



**Senate Bill 362 Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics – Established**

Senate Finance Committee

February 14, 2023

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT**

Good Afternoon Chairwoman Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier and members of the committee. My name is Cari Guthrie and I am the President and CEO of Cornerstone Montgomery. We have been meeting the behavioral health needs of Montgomery County for over 50 years, and with a staff of 350 and the capacity to serve up to 3,000 individuals each year, Cornerstone Montgomery is the largest service provider in Montgomery County. In the next two months we will be merging with Southern Maryland Community Network adding 500 clients, 80 staff, \$6.4 million dollars in revenue, and expanding to Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties.

SB 362 will increase access to comprehensive community based mental health and substance use care by expanding Maryland's network of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs). With our merger, this has the potential for even greater impact on the public behavioral health system and the people we serve.

CCBHCS are federally designated, proven models that provide a comprehensive range of outpatient mental health and substance use treatment, care coordination with other providers and services, and connection to other systems and supports. They are based on the federally qualified health center (FQHC) model, providing services regardless of insurance status or ability to pay.

CCBHCs must provide nine core services, including services for children and youth, 24/7 crisis intervention, peer supports, substance use treatment, and primary health screening and monitoring. States that have implemented the model broadly have seen increased access to care, reductions in emergency department and inpatient utilization, a mitigation of behavioral health workforce challenges, higher engagement post discharge from hospitals, improved utilization of medication assisted treatment for opioid use disorders, and improved integration with physical care.

In 2019, Cornerstone Montgomery became one of the first CCBHCs in the State with the expansion grants from SAMHSA. Since becoming a CCBHC, Cornerstone Montgomery has added 1098 clients to our programs with 53% of these being Outpatient Mental Health Clinic participants. We have received a total of three SAMHSA CCBHC expansion grants and have positioned ourselves for long term sustainability if the state moves forward and supports this model.

The COVID19 pandemic and aftermath highlighted the increasing need for mental health services for children and adolescents and Cornerstone Montgomery used CCBHC grant money

to expand our Outpatient Mental Health Clinic to serve children 12 and older, with plans to further expand to serve ages 5 and older. Though a still relatively new expansion in our OMHC, we have received 23 referrals many directly from the school system - and 5 more are scheduled for intake over the next few weeks.

We were able to add a second Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team and bring in over 100 new clients to the program, doubling our capacity to serve some of the most challenging to treat clients - many of whom are repeat admissions to emergency departments, hospitals and jail. By expanding these services we have seen both emergency department visits and hospitalizations trending downward, with emergency department visits decreasing at a rate of nearly **five times** faster than hospitalizations. To provide specifics, across all of Cornerstone Montgomery programs, hospitalizations were down between 28 and 36% each year and Emergency Department visits were down 20% in 2019, 30% in 2020 and 59% in 2021 - saving the State millions of dollars in unnecessary visits and admissions. The reduction of emergency and hospital visits in our ACT program alone saved the state over **\$2 million**.

One of the most common frustrations with seeking treatment for a mental health or substance use condition is the wait time for an intake and first appointment. As a CCBHC, Cornerstone Montgomery has been able to implement **same day access** so that a person seeking treatment can be evaluated and complete an intake assessment within 24-hours of first contact.

Research shows that adults with serious mental health disorders die on average 20 years earlier than adults without a mental illness. This is due in part to an inability to effectively manage their physical health due to symptoms of their mental health, and also to an inability to effectively communicate their needs to a primary care doctor, or their symptoms being attributed to their mental illness. As a CCBHC, Cornerstone Montgomery was able to add CNAs and LPNs to our programs and have seen success in helping clients bridge some of the treatment gaps. Over the last 4 years, nearly **400 Cornerstone Montgomery residential clients received services from a CNA or LPN** with 74% receiving one to five services, 13% receiving six to ten, and 24% receiving eleven or more services. Services provided include hands-on support with personal hygiene, nutrition, and medical follow up recommendations from doctors. We believe that this has had a significant impact upon the hospitalizations and ED visits. Additionally, we have implemented a Smoke Free policy and are able to provide smoking cessation materials and support to clients as part of the CCBHC grant. Through these supports, 8 chronic smokers have reported quitting 100% with many more reporting a reduction in the amount they smoke. In addition, Cornerstone Montgomery will be partnering with Johns Hopkins to implement evidence based smoking cessation treatments for smokers with serious mental illness. The Johns Hopkins Alacrity Center for Health and Longevity in Mental Illness is leading IMPACT - a 12-month research project. Alacrity trained our providers in evidence-based smoking cessation treatments to deliver to clients that smoke in the mental health outpatient clinic setting. Smoking cessation treatment involves behavioral counseling and pharmacotherapy.

