

December 5, 2022

City Hall  
Honorable Mayor and City Council Members  
301 W 2nd Street  
Austin, Texas 78701

RE: Letter of Support for Intergenerational Day Center (IDC)

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

Central Health is pleased to submit a letter of support for the City of Austin to create an innovative concept for an Intergenerational Day Center (IDC). This concept brings together generational age groups of low-income seniors, adolescents, and children that would foster learning for young and older generations – all within the same facility.

Central Health recognizes the immediate benefit of this much needed program for our community's elderly and young children. Other states, like Ohio and California, have already replicated similar model-projects. Both programs were recently evaluated for their best practices by the University of Texas at Austin's LBJ School of Public Affairs.

Our mission here at Central Health is to create access to health care for those who need it most. Central Health is the local government entity responsible for funding the provision of health care services for the vulnerable residents of Travis County living at or below 200% of the federal poverty level and are not covered by other programs or insurance.

In Fiscal Year 2021, Central Health and its safety-net partners provided health care to nearly 150,000 residents in Travis County,

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many of whom were over the age of 55. Approximately 4 percent of Central Health's enrollees in East Austin are 65 and older – this includes vulnerable residents who do not qualify for Medicare or Medicaid. Many of these patients living in East Austin experience higher-than-expected burdens of disease for eight of the nine chronic conditions that are the leading cause of death.

As a health care provider, Central Health supports an IDC initiative that will promote healthy social interactions, which are critical to the overall health of our low-income, aging population. With Austin's population growing at an unprecedented rate, the demand for senior services will only increase. As recently noted by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area is home to the second-fastest growing population of adults aged 65 and older in the country, and it has the fastest-growing population of adults between 55 and 64 years old.

Social isolation is becoming a public health care issue for many senior adults, and this intergenerational day center model has demonstrated improved health outcomes for seniors. This type of initiative has garnered widespread support from several long-standing organizations and local community leaders in the area, and we hope the Austin City Council will support it.

If you have any questions regarding this letter of support, please feel free to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Mike Geeslin

President & CEO

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