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“

Our lives begin to
end the day we
become silent about
things that matter.

-MLK JR



≥ 2025
IMPACT
REPORT

Introducing AgeUp!

Dear Friends and Partners,



This year marks a bold new chapter in our journey, one rooted in nearly 25 years of trusted advocacy and powered by an unwavering belief in dignity, voice, and possibility for every individual we serve. With great pride and purpose, we introduce you to AgeUp, Inc., our new name that reflects our expanded mission to champion both aging and disability communities through innovative services, transformative partnerships, and inclusive advocacy.

At AgeUp, we're not simply evolving, we're reimagining what it means to grow older and live with a disability in today's world. We are changemakers, community builders, and fierce advocates who understand that real impact comes from challenging outdated assumptions and designing forward-thinking, people-centered solutions.

Over the past year, we have deepened our reach supporting nearly 10,000 residents in long-term care through our Ombudsman Program, while also launching new initiatives to fight isolation, elevate inclusion, and empower every person with the tools and support they need to thrive. Whether it's a volunteer visitor offering companionship, a policy win at the state level, or a family receiving the guidance they need at a critical moment, our work is driven by one question: How can we create a future where dignity and opportunity are non-negotiable, for everyone?

This impact report reflects the passion, collaboration, and vision of our entire community, staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters like you. Thank you for standing with us, growing with us, and believing in the power of advocacy to create real, lasting change.

Together, we're not just aging up, we're leveling up what it means to serve our most vulnerable neighbors.

With gratitude and resolve,

Elyse Brummer

Elyse Brummer
Executive Director
AgeUp, Inc.



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Message From The Board

Dear Community Members,

As the Board of Directors of AgeUp, Inc., we are honored to support an organization that stands at the forefront of advocacy for older adults and individuals with disabilities. The past year has been one of profound transformation, guided by a renewed vision, a dynamic rebrand, and an unwavering commitment to justice, dignity, and opportunity.

AgeUp represents more than a name change. It symbolizes a bold leap forward, one that recognizes the evolving needs of our community and answers them with innovation, compassion, and strategic action. Through expanded services, deepened partnerships, and continued excellence in the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, AgeUp is reimagining what care, connection, and inclusion can look like across every stage of life.

As board members, we are especially inspired by AgeUp's ability to lead with both heart and expertise. The organization's impact is felt not only in the thousands of lives supported directly, but also in the systems it challenges, the policies it shapes, and the volunteers it mobilizes.

Looking ahead, we are proud to stand beside AgeUp as it continues to serve as a credible voice, a trusted guide, and a catalyst for change in San Mateo County and beyond.

Thank you for your support and belief in our shared vision. Together, we are building a future where aging and disability are met not with limitations, but with possibility, purpose, and dignity.

Warmly,

David Cowell

David Cowell
Co-Chair

Susan Houston

Susan Houston
Co-Chair

The AgeUp Board of Directors

New Website :)