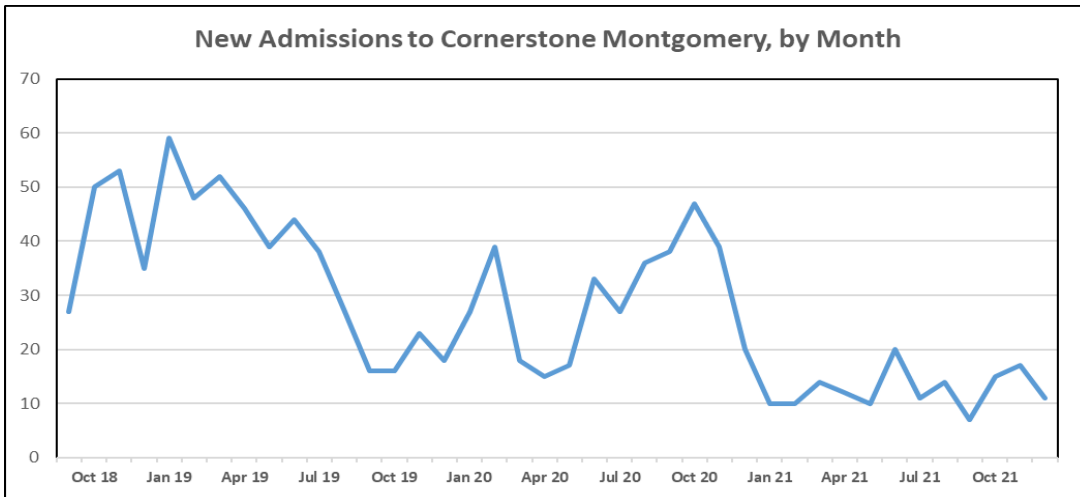
Montgomery County is a diverse County where many languages are spoken. Cornerstone Montgomery is committed to serving all members of our community and in 2019, was able to implement an on-demand video translation program. Our annual translation usage by minute has increased exponentially - in 2019, we used 904 minutes of translation services, 1,482 minutes in 2020 and in 2021 we used 14,419 minutes and in 2022 we used nearly 25,000 minutes. In our first three years, we served 45 clients who speak 21 different languages. Languages most commonly used since 2019 include American Sign Language, Amharic, Russian, Arabic and Cantonese. Our full CCBHC metric outcome reports are included to show our data and we know that these numbers will continue to improve.

Nationally, CCBHC's are addressing the nation's opioid crisis by dramatically expanding access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT), the "gold standard" in substance use care. Many of the individuals Cornerstone Montgomery serves are dually diagnosed with mental health and substance use disorders. Cornerstone Montgomery currently provides MAT and prescribes Suboxone and other substance use medications. While we do not prescribe Methadone, we do work with clients in active Methadone treatment. Cornerstone Montgomery is committed to treating both illnesses concurrently and in addition to our Integrated Treatment for Co-Occurring Disorders program, we plan to add Substance Use Disorder services and obtain our Substance Use Disorder certification this year to expand the number of individuals eligible for our services.

