

**BACKGROUND**

Jewish Family & Children’s Service (JF&CS) Adult Family Care (AFC) program is a MassHealth program that helps individuals age 16 and older to live in the community with related or non-related families by offering financial assistance and support services. Through the services of the JF&CS AFC program, people needing assistance with care maintain as much independence as possible, while living in their community. JF&CS registered nurses and case managers offer ongoing education, advocacy, and healthcare oversight through home visits, phone consultations, and 24/7 on-call emergency support.

In 2021, JF&CS surveyed clients, caregivers, and legal guardians to ensure that the agency was providing high-quality services; to check that clients, caregivers, and legal guardians were satisfied with the services that they received; that caregivers felt supported and equipped to care for their client; and to seek feedback on further support needs.

AFC staff hand delivered paper surveys to all clients. Clients were provided a return envelope for mailing the survey back to the Department of Evaluation and Learning (DEL) or for having AFC staff return the survey for them. **Twenty-eight clients participated** in the survey, resulting in 37% response rate. Caregivers received the survey by email and by mail. **Forty-six caregivers** participated, with 61% of caregivers responding overall. Legal guardians received the survey by email and by mail. **Twelve legal guardians** provided feedback, representing 29% of legal guardians.

**OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH JF&CS AFC PROGRAM**

JF&CS strives to provide services and support that clients, caregivers, and legal guardians are satisfied with. The majority of clients, caregivers, and legal guardians responding to the surveys are “*very satisfied*” with the JF&CS AFC program.

**CLIENTS** (n = 27)

■ Satisfied ■ Very Satisfied



**CAREGIVERS** (n = 45)

■ Satisfied ■ Very Satisfied



**LEGAL GUARDIANS** (n = 12)

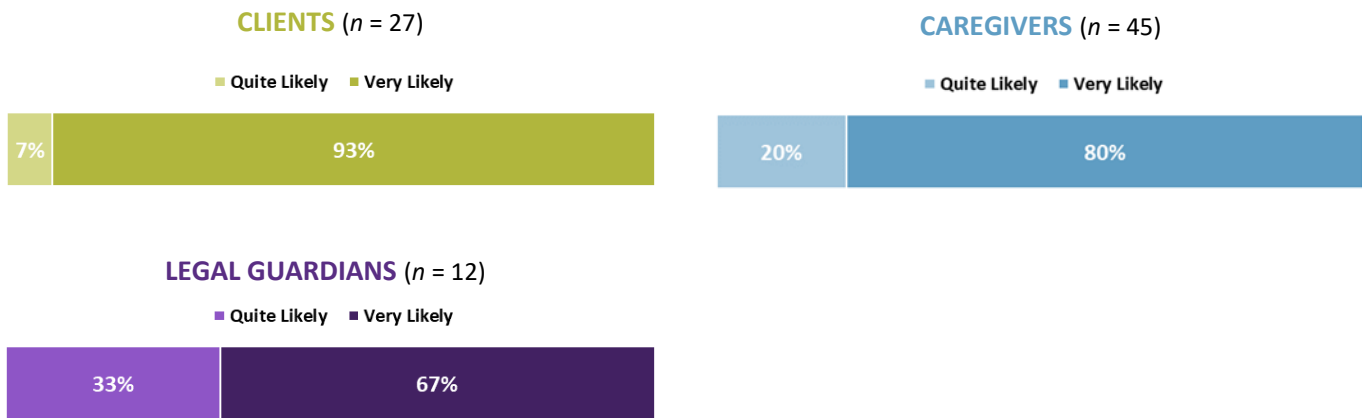
■ Satisfied ■ Very Satisfied



*“I like that staff take interest in me and care about me” – Client*

*“I like that the caregivers are able to speak and be heard. The caregiver gets to have input in the client plan and are respected. Overall a great working relationship.” – Caregiver*

As another means of gauging satisfaction with our services, we also wanted to know if survey responders would recommend the JF&CS AFC program to others interested in AFC services. Almost all are “quite likely” or “very likely” to recommend our program.



Legal guardians were also asked overall, how well the AFC program meeting their family member’s needs. All legal guardians responded, “very well.”

### LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY

A primary goal of the AFC program is for clients to be able stay in the community of their choice with the assistance of a respectful caregiver.



**100%** of clients reported that they like the community where they live with their caregiver “quite a bit” or “very much.” (n = 28)

“close to niece” – Client



**100%** of clients responding stated that their caregiver “always” treats them in a respectful manner. (n = 28)

**100%** of legal guardians responding thought that their family member’s caregiver “always” treats them in a respectful manner. (n = 12)

## INTERACTIONS WITH STAFF

JF&CS nurses and case managers strive to work closely with clients and caregivers to provide care and resources to support the clients' abilities to remain in the community. Because each client's and caregiver's needs are different, not all questions applied to each person responding.