www.age-up.org

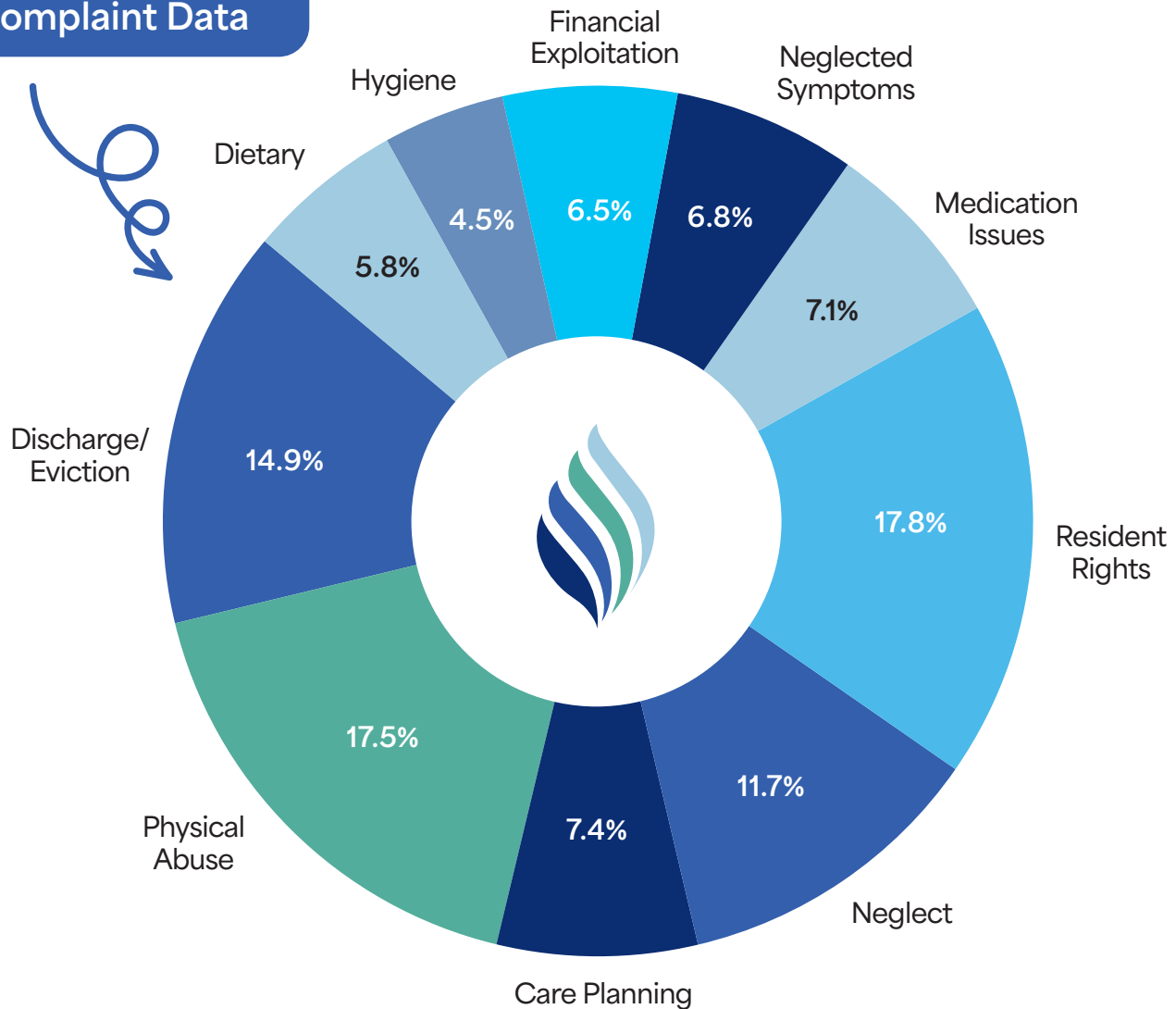


FY 24-25 Community Partners

Age Forward Coalition,
San Mateo County
Alzheimer's Association
Adult Protective Services San
Mateo County
California Long-Term Care
Association
California Association of
Nursing Home Reform
(CANHR)
Catholic Charities - Aging
Support Services
CoastPride
Family Caregiver Alliance
Health Care Coalition San
Mateo County
Health Insurance Counseling
& Advocacy Program
Health Plan of San Mateo
Jewish Family & Children
Services
Seniors At Home
Justice in Aging
Legal Aid San Mateo County
San Mateo County Aging &
Disability Services
National Association of
Mental Illness (NAMI)
San Mateo County
Peninsula Volunteers
Peninsula Family Services
San Mateo County
Pride Center
SMC Oral Health Workgroup
City of Redwood City
SF Tech Council
Stanford University
TeleVisit
The Villages San Mateo
County
Veterans Memorial
Senior Center
University of California,
San Francisco (UCSF)

Highlights From FY24-25 !

San Mateo County Complaint Data



13,200
inbound calls
per year

1,652
cases
per year

8 full-time
equivalent
staff & **32**
volunteers

65
Community
Education
Workshops

Serving
over
10,000
people

Visiting
425
facilities

4,632
visits
per year

4,404
volunteer
hours
per year

Meet Some Members of Our Team !

Julie Schneider, MSW, Director of Ombudsman Services



Julie Schneider leads the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. She brings over a decade of experience as an ombudsman, beginning her journey as a volunteer in San Francisco and eventually serving as Volunteer Coordinator and part of their leadership team. In that role, she was responsible for recruitment, training, supervision, and volunteer development, while also overseeing compliance and facility coverage.

Julie holds a Master's degree in Clinical Social Work and brings a balance of clinical insight, humor, and heart to her work. She is passionate about fostering a supportive environment where staff and volunteers feel empowered and residents feel heard. Outside of work, Julie enjoys the outdoors, particularly pickleball, skiing, hiking, and beachcombing with friends and family.

Michele Epstein, Manager of Volunteer Services



Michele Epstein brings years of experience working with older adults. Previously, she coordinated a peer counseling program where she recruited, trained, and supported volunteer counselors and facilitated discussion groups across San Mateo County. She also provided tech training and resource support for senior programs and remains active in the county's Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Spirituality Initiative.

Michele has lived in San Mateo County for over 30 years and is deeply rooted in the community. Outside of work, she enjoys local theater, book groups, interfaith service projects, and Jazzercise.

Bethany Dinh, Director of Community Enrichment



Bethany Dinh has spent over 15 years in senior care, holding leadership roles in enrichment, hospitality, and program administration. She earned her degree in Health Services Administration in 2009 and has since managed volunteer programs, led activity and enrichment efforts, and developed sensory-focused programming for residents with dementia.