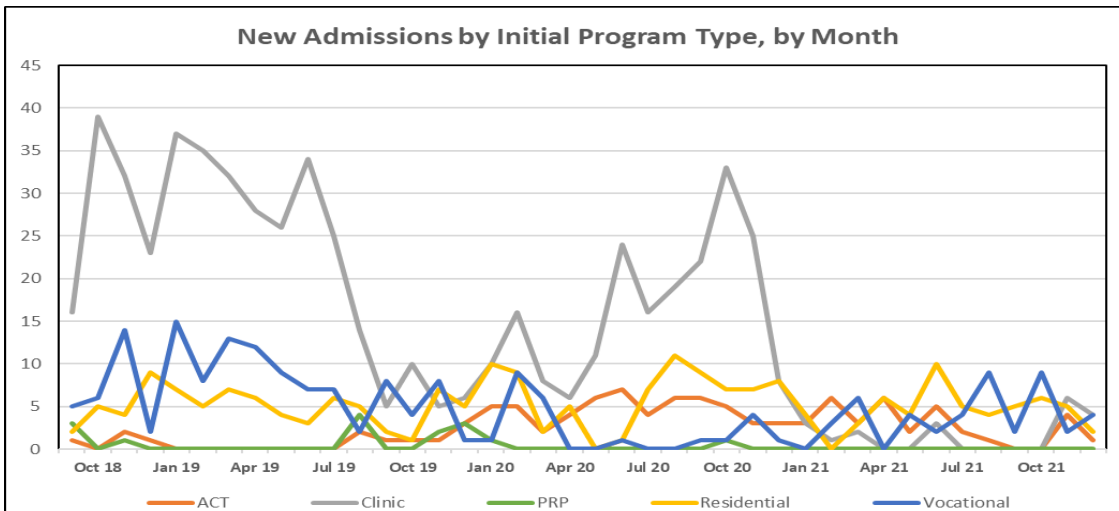
Being a CCBHC has benefited not only Cornerstone Montgomery as an agency, but Montgomery County as a community. We have been able to expand services and implement new programs to better serve the growing needs of our community. This bill will improve behavioral health outcomes, save money, and keep people out of crisis. **For these reasons, Cornerstone Montgomery strongly urges this committee to pass SB 362.**

## Cornerstone Montgomery CCBHC Outcomes Report 9/2018 – 12/2021

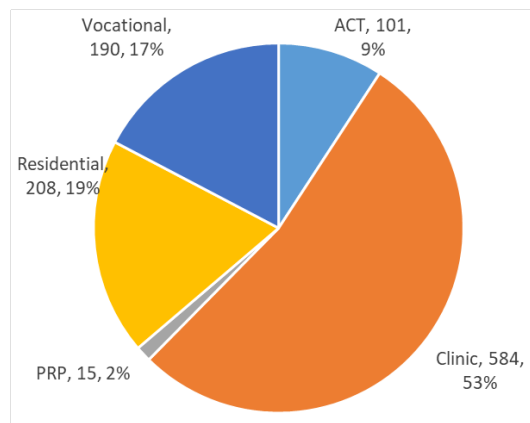
This represents new client admissions to Cornerstone Montgomery, by month, from September 2018 through December 2021. **Over this time period, Cornerstone Montgomery has had 1098 new clients join our programs.** The three lower periods last from September thru December 2019, then March thru May 2020, and finally January 2021 onward.



Below, new client admissions are separate by their initial program type.

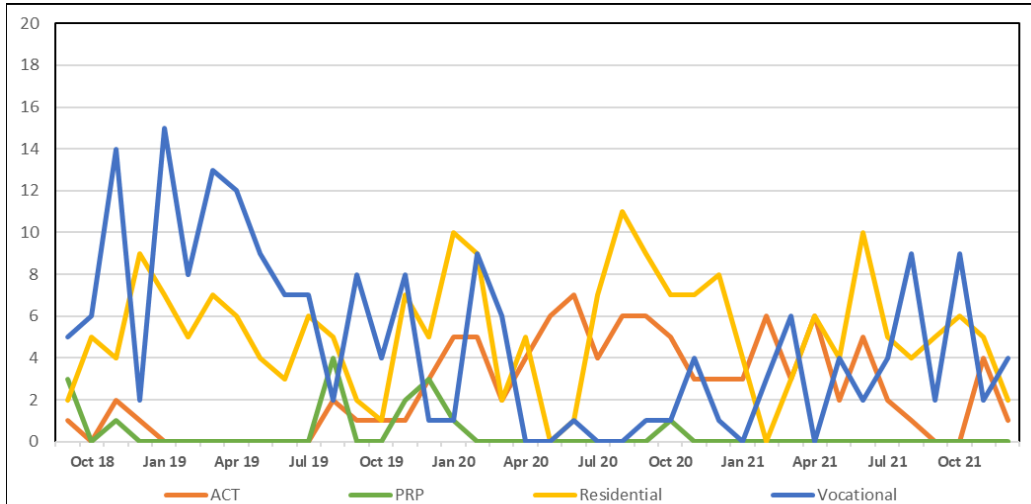


The Clinic makes up 53% of new client admissions, and consequently have the largest impact on the overall admission graph above.

