

Senate Committee on Appropriations

Testimony by Lindsay Casale, Housing First Program Director, Pathways Vermont

April 4, 2018

I appreciate your time this afternoon. I want to start by thanking the committee for its work on increasing minimum wages at Designated and Specialized Service Agencies to \$14 an hour. I'd also like to thank the committee for supporting the expansion of the Pathways Vermont Support Line from 1 a.m. - 6 a.m. (aka "Warm Line"). These expanded hours have proven an important resource for Vermonters looking for support, connection, and to avoid emergency service involvement. By providing a low-barrier, non-emergency level of service, the Support Line prevents the utilization of resources such as mental health crisis, 911 and emergency departments. Last year alone, the Support Line diverted 112 calls from emergency services.

I am here today to ask you to support two elements of the House-passed budget. The first is \$168,000 for the Support Line so that it can expand its hours to 24/7. ACT 79 mandates this program to run 24/7 and we appreciate your previous support to move incrementally towards this goal. This final expansion would allow the program to run 24/7 and provide a confidential, compassionate resource to Vermonters in need regardless of time of day. With this expansion, this service would cost a total of \$74 an hour for full-time coverage. This is significantly less expensive than alternative resources that might be accessed if not for the Support Line.

Secondly, I would like to ask you to support \$276,000 currently proposed in the House budget to expand the Evidence Based Practice of Housing First to Rutland County. Pathways Vermont currently practices the Housing First model in 6 counties across the state – Washington, Windham, Windsor, Addison, Chittenden and Franklin. Pathways has been designated as a Specialized Service Agency by the Department of Mental Health to provide the specialized service of Housing First to Vermont communities. We are invested in this resource being equitably available across the state and have a proven track record of success. In addition to positive program outcomes, permanent housing and support services through the Housing First model also equates with significant cost savings across some of the state's most expensive resources. The attached document details some predicted cost savings based on aggregate data of Pathways' clients' utilization of hospital, jail, and emergency housing resources (motel vouchers) before and after enrollment in the program. To summarize, we estimate annual savings of roughly \$770,000 for those cost centers if Housing First is expanded into Rutland County, \$496,000 when netting out the cost of our expanded services.

Community partners have sought Pathways' expansion in both Rutland and Bennington counties. Both communities have articulated a need for Housing First resources and that their population of people experiencing homelessness is underserved. Expansion to both communities would be cost effective as we would be able to support both local and regional staffing patterns, which will provide some economies of scale. The additional cost of expanding to Bennington is \$223,000, estimated annual savings \$514,000 (net \$292,000).

I have also provided handouts to supplement this testimony, which include program outcomes, cost savings, and stories for both the Vermont Support Line, the Housing First program, and our other programs.

We ask that you support the increases in the House budget for both the Support Line and the expansion of supportive housing services to Rutland County, specifying that they be for Housing First. We also ask you to consider the additional funding to expand into Bennington County.

Thanks again for your support and the opportunity to testify.

## HOUSING FIRST EXPANSION OPTIONS

Prepared by Pathways Vermont

March 8, 2018

### ESTIMATED COST OF HOUSING FIRST EXPANSION

Rutland Only Option	\$	275,405
Rutland/Bennington Option	\$	497,870
(add'l cost for Bennington)	\$	222,465

**Note:** Expenses include staff, operating costs, tenant related expenses, and administration; tenant rent subsidies provided through other federal and state resources (Section 8, Shelter Plus Care, DMH Subsidy Plus Care rental assistance, etc.)

ESTIMATED SAVINGS	People Served	6 months prior	6 months after	6 Month Savings	Annual Savings
<b>Rutland Only Option</b>					
Estimated Hospitalization Costs	30	\$ 242,892	\$ 351	\$ 242,541	\$ 485,082
Estimated Corectional Facility Costs		\$ 169,976	\$ 51,157	\$ 118,820	\$ 237,639
Estimated Motel Voucher Costs		\$ 35,356	\$ 11,055	\$ 24,301	\$ 48,602
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$ 385,662</b>	<b>\$ 771,323</b>
<b>NET SAVINGS</b>					<b>\$ 495,918</b>
<b>Rutland/Bennington Option</b>					
Estimated Hospitalization Costs	50	\$ 404,820	\$ 585	\$ 404,235	\$ 808,470
Estimated Corectional Facility Costs		\$ 283,294	\$ 85,261	\$ 198,033	\$ 396,065
Estimated Motel Voucher Costs		\$ 58,927	\$ 18,425	\$ 40,502	\$ 81,003
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$ 642,769</b>	<b>\$ 1,285,539</b>
<b>NET SAVINGS</b>					<b>\$ 787,669</b>
				Add'l Bennington savings, gross	\$ 514,215
				Add'l Bennington savings, net	\$ 291,750
<b>Note:</b> Savings estimates extrapolated from actual expense data for a cohort of 129 individuals across the state for 6 months prior to enrollment in Housing First and 6 months after.					

