



Cedarcrest



2024-2026 Strategic Plan Executive Summary



Exceptional Complex Care and Education

Our Mission

Cedarcrest enriches the lives of children with complex medical and developmental needs, supports their families, and collaborates with other community providers to build a continuum of care.

Our Vision

Cedarcrest will be the model for best practices in the care and education of children with complex medical and developmental needs.

Our Values

- Integrity** We recognize the awesome responsibility we have in serving children and families. We pledge ourselves to serve them with integrity, embracing families as active partners in their children’s care, and fostering trust among families, providers, and members of the community through our commitment to continuous quality improvement and ethical behavior.
- Compassion** We treat each child and family with compassion, and we are passionate about ensuring each child the highest possible quality of life.
- Accountability** We are accountable to our families, providers, service partners, employees, and donors for effective and transparent stewardship of the resources entrusted to us. Most of all, we are accountable to the children we care for, ensuring that their health, welfare, and best interests guide every decision we make and action we take.
- Responsibility** We embrace our responsibility to be a voice for families and their children with disabilities both at Cedarcrest and in the community. We accept it as our fiscal responsibility to ensure the financial resources necessary to provide optimal care to children with complex needs and to invest in staff, programs, and facilities in order to meet emerging and future needs.
- Enrichment** We believe that every child in our care has the right and deserves the opportunity to grow and learn to his or her maximum potential, and to live a life of the highest quality possible. Our focus is on enriching each child’s life through the finest possible special education and therapy services, and to enable each child to enjoy the same cultural and recreational that children in the wider community enjoy.





Introduction

In the Spring and Summer of 2023, the community that encompasses Cedarcrest engaged in a multidimensional process of self-assessment, visioning, and affirmation. We sought to better understand the current needs of the children and youth for whom we provide care, education, and enrichment activities; determine ways to support our employees in their work; and celebrate all that has been accomplished in the past few years. This process led to the identification of programs and services we wish to enhance and expand as well as opportunities to hone our operations to better serve current and future clients.

This new 2024-2026 plan is only the most recent in a series of continuous improvement strategies occurring in quadrennial or triennial succession for the past forty or more years. The most recent of these, led by Trustees and staff in 2020, had many similar goals and objectives. Having provided care to children and youth for over 76 years, Cedarcrest has many evergreen priorities related to care delivery, support for families, developing and engaging a professional workforce, and sustainability.

Since 2020, the organization has experienced many organizational impacts including a worldwide pandemic; the retirement of the 26-year President and CEO; new executive leadership, and a substantial increase in inquiries and admissions for short and long-term care and enrollment in the Cedarcrest School.

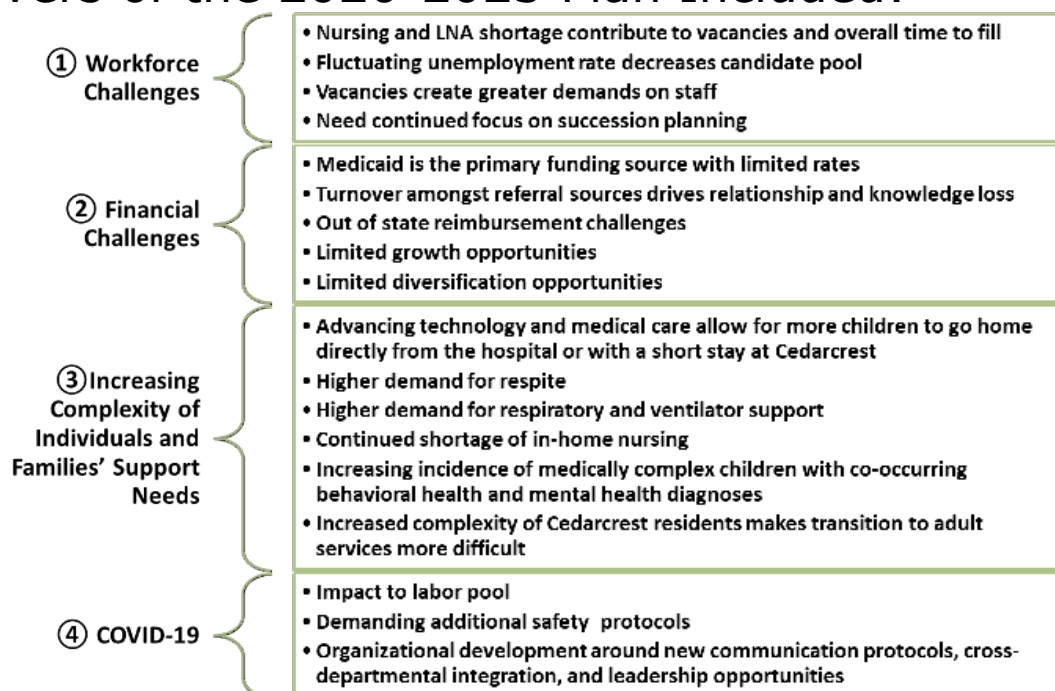
Throughout this time, the children and youth served have been at the forefront of our priorities. The Cedarcrest staff has continued to deliver exceptional care, expanded community engagement opportunities, and implemented innovative strategies to advance the goals and objectives of the 2020-2023 plan.

