of his mother's care, Doug suffered permanent kidney damage and needed ongoing dialysis. Our Guardian Care Manager worked with the social workers at the hospital to get him placed in a nursing facility that would assist with transport 3x/week for dialysis care and would manage his medications with 24/7 nursing care. He started to improve and was stable for the first time in a while. The Care Manager was able to get him brand new hearing aids to improve his quality of life, and he is a favorite among the staff at the facility where he now lives.

# SUCCESS STORIES

## **Ms D, age 104, Lifetime Connection Without Walls**

At the age of 104, with limitations in mobility and vision, Ms. D spends a lot of time at home. *"I just sit here and stare at the walls but when the phone rings, that all changes,"* she says. As our program's lone centenarian, Ms. D feels strongly about her peers joining LCWW, saying more older adults should know about it. *"The feeling of belonging that LCWW provides is important to me. I can't say enough nice things about it."*

## **Sandra, age 72, Service Coordination**

72-year old Sandra lives in a housing complex for older adults. She had never lived alone before. After losing her husband of 43 years, she moved in with her children. She appreciated their help, but eventually felt she needed her own space. She credits Family Eldercare, and especially her on-site Service Coordinator Michelle, with helping her maintain her independence.

It hasn't always been easy. *"I've been struggling,"* Sandra admits, *"because the electricity bill just keeps going up and up."* Michelle, she says, is *"really good about doing what needs to be done to keep my lights on."* Beyond connecting her to resources, Sandra is especially grateful to Michelle for the emotional support she provides. Sandra says talking to Michelle has really helped her.

*"If it weren't for Michelle, I probably wouldn't still be here. I would not be alive because I would just have given up on myself. But I'm not ready for that yet, thanks to Michelle."*

## **Connie, age 55+, Summer Fan Drive & COVID-19 Assistance**

The fan drive hotline received a desperate call from a woman who was in crisis. Connie lived in a small trailer and its small window unit was not working well. We were experiencing a 100+ degree heat wave when she called. She lived on a fixed income and her water was about to be shut off. Family Eldercare referred her to our RISE program, which provides financial assistance for families impacted by COVID-19. The next day, our case manager delivered four fans to Connie and submitted her application for RISE funds. Connie qualified to receive \$1,200 in assistance to get her up to date on her bills, rent, and the overdue water bill. Once she was caught up on her bills, Connie was able to afford a much-needed walker. Now she could walk to the mailbox without worrying about falling because of her mobility issues. During our follow up call, Connie was excited and thankful, saying, *"Oh Lord have mercy, those fans saved my life! If it hadn't been for Family Eldercare bringing me those fans, I wouldn't have been able to cool my trailer when it's 110 degrees outside."*

*Names changed to protect the privacy of our clients.*



Special thanks to the St. David's Foundation for continued support of our mission and to donors who provided COVID-related direct client assistance funding that allowed us pay for basic needs such as rent, food, medications, utilities, and other assistance for our clients as they endured this unprecedented pandemic.

# **St David's** **FOUNDATION**

**A Glimmer of Hope Foundation**  
**All Together Austin**  
**Applied Materials Foundation**  
**Communities Foundation of Texas**  
**HEB**  
**Impact Austin**  
**May and Stanley Smith Charitable Trust**  
**Sempra Energy Foundation**  
**The Barilla Foundation**  
**United Way for Good**

**family**  
**ELDERCARE**