

Madison Supportive Housing 3

Supportive Services Description and Rethke Terrace Apartments Update

The “Park Street” development will be the third of three supportive housing properties being developed by Heartland Housing with the goal of ending chronic homelessness in Madison. The building will permanently house chronically homeless individuals in studio and one-bedroom apartments with regular leases. Services will be provided on-site by Heartland Health Outreach to support residents in maintaining housing stability, increasing health, well-being and self-sufficiency. Participation in services is not required for tenancy, but residents do have responsibilities to pay their portion of rent, live independently and abide by building rules.

Supportive Services will be provided to every resident of the building. We will primarily pay for those services through residents’ enrollment in and our billing to Wisconsin’s Comprehensive Community Services (CCS) program or Medicaid. The services staffing will include a Program Manager; Licensed Mental Health Specialist; Certified Substance Abuse Counselor; and Peer Support Specialist.

Questions about supportive services:

Will all residents have access to services regardless of enrollment? Yes, services will be provided to all. As residents become more engaged in services the professional staff will work to encourage enrollment in CCS if they qualify. There are CCS requirements for enrollment which present barriers to some participants; they must have a doctor’s prescription, a diagnosis that is part of billable services and willingness to receive services. The on-site staff members will work with residents to overcome these barriers. Virtually all people who have experienced chronic homelessness are qualified for and already enrolled in Medicaid. If they are Veterans, they receive full range of supportive services through their care at the Veteran’s Administration.

If a person is un-willing to enroll in CCS will they be able to continue to receive services from building staff?

Yes. The services will be provided through billing Medicaid with the goals of either connecting residents with services out in the community or to continue to engage them toward enrolling in CCS longer term. More intensive services require enrollment in CCS in order to be able to pay for the staff. It is our experience that over time, with deep, relational engagement by trained professionals, most residents will want to participate.

Are there other ways to pay for services that would allow for services to be provided without any barriers?

At this time billing for services through CCS/Medicaid is the primary sustainable method of paying for services. We would love to partner with foundations or government to “diversify” funding. However, while we continue to work toward it, funding of this type is not readily available in the current environment. The systems which have supported social services in the past have now largely withdrawn their support and are asking providers to move toward billing for services, especially for this population.

Heartland’s policy and advocacy staff members continue to work with policy makers to expand the ways that government supports society’s most vulnerable. This includes efforts to expand services covered by

Medicaid. We encourage Wisconsin advocates to work to encourage WI policy makers to increase the services covered and lower the barriers for enrollment!

Questions about Rethke Terrace, Madison Supportive Housing #1, opened June 1, 2016

Out of the 60 tenants at Rethke, how many receive intensive services?

25 of the 60 residents at Rethke receive full, intensive supportive services through the VA and 3 of those have also enrolled in CCS. Of the remaining 35 residents, 12 have been enrolled, 9 are currently enrolled (we had one death and 2 people moved on to different housing) 6 more are going through the process of enrollment. As we add professional staff members and collaboratively work with the CCS enrollment process we expect that the process will proceed at a steady pace. We project that about 30 residents total will ultimately enroll in CCS services and we have based our financial model for hiring staff on that estimate.

For residents that are NOT enrolled in CCS what services are being provided?

In addition to CCS, we also bill for Targeted Case Management (TCM)/Medicaid services. TCM includes initial assessment, case plan development, and ongoing monitoring and service coordination to assist individuals in gaining access to a full array of services out in the community.

However, TCM is not a long term solution either for sustainable financial management or for ongoing support of residents. Medicaid does not reimburse at a rate that covers the cost of the services and the services for which we can bill the system are not intensive or comprehensive. TCM services are meant to link individuals to services in the community and coordinate those services, so if someone has a higher need we would work with them to enroll in CCS services. Almost all current Rethke residents (non-veterans) are enrolled in Medicaid. Enrollment has not been a barrier for them.

What is your current social service staff to resident ratio at Rethke?

The standard in the field for working with people who have experienced chronic homelessness is a ratio of 1:15. In addition to the VA case managers, who provide full supportive services to 25 of the residents, there are currently three full time supportive services staff members. Those are a Licensed Mental Health Specialist with both LPC and C-SAC (Certified Substance Abuse Counselor) certifications, a full-time Program Manager with 15 years' experience and a Supportive Housing Case Manager. The ratio with 3 staff members is about 1:12 for non-VA supported residents.

In addition to the staff mentioned, the full staffing plan for the building also includes an additional Supportive Housing Case Manager and a Peer Support Specialist to be hired as billing increases.

For More information please send inquiries to: Lisa Kuklinski
Lkuklinski@heartlandalliance.org