

Winter/Spring 2019

FHO News

A newsletter for our friends and supporters



From the Director's Desk — There's a lot going on at Fellowship Housing, however, the road we travel in our work is not always smooth and clear. We have been very fortunate to receive a number of gifts lately. See articles below about Christmas presents and a new van for our House. A lot of work went into these accomplishments by a number of staff! We were also looking at a new venture and much needed expansion project, but the road was not without bumps and potholes that eventually curtailed the project. It was a difficult decision, but we needed to look at the larger good so that we could assure our services for those that count on us now, and be in a solid place to then venture into new opportunities. It is a difficult road to maneuver and travel at times, but we are trying our best and learning a lot. And we hope that opportunities continue to present themselves in 2019.

Happy New Year! Nancy Egner, Executive Director.



Fellowship Housing was awarded grants from the Oleonda Jameson Trust and the Cogswell Benevolent Trust, allowing us to purchase a new-to-us van!!! Thank you to the trusts and our grants committee!

Fellowship Housing now has a Facebook account at Fellowship Housing Opportunities!! Check us out, like us, and share us with your friends!



Fellowship House Christmas tree, with gift bags, and hampers full of new bedding for each of our 12 residents!

Santa was very generous to the residents of Fellowship House this year!!

Thanks to the generosity of a number of people who kindly donated to our "Comfortable Sheets make for Better Sleeps" campaign though Giving Tuesday on November 27th, and some private donations, Santa was able to offer all 12 of the residents of Fellowship House -our staffed group home - new sheets, pillowcases, comforters, towels, hampers, and pillows. It was WONDERFUL, and they were all very grateful. This was in addition to some more personalized gifts bought by our staff thanks to our donors, and from a church in East Concord that is a faithful donor to our residents at Christmas time.

We thank you all very much!!



A resident with their presents, and presents and hampers of new bedding for all residents!!

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Affordable Supported Housing Outcomes for Fellowship Housing; taking a stab at some numbers

In our newsletter this last summer/fall, I did an article talking about how we as professionals struggle to figure out how to measure our outcomes and successes and quality. And how difficult it is to see how our work has an impact—for better or worse - on our residents. It is an on-going challenge. Moreover, seems particularly important at budget times. The Department of Health and Human Services is currently talking about their 10-year plan for improving mental health services and as such is making decisions about the priority needs for those dealing with mental illness going into the future. In addition, the legislature is currently working on the next biennial budget. How can Fellowship Housing advocate that supported housing for mentally ill adults is vitally important for the betterment of the population, and is actually cost effective in the long run?

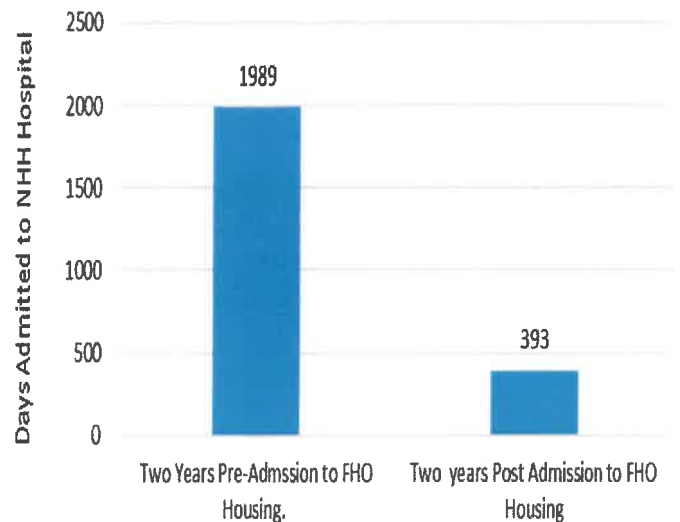
One variable that is often talked about for the psychiatric population when attempting to measure outcomes is hospital days. How many days did someone spend in the hospital versus in the community? The assumption is that in the community is better, and most cost effective. I started to wonder how to look at this variable for our population. And did having a place to live with Fellowship Housing have an effect on this measure?

With the assistance of many in providing the information, we decided on variables to count. These variables included:

- Our 50 current residents, who live in our independent apartments. This data did NOT include the 12 people who live in our community residence, two very different levels of support offered (and therefore costs to provide this support).
- Number of hospital days for 24 months prior to tenancy with Fellowship Housing, and number of hospital days at NHH for 24 months post tenancy to NHH, for each of these 50 tenants. For each tenant, the time and year they were admitted to FHO is VERY different, over a 20 year time frame. But the hospital days 24 months pre FHO and 24 months post FHO for each is consistent.

The results were astounding!!!! For our 50 tenants, for the two years prior to coming to live in a Fellowship Housing supported independent apartment, they spent 1989 days in New Hampshire Hospital. The same group of residents and tenants were admitted to New Hampshire Hospital only 393 days for the two years after coming to live in Fellowship Housing. That is a five times reduction in the days in New Hampshire Hospital; the most expensive service in our system, and the most restrictive. Amazing! That is a very good outcome for affordable supported housing!!

Days FHO Residents and Tenants Admitted to New Hampshire Hospital



So lets attempt to determine the financial implications of this data. I warn you, there will be some estimating involved.

Today the cost of being a patient in New Hampshire Hospital is about \$1300 a day. About 20 years ago the cost was about \$800/day. If we guesstimate something in between, say \$1000/day, the average cost to be in NHH is roughly \$30,000 per month. If again we guesstimate that a person living in an FHO independent apartment receives about \$900 per month in disability payments, and gets about \$900 per month in housing subsidies from state and federal sources that FHO counts on to offer people affordable housing, that is about \$1800 per month. And lets guess that cost of food and clothing and medicine and medical care is about equivalent between the two systems. Lets add on about \$1000 per month for medical costs of support people in the community for treatment for their mental illness, as not included in the charges to live in the community so far, but are included in the NHH costs. So total cost to live in FHO apartments is about \$2800 per month, versus \$30,000 in NHH, for a difference of about \$27,200 per month.

So, going back to our findings of hospital days for our 50 tenants, for the 24 months prior to tenancy with FHO, about \$1,800,000 was spent on costs for hospitalization for these 50 people for 1989 days. For the 24 months post FHO tenancy, about \$350,000 for 393 days was spent on hospitalization for these same 50 people. That is a difference of \$1,450,000!! Seems some of that being spent on additional supported affordable housing would be a wise investment!!

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