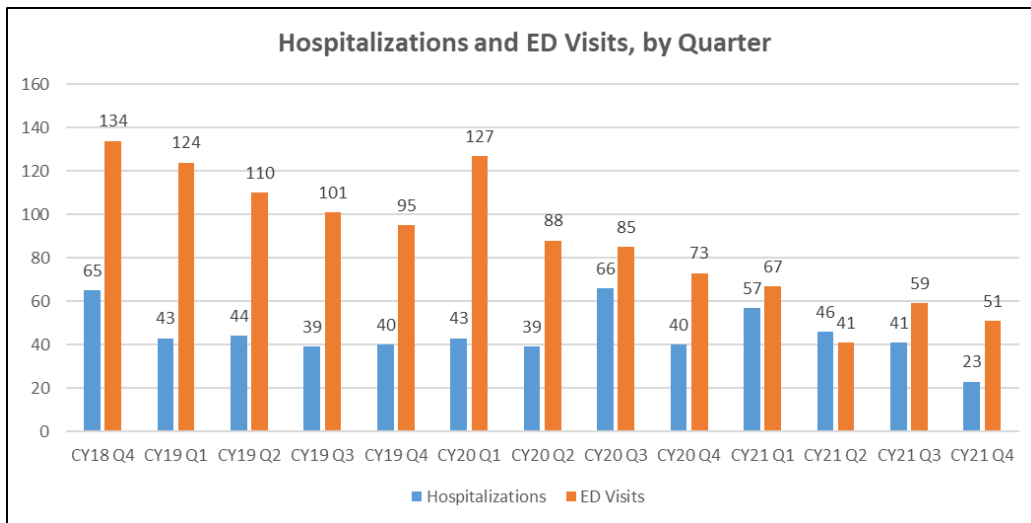


Removing the Clinic admissions from the graph lets us see the others in more detail.

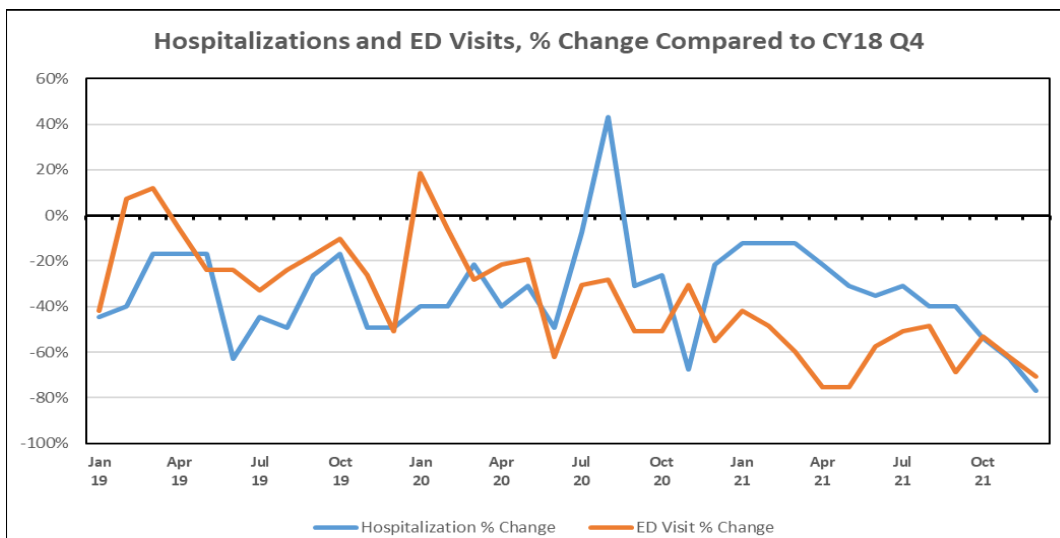
**Over the time period, ACT represents 9% of admissions, PRP 1%, Residential 19%, and Vocational 17%.**



