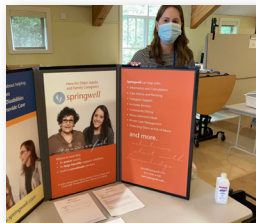




In this issue:



Support for
LGBTQIA+
Seniors



Making
Community
Connections



People
Who Help
People

Springwell & BayPath Have Merged

Springwell and BayPath have been independent, non-profit members of the network of Aging Service Access Points (ASAPs) and Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) in Massachusetts since 1977. Our services make it possible for older adults to get the help they might need to continue living in the home setting that suits them best -- things like home-delivered meals, personal care assistance, and homemaking. On July 1, Springwell and BayPath merged to serve our communities more effectively.

With very similar missions to provide quality resources and services to individuals across the lifespan, the merger was a natural and attractive option for both boards of directors in an environment in which larger non-profits are better positioned to thrive. A year of due diligence and planning to minimize disruptions for those served went into the merger.

The new combined organization has kept the name Springwell and will continue to be led by CEO, Trish Smith. Springwell now serves twenty-two communities: Ashland, Belmont, Brookline, Dover, Framingham, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Natick, Needham, Newton, Northborough, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Waltham, Watertown, Wayland, Wellesley, Westborough, and Weston.

“As a bigger organization, the new Springwell has more resources to provide the services that our communities have come to count on.”

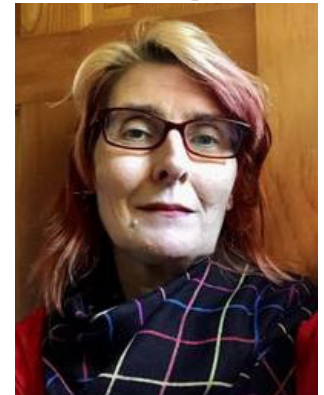


According to Smith, “As a bigger organization, the new Springwell has more resources to provide the services that our communities have come to count on.” Combining operations allows for more flexibility and efficiency in providing services. The service area creates a wider geography that enhances our ability to recruit staff and volunteers. The new Springwell is large enough to take advantage of opportunities that have not been possible for two smaller nonprofits. Some members of Springwell’s new, combined board (pictured left, with CEO Trish Smith) recently came together to celebrate the completion of the merger.

Springwell offers the same services, from the same staff, out of the same offices in Marlborough and Waltham that it always has. If you or someone you know or work with have been receiving services from BayPath or Springwell, your current care manager is available to answer any questions you may have. If you aren’t familiar with us, and you are an older adult or a caregiver of someone who might benefit from help to continue living at home, we look forward to getting to know you. Please contact us to learn more: 617-926-4100 or info@springwell.com.

Pathways of Understanding & Accessibility.

lgbtqia and allies



Springwell's Julie Nowak (right), LGBTQIA+ Initiative Coordinator, has created an array of warm and welcoming in-person and virtual events to support and connect LGBTQIA+ older adults and their friends, families, and other allies.

LGBTQIA+ seniors face the typical challenges of aging but are also at higher risk for abuse, isolation, discrimination, and exploitation because of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. Pathways, our LGBTQIA+ Initiative, was started at BayPath about five years ago and is coordinated by Julie Nowak (she/they). With the merger of BayPath and Springwell, we're excited to expand Pathways further into Belmont, Brookline, Needham, Newton, Waltham, Watertown, Wellesley, and Weston. As always, Pathways services and resources are available to individuals from all communities.

Pathways offers confidential one-on-one support as well as free conversational gatherings and special events for LGBTQIA+ older adults and SOFFAs (Significant Others, Family, Friends, & Allies). GRAY PRIDE cultural competency training sessions help expand knowledge and understanding of the rainbow community, and can help provide information, support, and resources. At the heart of Pathways services and programs is our mission of building community. "By making spaces for conversations, explorations, and celebrations, we create pathways of understanding, insight, and accessibility to create a web of support," Julie acknowledges, "We are all allies of one another."

Pathways events include weekly virtual coffee hours (hopefully soon becoming hybrid conversations), our Pathways Café community meal site (currently virtual, meeting in person later this autumn), and weekly creative gatherings in our virtual Dune Shack. In this "artspace," guests learn about LGBTQIA+ artists and play creative thinking games, and anyone working on their own artwork is welcome to showcase their creations.

Pathways events are open to guests who identify as LGBTQIA+, SOFFAs, and anyone questioning their

own sexual orientation, sexual identity, and/or gender identity. They create great opportunities for intergenerational conversations although some topics of discussion (such as the causes/events of the Stonewall Uprising) may be better suited to a mature audience. Julie shares that, "during Pathways gatherings, we've witnessed people who have felt deeply isolated finding support, making new friends, and gathering insights that help them live more authentically."

Julie reflects upon how, in just five years, we've had so many guests who have gained so much from the Pathways program: "One first-time caller came out as transgender in her seventies and became an activist supporting others. Another met 'someone like me' for the first time in their life. Grandparents caring for nonbinary grandchildren have learned how to be better allies to their loved ones. 'Late bloomers' have grown more comfortable and confident while chatting with peers and have come out during Zoom calls. It's been an amazing journey!"

