

## Gatekeeper Program

In Oklahoma County, more than 106,000 residents are over the age of 60 and nearly one-third of these citizens live alone. While many of these residents may have the resources to cope with physical, mental, social and economic problems, there are a number who are isolated and have little or no support. The Gatekeeper Program, administered by the Contact Telephone Hotline, was developed two years ago to identify and assist these vulnerable older adults. A three-year Great Grant from OCCF helped to launch this valuable program.



Without the Gatekeepers program, the needs of hundreds of Oklahoma County elderly citizens would go unnoticed.

Thanks to the Great Grant funding, the Gatekeeper program has been able to assist more than 200 elderly citizens who have been identified as at-risk in its first two years. In addition, more than 2,000 Gatekeepers have been formally trained to identify and refer seniors in need. These Gatekeepers are individuals who may have reason to be in contact with elderly citizens such as police officers, utility and postal workers, customer service representatives and neighborhood associations.

Gatekeeper client characteristics show that the "typical" elderly person assisted by the program is a 76-year-old woman, living alone with limited support, and is usually referred for multiple needs such as physical or mental health issues, functional limitations, housing or financial concerns. Once referred, the person receives an in-home assessment to determine the type of assistance and services necessary. Following is a recent example of a referral:

*An 85-year-old woman was referred for in-home assistance. She was recovering from a heart attack and pneumonia. Her husband, also in his 80s, had just had knee replacement surgery. Upon assessment, they reported needing help with meal preparation and occasional transportation. Their family could not cover these two areas of need. The*

individuals trained as Gatekeepers look for signs, such as a lack of home repairs, that indicate an elderly person may be in need of assistance.



*couple was linked to Mobile Meals program and transportation services.*

Helping to identify community needs is a role the Oklahoma City Community Foundation is able to fill thanks to the generosity of many individuals who have made Great Grants possible by contributing to the Fund for Oklahoma City. For more information about giving to the Fund for Oklahoma City, contact Jennifer Stewart at 405/235-5603 or [j.stewart@occf.org](mailto:j.stewart@occf.org) or visit [www.occf.org](http://www.occf.org).

# Great Grants

# Helping Our Community



The Gatekeeper program identifies isolated and vulnerable elderly citizens in Oklahoma County.

The Oklahoma City Community Foundation is the metropolitan area's non-profit public charity that works with individuals and non-profit organizations to attract and manage endowment funds for the community's benefit.

As part of its mission, the Oklahoma City Community Foundation partners with community groups that address specific needs such as the Gatekeeper program.

A basic goal of the Oklahoma City Community Foundation is to improve the community, not to simply distribute funds. Our staff takes a proactive approach to assisting organizations in identifying emerging issues and developing programs that meet those issues.

How do you want to help your community? Let the Oklahoma City Community Foundation help you reach your charitable goals. For additional information, contact us at 405/235-5603 or visit [www.occf.org](http://www.occf.org).



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