Bethany has worked across a range of care settings—from independent living to skilled nursing, and is known for her personalized approach to resident engagement. She is committed to creating meaningful experiences that enhance quality of life for older adults. Outside the office, she enjoys the outdoors and traveling with her family.

Commitment to Solutions !

New Programs: Expanding Impact, Elevating Lives

At AgeUp, we are redefining the experience of aging and living with disabilities by offering high-impact programs that connect, empower, and protect our most vulnerable community members. Building on the strong foundation of our Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, we are expanding our services to reach more people, close critical service gaps, and deliver innovative, community-driven solutions.

Core Program

The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, our flagship program, remains at the heart of our mission: protecting the dignity and rights of 9,058 residents in 425 long-term care facilities across San Mateo County. Our trained volunteer Ombudsmen provide advocacy, conflict resolution, elder abuse response, and critical support for residents and families navigating complex care systems.

Expanded Programs !

Friendly Visitors

Volunteer-powered and relationship centered, the Friendly Visitors Program reduces social isolation through meaningful, in-person connections with seniors and individuals with disabilities both in long-term care facilities and in neighbors living at home.

Phone Buddies

Our Phone Buddies Program provides regular phone check-ins, helping seniors and individuals with disabilities stay connected, engaged, and emotionally supported. Open to all residents, including aging in place.

Healthcare Directives Workshops

Partnering with UCSF, we empower older adults and caregivers to make informed decisions about healthcare, aging, and ensure their wishes are followed with comprehensive end-of-life planning.

Community Education Workshops

We offer practical workshops on topics such as navigating care transitions, estate planning, understanding the latest technology available to seniors and dementia care innovations to practical information on innovative topics.

Support Groups

Connecting older adults to facilitated peer and professional support groups create safe spaces for emotional support, education, and resilience-building for individuals navigating caregiving, grief, dementia, and other life challenges. Check out our website for more information.

Age-Friendly Cities Initiatives

This year, we will be meeting with San Mateo County cities to ensure that long-term care residents are included in Age-Friendly planning efforts and broader community-building initiatives.



Robotic pet gifted to a resident in Memory Care from the **Make a Wish Fund**

New Programs Continued!

Elder Abuse & Fraud Prevention

Through public education, professional training for first responders, and partnerships with law enforcement and Adult Protective Services we work to raise awareness, prevent scams, and build stronger protective pathways against elder abuse and neglect.

Dementia Friendly Movies

Specialized sensory-friendly movie experiences for people with cognitive impairments, offering safe, inclusive opportunities for social engagement, caregiver respite and enjoyment.

Faith Community Resilience

Partnering with faith communities, we educate faith leaders and communities on programs and support services to support older adults and those at risk for abuse or self-neglect.

Family Council

We are launching a San Mateo County-wide Family Council to amplify the voices of residents and families who may feel hesitant to raise concerns or complaints individually. Our goal is to create a collective, supportive platform for advocating for quality care and protecting resident rights.

Legislative Advocacy

We actively engage in advocacy efforts at the local, state, and federal levels to protect the rights of residents in long-term care and expand access to needed services from local government to DC.

Adults with Disabilities (18-59 years)

Our programs serve not only older adults but also younger adults with disabilities living in special licensed facilities. Our services include visitation, training and responses to complaints, as well as connecting them with volunteers to provide life enrichment activities.

Continuing Education (CEU) Vendor

AgeUp is now a certified provider of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for RCFE administrators. This new certification allows us to offer accredited training programs designed to support professional development, regulatory compliance, and quality improvement across residential care communities. Our goal is to make it easier for administrators to access meaningful, relevant education that enhances resident care and strengthens leadership in long-term care settings.



Kindness Crew!

Activity Enrichment Volunteers

We connect volunteers to bring enriching programs, including art, music, and wellness, that bring life, stimulation, and joy to residents in long-term care facilities. Volunteers and local creatives contribute their talents to create vibrant, meaningful experiences.

Volunteers of all ages welcome!



What is an Ombudsman?

Improving the Long-Term Care Experience

We are committed to improving the quality of life for residents living in licensed long-term care facilities. By advocating for current residents, we help facilities strengthen the care they provide and create more supportive environments. We collaborate closely with facility staff, legislators, the California Long-Term Care advocacy group, and public agencies across San Mateo County to advance improvements at every level. From mentoring volunteers to delivering targeted staff trainings, we work to make life in long-term care the best it can be.