Julie acknowledges, "We live in uncertain times, and our connection with others helps us cope with the stresses we face. The ongoing goal of Pathways is to keep connecting more people. I'm always happy to find info, support, and resources." If you would like to learn more, please contact Julie Nowak at (508) 573-7288 (direct line with confidential voicemail), or visit www.springwell.com/service/lgbtqia-initiative.

did you know?

Our cultural competency trainings: "Gray Pride" and "Modern Pronouns: They is Correct" introduction to affirming language can help you to ensure a welcoming, informed, and thoughtful approach, using affirming language, to working with LGBTQIA+ older adults seeking support and services. We can bring these trainings to your group/organization/congregation. Learn more at www.springwell.com/service/lgbtqia-initiative

CEO Notes

offering more service



I am delighted to share news about the benefits of the merger of Springwell and BayPath. We worked together for over a year before the July 1 merger to make sure it was the best decision for everyone. As a result, the new Springwell can offer more programs to more people because we have more resources. A great example is the LGBTQIA+ Initiative you can read about in this issue of our newsletter. Further, with more people we have flexibility to have staff members fill in for each other when some are away from work.

If you have been receiving services from Springwell or BayPath, nothing major should change for you, but I encourage you to talk with your care advisor if you need additional help. If you refer people to Springwell or BayPath, you can continue to reach us at either office, phone number, or website. If you aren't working with us but think you or someone you know might benefit from some assistance, please contact us. Aging is different for everyone, and everyone has unique needs. Ask questions and learn about resources *before* you need them. It is always more difficult if you wait until there is a crisis before planning.

-Trish Smith, Springwell CEO

Making Community Connections

spreading the word

Providing outreach and education to our communities about issues related to aging is both part of our charge as an Aging Service Access Point/Area Agency on Aging, and also necessary for achieving our mission of helping people as they face the challenges that come with aging. This important part of our work has been more challenging in the past two years, but opportunities to get out into the community are increasing. As a larger organization, Springwell now has more staff who are able to help us accomplish this important part of our mission.

Springwell leads regular outreach and education efforts in our communities on nutrition and aging, issues related to caregiving, and elder exploitation. We partner with local meal sites and other service providers to get the word out about these opportunities.

In addition to the forums we initiate, this summer and fall, there has been an increase in local health and wellness events, and Springwell staff have been excited to get back out into the community. These in-person, hybrid, and virtual opportunities help to build community connections, introduce people to organizations and people in their neighborhoods, provide a forum to get active, and spread the word about local resources like Springwell. They give us the opportunity to answer questions about aging, services, volunteer opportunities, and so much more.

You can look for more information about where to find Springwell in our communities on our website and social media. Our Information & Consultation staff are also available to answer any questions you might have at 617-926-4100.



"People in our communities are eager for information, and we're eager to help."

-Donlyn Cannella, Director of
Community Services

In Memoriam: Adele Hoffman, Ombudsman

helping people



Adele Hoffman (left photo, center) at a meeting of the Springwell volunteer Ombudsman Program in 2019 and in a photo from her 95th birthday that she shared to help Springwell with Ombudsman Volunteer recruitment.

Adele Hoffman was a long-time volunteer member of the compassionate Springwell team dedicated to ensuring that older adults in our community get the help and support they need and want. According to Adele, “Helping people is what I do. I respond to people’s needs.” She responded to Springwell’s need for engaged community involvement for more than ten years in a number of volunteer roles.

In retirement, Adele was running a research project on aging for the Council on Aging in Newton when she learned about board service at Springwell. She provided dedicated service for two terms on Springwell’s board of directors and during her tenure was excited to learn about the many volunteer opportunities for community service at Springwell. After completing her second term and also serving on our Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council, she decided to volunteer in a new way and joined the Ombudsman Program in 2016.

Adele became an ombudsman at age 91 because the role appealed to her. In a 2019 interview, she said, “Being an ombudsman gave me the opportunity to be supportive. I

always explained to the residents that I was their advocate and gained their trust.” The Ombudsman Program offers residents of long-term care facilities a way to have their complaints and concerns heard. Highly trained and supervised volunteers visit a facility at least weekly and are available to hear concerns in confidence, advocate to protect residents’ rights, and provide information and referrals. It is one of the most rigorous and substantive volunteer roles offered at Springwell. We are always searching for the special individuals who can help us fill this need in our communities.

Adele served as an ombudsman for a small skilled nursing facility for four years. After the first difficult year of moving to exclusively phone-based support during COVID, Adele decided (at age 96) to retire from her job as an ombudsman in April of 2021. She died peacefully at home in December. We will miss Adele and the warm, dedicated energy she brought to all of her relationships at Springwell. We hope that others are inspired to learn more about volunteering from Adele’s example. For more information, email volunteer@springwell.com.



307 Waverley Oaks Road, Suite 205
Waltham, MA 02452

www.springwell.com

Tel 617.926.4100

TTY 617.923.1562

Fax 617.926.9897

Solutions in Support of Health and Independence

Springwell is an independent, non-profit organization dedicated to helping people who need long-term services and supports to remain independent and healthy in the setting of their choice. Services are made possible in part by contracts with or grants from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs, the Federal Administration for Community Living, MassHealth, insurance providers and health care entities. Generous philanthropic support from individuals and institutions is also critical to our success.