Key goal areas of the 2020-2023 plan

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Organizational Effectiveness | Operational Sustainability |
| Individual & Family Experiences | Relationships and Communications |



Drivers of the 2020-2023 Plan Included:



Accomplishments of the 2020-2023 Plan include:

Organizational Development & Culture

- Leadership management training completed
- Significantly improved employee salaries and benefits to at-market competitive status to aid in recruitment and retention
- Adjusted in the alignment of the organizational structure to better meet the needs of those we serve
- Begun the research to support program expansion as part of the business continuation strategy
- Broadened opportunities at all staff levels for participation in professional development, conference attendance

Program Innovation & Quality

- Transitioned to a new Electronic Medical Records system
- Increased the therapy staff to include a COTA (Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant)
- Relunched the Recreation/Enrichment program for evening and weekend programming
- Achieved Bronze recognition from the American Health Care Association for quality achievement
- Implemented off-site "best practice" visits to other pediatric centers for staff in all departments

Operation Sustainability

- Implemented numerous process improvements in achieving annual fiscal stability (including increased census for residential and school placements, seeking pandemic-related stabilization aid, increases in Medicaid rates and school district tuition funding)
- Advancements in adopting new technology for both clinical care and administrative needs resulting in greater efficiency, reporting, and productivity
- Workforce professional advancement efforts including the promotion of four staff to management or coordinator level roles, offering an onsite LNA Class through a partnership with River Valley Community College adding thirteen new clinical staff to our nursing team
- Year-over-year increases in philanthropic giving

External Relations & Communications

- Assessment of communications materials, marketing gaps and opportunities
- Conducted branding project resulting in a new name, logo, and website



2024-2026 Plan

President/CEO Jay Hayston and consultant Holly Jarek, guided Trustees, Advisory Council members, and staff, through the planning process incorporating the knowledge and vision of those closest to the client population: parents, guardians, continuum of care partners, educational partners, and volunteers to set forth our new goals and objectives.

The 2024-2026 Planning Process



Planning Process Participants

Survey Respondents

| Parents & Guardians | Medical Care Provider (13.33 %) Referral Partner (20%) Education Partner (20 %) Social Services/Government Partner (3.33%) Business Associate 6.67%) Volunteer (36.67%) | Staff |
|---------------------|---|-------|
| 14 | 46 | 86 |

SWOT Analysis and Goals/Objective Review Session Participants

| Trustees/Advisory Council Member Volunteers | Staff |
|---|-------|
| 15 | 36 |



Key Survey Findings

Parents/Guardian

- 76.5% of respondents indicated that the 24/7 high-tech specialty care, educational services offered and advanced respiratory care were most important or important as services offered to their child
- 69% indicated that short-term respite care was either most important or important
- 92% indicate that Cedarcrest encourages and allows for opportunities for them to be involved in their child's care plan
- 85% strongly agree or agree that the staff and the environment is welcoming to parents and families when visiting
- 71% strongly agree or agree that Cedarcrest staff make expectations of parents/guardians clear concerning their child's educational programming
- 90% strongly agree or agree that they are generally pleased with their child's therapy services
- 100% would recommend Cedarcrest to families facing a similar need
- 50% indicated that they anticipate needing a medically based residential setting for their child as they advance past the age of 22 years

Stakeholders

When asked about their assessment of the significance of trends in our region?