- We are also responsible for responding to concerns of elder abuse and neglect within long-term care facilities, ensuring that residents' safety and dignity are always protected. In addition, we provide specialized training for first responders to help them recognize and respond to signs of elder abuse and advocate effectively for residents.
- We conduct staff trainings on topics such as residents' rights, mandated reporting and best practices for licensed care settings.
- We train first responders to better identify and address elder abuse in long-term care settings.
- We make over 5,000 unannounced facility visits each year to observe the quality of care firsthand.
- Our internship program prepare future social workers to better serve residents in long-term care environments.
- We help shape policies and legislation that protect and empower people living in residential care.

An Ombudsman is a Resident's Ally

People living in licensed care facilities, whether older adults, individuals recovering from illness, or people living with disabilities, deserve strong advocates who stand by their side. That's the role of an Ombudsman. We are the educators, the listeners, the helping hands, and the voices that speak up when residents need support. Our highly trained, certified volunteers visit facilities regularly, offering compassionate listening, advocating for health, safety, dignity, and well-being, and ensuring that every resident has someone they can trust.

- We are mandated by law to advocate for residents' rights and welfare.
- Our advocacy services are completely free of charge.
- We are trained and equipped to respond to reports of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- In 2025, over 30 volunteer Ombudsmen contributed more than 5,000 hours to serve residents across San Mateo County.
- Our Make-a-Wish Fund provides residents with essential items that enhance quality of life, such as skincare products, incontinence care, and special personal items that they otherwise could not access.



Isaac, Volunteer
Ombudsman

Testimonials

"As a caregiver, I was grateful to have the Ombudsman as a resource. They helped resolve issues quickly and treated everyone with compassion and respect."

— Facility Staff Member

"My Ombudsman this year was able to help me through an eviction process to ensure I was set up with public resources to transfer to an assisted living facility. She was a true hero."

— Resident

"The Ombudsman program is a lifeline. Knowing someone is there to stand up for residents brings peace of mind to families like ours."

— Daughter of Assisted Living Resident

"The Ombudsman program gave my mom a voice when she couldn't advocate for herself. Their support made all the difference during a very difficult time."

— Family Member of a Resident



"Thanks to the Ombudsman, I felt safe speaking up about concerns at my nursing home. They listened without judgment and made sure my rights were protected."

— Long-Term Care Resident

Ombudsman Facility Resident Services !



Advocacy

Ombudsman regularly advocate for improvements in resident care and work to improve their quality of life. In addition, during conflicts the Ombudsman acts as a neutral third party representing the interests of the care facility resident.



Complaint Investigation and Resolution

Ombudsman investigates complaints made by or on behalf of care facility residents. Complaints can be made regarding any issue; most involve problems with care or abuse.



Eviction Assistance and Prevention

Ombudsman work with facility residents and their families to prevent evictions whenever appropriate. Many residents are unaware of eviction regulations and may become subject to improper evictions without Ombudsman intervention.



Training

Ombudsman provide training to facility staff, residents, and family regarding care issues, Residents' Rights, and elder abuse prevention. Continuing Education Units may be available.



Advanced Healthcare Directives - Witness

Ombudsman are required to witness these forms for residents in Skilled Nursing Facilities. We also provide forms and information to persons residing in Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly.

Ombudsman Community Outreach !



Advance Health Care Directives

The Ombudsman office provides the public with the most current version of the Advance Health Care Directive. In addition, the Ombudsman staff can provide information and assistance to persons completing the form. UCSF evidenced-based workshops available in Spanish, Chinese and English.



Community Education

We provide education at community events regarding long-term care issues.



Placement Assistance

We provide lists of care facilities, checklists for helping to choose a facility, and assistance with reviewing licensing history. We also provide assistance with admission agreements.

Information and Referral

We provide information and referral to other agencies regarding long term care in the community.





MAKE A DIFFERENCE !

Volunteering with AgeUp is a powerful way to make a real difference in the lives of older adults and individuals with disabilities in our community. Many older adults experience isolation and loneliness, and your time, talents, and kindness can bring connection, joy, and dignity back into their daily lives.

Whether you lead a game, share your musical skills, assist with art projects, or simply offer a friendly conversation, every moment you give helps brighten someone's world. At AgeUp, we believe in creating a community where every person feels seen, valued, and supported, and volunteers are at the heart of this mission. Join us and be a part of something meaningful!

Friendly Visitor
Phone Buddies
Activities Volunteer
Certified Ombudsman
Office Support

BECOME A
Volunteer
HERO





Thank You to Our Supporters !

Atkinson Foundation

CalWater Service

City of Burlingame

City of San Mateo

City of Burlingame

City of Menlo Park

City of South San Francisco

Deacon Foundation

Foster City

LB Foundation

Palo Alto Community Fund

Peninsula Health Care

District

Redwood City

Safeway Foundation

San Bruno Community
Foundation

San Mateo County

SMC Bar Association

SMC Board of Supervisors

Sequoia Health

Care District

Stanford University

TouchPoint Foundation

Town of Colma

Woodlawn Foundation

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