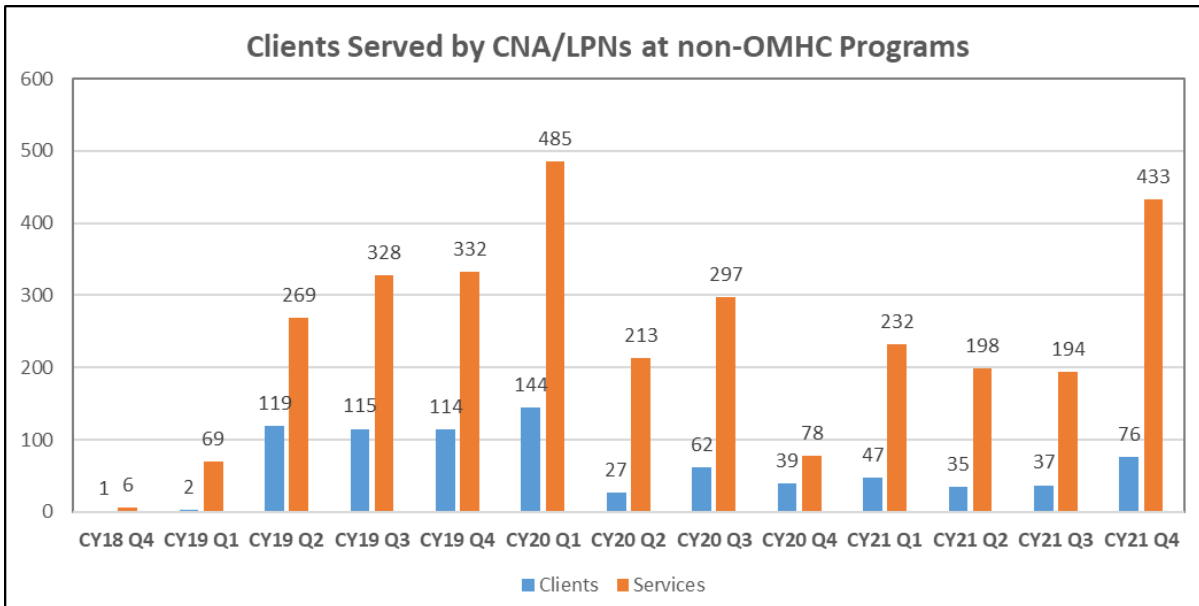
Looking at Hospitalizations and ED visits, both are trending downward over the reporting period, **though ED usage is decreasing over 5 times as rapidly as Hospitalizations.**



Averaging the last three months of 2018, we can look at how the next three years compared. **Hospitalizations were down between 28% and 36% each year. Emergency Department visits were down 20% in 2019, 30% in 2020, and down 59% in 2021.**

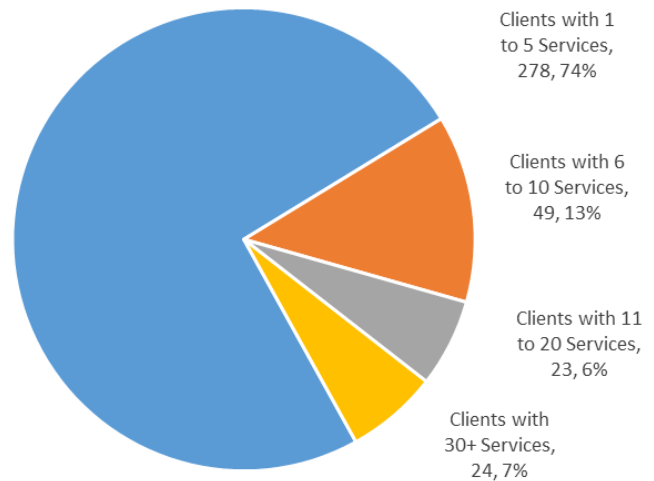


Here we can see the number of clients receiving services from a CNA or LPN at a non- Clinic program, against the total number of services for each quarter. The dip in CY20 was due to staffing issues related to COVID and in CY21 we added more CNA's in the second SAMHSA grant.



