

## Questions/Responses

1. We've taken every precaution to ensure the health and safety of our residents and staff and so far, no one has contracted the virus.

Our arrangement with Dr. Jill Hingston continues to be a productive one, particularly during the pandemic while our kiddos are not able to work or go to school. She's really helping them manage their emotions and feelings of isolation so they can return to their prior level of productivity once employment and educational opportunities resume.

One outcome that I did not have space to write about on the application illustrates just how valuable her services are to our residents. Tragically, one of our kids' brothers was recently killed in a motorcycle accident. Jill not only helped him through that difficult time (he and his brother were close), but after he traveled back to central CA to attend the funeral, he reconnected with his family and they indicated they would like him to move back home. Naturally, that prospect raised a host of concerns for him, but Jill (and our case manager, Angel and program director, Tammy) all helped him come to his own conclusion that he does indeed want to be closer to them (geographically and emotionally) and so he'll be moving back to Fresno later this week. It's so rare for an older foster youth to rekindle a strong relationship with their family, so we're all thrilled that it looks as though he'll be welcomed back by his and that he has the emotional tools he'll need to navigate this transition. After all, no program, no matter how supportive, can ever replace the love and support of family. Just thought I'd share that bit of good news, particularly because good news is so hard to come by these days.

2. Dr. Hingston is currently seeing how many of your clients? How many are anticipated to receive therapy in a year. What is the average number of sessions that a client needs? How many are in need of long term therapy? What cost/fee per session is and will Dr. Hingston charge as an independent contractor?

Mental health issues, caused by complex and prolonged traumas that foster youth have experienced throughout their lives, are often the primary reason many transition age foster youth do not succeed in their educational and vocational pursuits. Helping them to understand the role that complex trauma plays in their lives, along with the development of strategies to help them manage the effects of their trauma, are the therapist's main goals. Consistent and ongoing therapy with a trusted clinician is essential to our residents' growth and ability to reach their goals.

Therefore, Dr. Hingston maintains standing, weekly appointments with all of our residents. There are no limitations on the number of sessions they receive. The treatment is ongoing for the duration of their placement with us because it is an essential component of our efforts to prepare them for adulthood. Treatment goals are set on an individual basis according to the resident's needs. For some, helping them to repair relationships with their family of origin is a priority because going back to live with their family once they leave foster care would be a better option than trying to live on

their own. For one of our residents who witnessed his mother's murder, his feelings of inadequacy have been so deep that it's taken a solid year of weekly therapy for him to gain the self-confidence to complete his high school degree, something which, thanks in large part to the therapy Dr. Hingston has provided, he is now in the process of achieving.

Dr. Hingston's fee is \$120 per hour. Since we maintain a census of 5 to 6 residents, I've allocated up to \$37,440 per year for her services. In reality, due to our residents' work and school schedules, and because there are some weeks when they simply do not want to attend therapy (which is their right), our actual expenses are somewhat lower. Dr. Hingston's monthly invoices tend to average between \$1200 and \$2000.

Our situation with DAP was not based on the need for emergency or urgent behavioral healthcare. Due to their inability to maintain behavioral health staff, DAP was never able to establish a system of regular and consistent therapy for our residents. It would routinely take 2-3 weeks to have an appointment scheduled and then these appointments were often canceled or rescheduled by DAP. Foster youth need consistency in their lives because they've had so little of it. So we were forced to look elsewhere for a provider who could provide consistent care for our residents and we have found that in Dr. Hingston.

2. Our reasons for retaining Dr. Hingston's services as an independent contractor, why her fee rate is necessary, and that, because she has already established a consistent presence in the lives of our residents and has earned their trust in her abilities to meet their behavioral health needs, we are not willing to look elsewhere for similar services.