### ENGAGING WITH STAFF

**100%** of clients responded that AFC staff “usually” or “always” engage with them in a **respectful** and **professional manner**. (n = 28)

**100%** of legal guardians responded that AFC staff “always” engage with their family member in a **respectful** and **professional manner**. (n = 12)

**100%** of clients responded that AFC staff “usually” or “always” **communicate efficiently** with them. (n = 28)

**100%** of legal guardians responded that AFC staff “usually” or “always” **communicate efficiently** with their family member. (n = 12)

**100%** of clients “usually” or “always” can **schedule visits** with AFC staff easily. (n = 27)

**100%** of legal guardians reported that their family member “always” can **schedule visits** with AFC staff easily. (n = 10)

**100%** of caregivers responded that AFC staff “usually” or “always” engage with them in a **respectful** and **professional manner**. (n = 45)

*“All encounters both virtual and in person have been very professional from the AFC Staff.” – Caregiver*

*“Everyone who’s been assigned to our family goes above and beyond to accommodate our culture, customs, faith, and availability.” – Legal Guardian*

**100%** of caregivers responded that AFC staff “usually” or “always” **communicate efficiently** with them. (n = 46)

*“Simple easy communication” – Client*

*“They are very efficient in handling paperwork and visits” – Caregiver*

**100%** of caregivers “usually” or “always” can **schedule visits** with AFC staff easily. (n = 46)

*“The staff have been great and have been flexible in dealing with our schedule.” – Caregiver*



## RESOURCES

**100%** of clients responded that the AFC staff are “usually” or “always” **knowledgeable about other resources** in the community. (n = 25)

**88%** of caregivers responded that the AFC staff are “usually” or “always” **knowledgeable about other resources** in the community. (n = 41)

**92%** of legal guardians report responded that the AFC staff are “usually” or “always” **knowledgeable about other resources** in the community. (n = 12)

*“They are always helpful with answering questions and able to get whatever info that we need” – Legal Guardian*

## CAREGIVER TRAINING

Caregivers are required by MassHealth to complete 8 hours of training each year. JF&CS uses a fully online training system that tracks caregiver trainings and completion. JF&CS supplements the large range of topics offered by this training system with additional specialized trainings. For caregivers who prefer to do in-person trainings, AFC staff are available to conduct trainings with them during their monthly visits or at different, scheduled times.



**76%** of caregivers report that the content of trainings offered by JF&CS met their needs “quite a bit” or “very much.” (n = 46)

**87%** of caregivers report that the training methods offered meet their needs “quite a bit” or “very much.” (n = 46)

### Future training areas recommended by caregivers includes:

- CPR
- First Aid
- Mental health
- Dealing with many people
- Information on and applying for special housing
- Aging children, middle age, and biological changes
- Proactive management techniques
- Communication with client
- Improving client skills
- How to search for a job or volunteer opportunities for individual with autism
- Overview of other resources and services for clients
- How to promote more social inclusion
- Tips for fitting in and dealing with awkward situations in the community

## **FOLLOW UP/ACTION STEPS**

Most caregivers reported that the trainings met their needs and the online training methods worked well for them. Several caregivers noted that some training seemed more appropriate for institutional caregiving. The program will continue to seek new training courses that not only meet program requirements (determined by funding and accrediting bodies), but also the interests of the caregivers. Also, some of the training topics listed are currently available as additional optional trainings for caregivers, so AFC staff will work with caregivers on how to find and access the optional trainings within the online training platform.

The client response rate was lower than it was for 2020. In-person client interviews, conducted by non-program staff, are the most effective way to obtain feedback that includes all clients who would like to take part in the feedback process. Last year, we relied on phone interviews with non-AFC staff conducting the interviews. Both of these methods are labor intensive and can be difficult to complete for clients. This year we could not conduct in-person or phone interviews and relied on paper surveys. While the paper method made sure that all clients had access to the survey, there are still some who are not able to fully participate. The program will review this process in 2022 to determine the method that can be used for the year and will remind clients that their feedback is always welcome at any time.

In 2018, the program began to survey legal guardians. For those clients who are not able to participate in the feedback process or who do so with difficulty, the goal is that their legal guardian can report on their family member's experience. The response rate for this group has been low since we started surveying legal guardians. This year we utilized email, with a reminder, and paper surveys. The program will continue to explore additional ways to engage this group in the feedback process.

As in other years, several survey respondents felt that staff are not able to provide them with resources in their community. Part of the issue is the lack of resources and supports that exist in the larger community – so at times the resources a family is looking for do not exist. However, AFC staff will continue to work with families in seeking resources, including providing contact information for the JF&CS Disabilities Resource Network (DRN). The DRN provides guidance in navigating the various systems of support available to an individual with disabilities and offers a compassionate place to consider steps for transition, support, and futures planning. Callers receive professional assistance in identifying resources related to education, vocational training, housing, finances, religious life, recreation, and other aspects of community living.