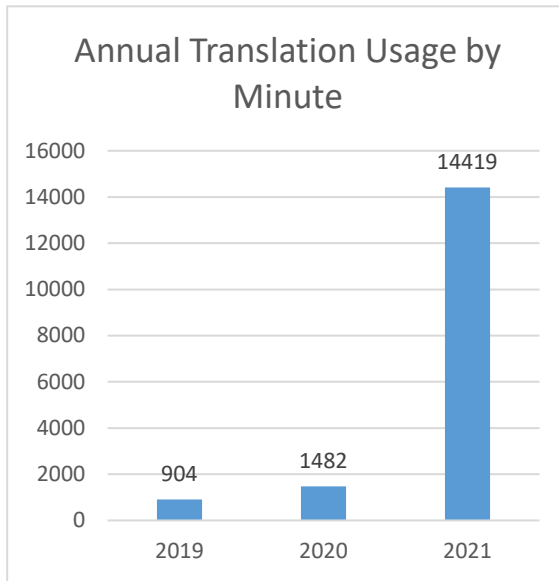
There have been 371 clients who've received a service from a CNA or LPN outside of the clinic in this period.

The majority of clients (74%) receive one to five services, then 13% receive six to ten services, and an equal amount receive eleven or more services.

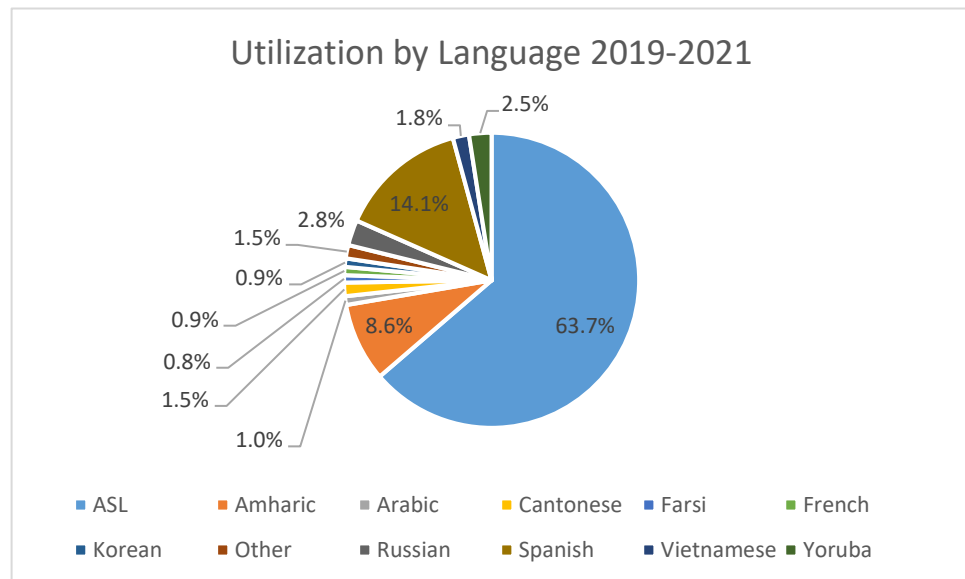


## Cornerstone Montgomery CCBHC Outcomes Report 2019 - 2021

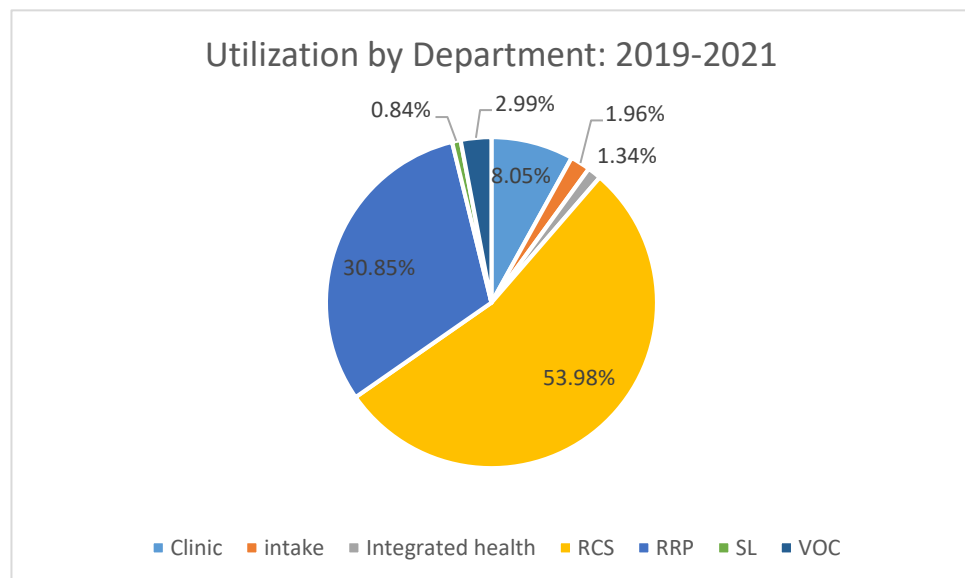
Languages Used	
1	Amharic
2	Arabic
3	Bengali
4	Cantonese
5	Farsi
6	Indonesian (Bahasa Indonesia)
7	Korean
8	Laotian
9	Malay
10	Malayalam
11	Mandarin
12	Russian
13	Spanish
14	Tibetan
15	Tigrinya
16	Vietnamese
17	ASL
18	Burmese
19	French
20	Serbian
21	Yoruba