- 44% see greater significance in social expectations that families that will care for children with complex needs at home
- 40% believe there to be increasing numbers of families electing for full medical support for very compromised infants
- 53% noted the increased sophistication of medical equipment required for care as a trend
- 75% have witnessed a trend in both increasing stress on families stemming from difficulties finding home care nurses and increasing stress/exhaustion among families overall
- 95% indicated the importance of Cedarcrest offering 24/7 high tech medical care, specialty onsite education and advanced respiratory therapy offered
- 93% responded the importance of the respite/short-stay option availability
- 78% reported that providing an alternative placement for children who needing DCYF involvement was most important or important
- 91% would recommend Cedarcrest to families facing a need for 24/7 medical care

Staff

- 84% agree or strongly agree that they feel they have the support of their coworkers to do their job
- 83% agree or strongly agree that their job allows them to make a meaningful contribution to the organization
- 59% agree or strongly agree that they have sufficient opportunities for professional growth at Cedarcrest
- 55% agree or strongly agree that systems and processes at Cedarcrest support high-quality work
- 58% agree or strongly agree that the management keeps employees informed
- 95% agree or strongly agree that their skills are a great match for their job
- 72% agree or strongly agree that they have the support of their manager or supervisor



SWOT ANALYSIS

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cedarcrest pride ▪ Staff/flexibility ▪ Great, knowledgeable passionate staff – teamwork ▪ Reputation ▪ Clean facility and well-kept grounds ▪ Leadership positive change -Pay, benefits, resources ▪ Growth opportunities for staff ▪ Community relationships/support ▪ High-tech, advanced equipment | <p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training/depth of knowledge ▪ Communication/too many platforms ▪ Staffing accountability, recognition ▪ Restrictions on the age of those served ▪ Employee fatigue ▪ Nursing support leadership ▪ Workforce scheduling and availability ▪ Physical space limitations ▪ Funding resources are unpredictable ▪ Parent/guardian/family engagement ▪ Programming beyond school hours |
| <p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expanding programs/services for those beyond current age limits ▪ Develop services for those outside of geographic areas ▪ Space – dedicated spaces for the diversity of ages served and utilization ▪ Staff role expansion: care delivery, access to specialists, community engagement ▪ Operationalize continuous improvement processes and quality measures ▪ Expanding volunteer and community partnerships ▪ Investigating support for home care/external providers ▪ Develop staff support/training and quality programs ▪ Integrate and train on new technologies ▪ Investigate data for new programmatic directions ▪ Diversify sources of funding ▪ Strengthen parent/guardians to partnership levels ▪ Create a new brand and strategy for expanded outreach, engagement, and recognition | <p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Space within the facility ▪ Funding insecurity ▪ Economic uncertainty ▪ External program encroachment ▪ Employee fatigue ▪ Workforce retention/recruitment ▪ Regional housing affordability and accessibility ▪ Regional childcare availability ▪ Programmatic stagnation ▪ Immoderate adoption of change ▪ Pace of adoption /expense of medical technology ▪ Exponential impact of families facing situational crisis ▪ Escalation of wages, benefits and competition and an unstable healthcare employment market |





2024-2026 Plan

Cedarcrest will provide exceptional services for children, young adults, and their families; take exceptional care of our staff, volunteers, and community partners; and be exceptional stewards of a proactive, transparent, and sustainable business.

1. EXCEPTIONAL SERVICES

Goal: We will provide exceptional services to children, young adults, and their families by strengthening existing offerings and expanding where there is a need in Cedarcrest's community

Objectives:

- 1.1. Increase consistency, variety, and engagement in education and recreation opportunities in the community
- 1.2. Standardize the education, recreation, and therapy activities schedules for residents who are not enrolled in the Cedarcrest School (infant/toddler, over age 22, short-stay residents)
- 1.3. Roll out charge nurse framework and shift responsibilities / rounding for all shifts/departments
- 1.4. Implement new support roles in recreation, education, nursing, and quality
- 1.5. Engage additional volunteers, families, and community members in the mission
- 1.6. Coordinate a child/young adult council and a parent council to provide regular feedback on services
- 1.7. Formalize annual satisfaction surveys for children, young adults, families, and other stakeholders
- 1.8. Conduct a quality assurance and process improvement review of the organization; expand participation in regular QAPI (Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement) efforts throughout all departments of the organization
- 1.9. Identify and deploy solutions for electronic medical records, activities and enrichment schedules, and parent information
- 1.10. Collaborate with community partners on the evaluation of service needs and available resources, both internal to Cedarcrest and external