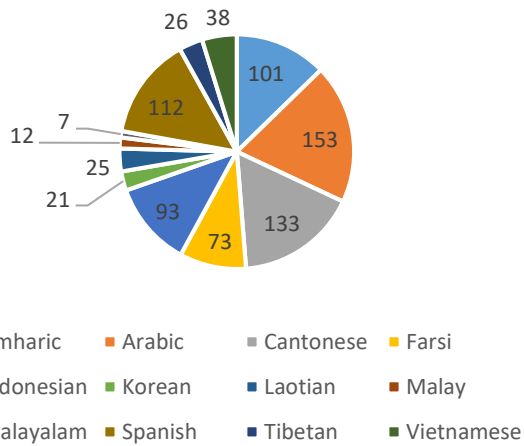
- We've served 45 unique clients since the start of the program.
- We have provided 267 hours and 13 minutes of translation, 240 hours of which were in 2021.
- Early utilization was primarily to assist existing ESL consumers but has grown rapidly to include groups we hadn't previously been able to serve, most prominently the ASL speaking community.



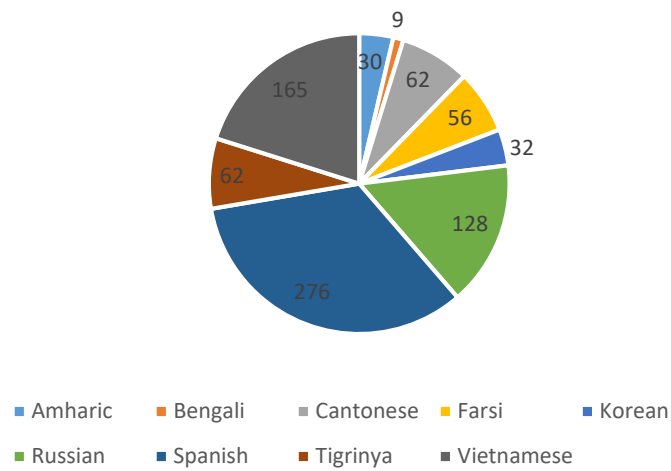
Minutes of Translation 2019-2021	
ASL	10212
Amharic	1383
Arabic	153
Cantonese	237
Farsi	129
French	144
Korean	149
Russian	447
Spanish	2267
Vietnamese	284
Yoruba	394
Other	234
Total	16033



### Utilization by Language in Minutes: 2019

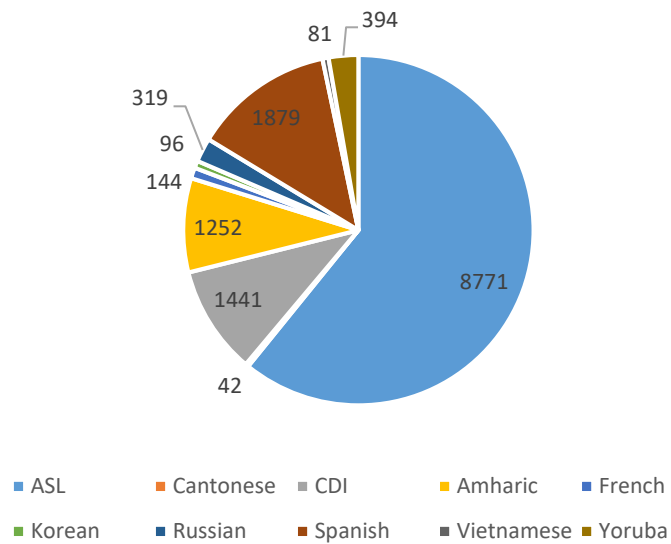


### Utilization by Language in Minutes: 2020



Minutes of Spanish Translation Provided	
2021	1879
2020	276
2019	112

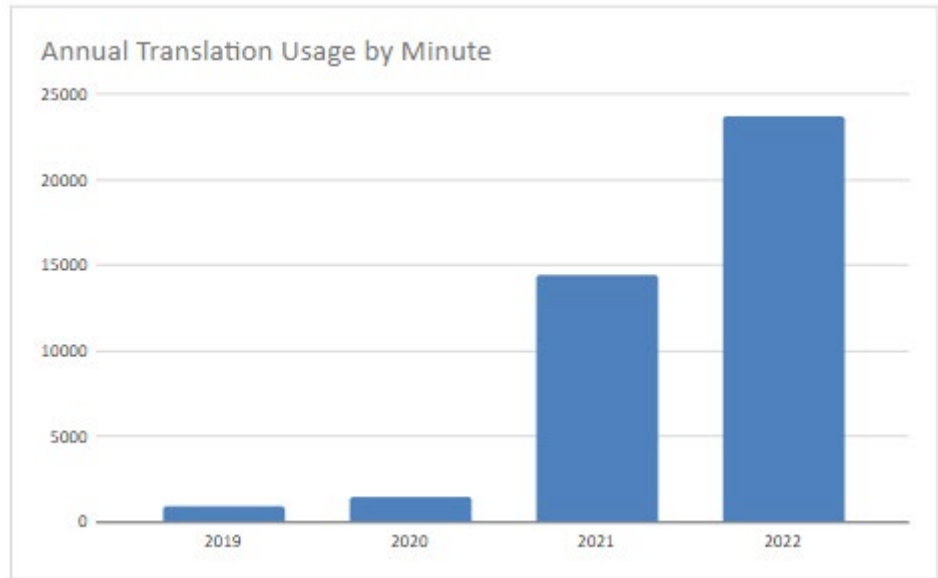
### Utilization by Language in Minutes: 2021



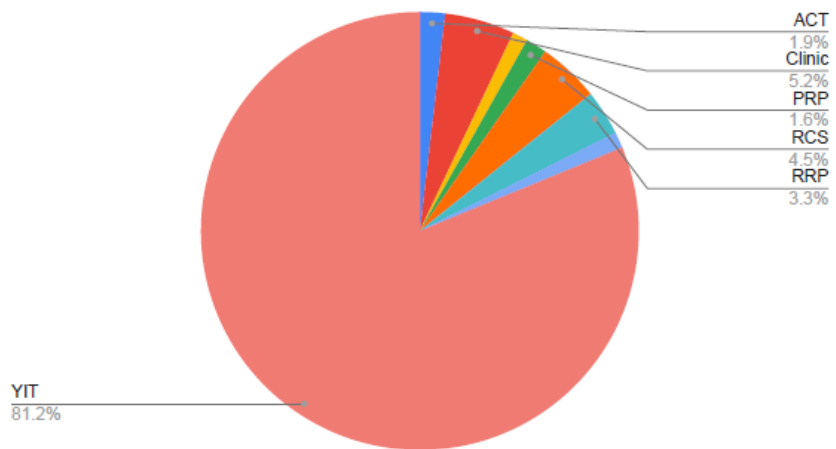


# Cornerstone Montgomery CCBHC Outcomes Report: 2022

Languages Used Since 2019
Amharic
Arabic
ASL
Bengali
Burmese
Cambodian
Cantonese
Farsi
French
Indonesian
Korean
Laotian
Malay
Malayalam
Mandarin
Punjabi
Russian
Serbian
Spanish
Tibetan
Tigrinya
Vietnamese
Yoruba



Minutes by Department



Languages Used in 2022
Amharic
Arabic
ASL
Bengali
Cambodian
French
Korean
Punjabi
Russian
Spanish
Vietnamese

Minutes Used in 2022