Examples of Key Operational Initiatives and Timetables:

- Implementation of scheduling program for care team with individualized needs for clients [Nursing] (Spring 2024)
- Integration of the Director of Quality role to reinforce staff training, care assessment, and quality practice assurance [Nursing] (Spring 2024)
- Conduct Parent/Family Survey [Programs/Social Services] (Summer 2024)
- Each teacher will have written and delivered a performance review to their respected staff, including SMART goals based on developments of rounding. [Education] (Summer 2024)
- Explore, select, and implement programming for current post-22-year-old clients [Social Services] (Summer 2024)





2. TRANSFORMATIVE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Goal: We will prioritize the employee experience by championing pay, benefits, growth, and development for staff, and rigorously improve processes and best practices throughout the organization

Objectives:

- 2.1. Push toward the top of nonprofit market on staff pay and benefits while increasing attractiveness of and utilization of benefits
- 2.2. Develop communities of practice in pediatric complex care via staff participation in conferences, visits to other pediatric facilities, and other opportunities for learning, scholarship, and advocacy
- 2.3. Review and update of policies and procedures systematically across the organization
- 2.4. Refresh interview, hire, onboarding, and orientation processes for all roles
- 2.5. Update competencies, best practices, and annual training across departments and roles
- 2.6. Promote just culture, high accountability, and a standard system of coaching and performance management
- 2.7. Increase staff involvement in committees, recognition efforts, and organizational decision-making
- 2.8. Build out succession planning, career coaching, and career development pathways and efforts
- 2.9. Expand partnerships and collaborations that support the education, professional development, benefits, or experience of staff and stakeholders

Examples of Key Operational Initiatives and Timetables:

- Implement a rounding program for employee feedback; to measure engagement; and identify areas for improvement [People Operations] (Spring 2023)
- Review and update of all policies and procedures [All Departments] (Summer 2024)
- Strengthen accountability practices to increase employee esteem, professional growth, and overall organizational effectiveness [All] (Summer 2024)





3. SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

Goal: We will prepare for what comes next in health and human services for Cedarcrest through needs assessment, brand update, consideration of service expansion, and proactive investment in operations and infrastructure

Objectives:

- 3.1 Complete needs assessment with third-party firm and communicate results internally and externally
- 3.2 Convene steering committee to evaluate service expansion options
- 3.3 Develop work plan on service expansion options across infrastructure and programs-only scenarios in collaboration with community partners
- 3.4 Secure commitment from state to fund young adult services on an ongoing, rather than interim, basis for those in need with a particular focus on transition-age and young adult respite options
- 3.5 Deploy refreshed brand, new website, and advancement efforts
- 3.6 Update tools, equipment, and infrastructure such that frequently used items are of high-quality
- 3.7 Evaluate vendor and contract relationships regularly for cost and quality
- 3.8 Continue strategies investing in team, program quality, and tools as proactive business practice
- 3.9 Maintain a responsible budget
- 3.10 Advocate for reasonable rate increases and other policy changes at the local, state, and federal level
- 3.11 Increase awareness of the mission and needs of the organization more broadly
- 3.12 Increase philanthropic support of operations and long-range reserves

Examples of Key Operational Initiatives and Timetables:

- Commit to workflow procedures between therapy, education, and social services to ensure timely accounting process [Finance] (Spring 2024)
- Launch the new brand and collateral materials across the Northeast by targeted campaigning including digital media, earned media, and the new website [Advancement] (Spring 2024)
- Integrate advocacy training for managers, Trustees, Advisory Council members, and parents [Advancement] (Fall 2024)



Strategic Planning Participants

Thank you to the following for their involvement and support of this planning process:

- Long-term and short-term parent/guardian survey respondents
- Stakeholder survey respondents
- Cedarcrest staff

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