**Questions:** contact Erhard Mahnke  
 Legislative Liaison for Pathways Vermont  
 (802) 233-2902 | erhardm@burlingtontelecom.net

# ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

FY 2017: JULY 1, 2016 TO JUNE 30, 2017

## SIGNATURE PROGRAMS: BY THE NUMBERS

Pathways Vermont has 5 signature programs designed to provide choice, connection, and home to thousands of Vermonters in need.



### HOUSING FIRST

- Individuals housed: **106**
- Average daily cost of Housing First Program: **\$43**
- Average Retention Rate: **86%**



### VETERAN FAMILY RAPID RE-HOUSING PROGRAM

- Families housed: **46**
- Instances of homelessness prevented: **30**
- Children housed: **40**



### SOTERIA HOUSE

- Total residents: **10**
- Occupancy rate: **91.28%**
- **All** discharges were positive (residents successfully graduated from Soteria), **5** residents went back to live with family and **4** residents went on to independent living



### COMMUNITY CENTER

Total visitors: **3,700**  
 Visitors receiving support services: **3,330**  
 Individual meals served: **1,421**  
 Job starts: **47**  
 Individuals engaged in employment services: **78**



### SUPPORT LINE

Completed calls: **6,318**  
 Calls diverted from emergency services: **18**  
 Calls from veterans: **1,025**  
 Caller satisfaction rate: **83.58%**



## OUR LIVED EXPERIENCE

At Pathways Vermont, many of our staff identify as having the same 'lived experiences' as the Vermonters we serve.

**86 STATEWIDE STAFF MEMBERS**

**78% HAVE EXPERIENCED MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES**

**44% HAVE EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS**

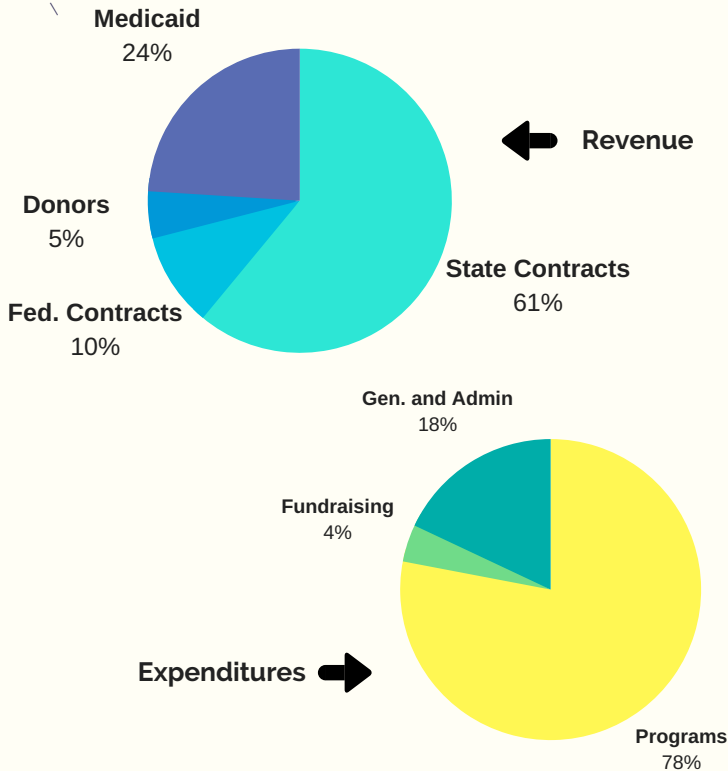
**21% HAVE BEEN INVOLUNTARILY HOSPITALIZED**

**22% HAVE ATTEMPTED SUICIDE IN THE PAST**



## FY 2017 Financials

## Board of Directors



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**Calvin Moen**  
Vermont Psychiatric Survivors

**Alison Harte**  
Cooperation for Supportive Housing

**Beth Tanzman**  
Vermont Blueprint for Health

## A Story of Hope

Meet Jody, Nichole and their newborn daughter, Quincy. The family recently moved into their new apartment in Burlington after a prolonged period of homelessness. Finally, they have a place to call home! To the right, Jody and Nichole tell their story in their own words:



"We were staying at a motel for 6 months, which cost us \$350 a week! After that we became homeless and couch surfed... it was awful. Finally, we met with Amos (Pathways Vermont's Intake Coordinator), who was very helpful. He went above and beyond to help us out. He was very kind and courteous about everything. In fact, everyone that we've been working with at Pathways Vermont has been really on top of things.

J.R. (Pathways Vermont's Housing Coordinator) was really cool, we found our apartment very quickly and our landlord has been extremely accommodating. There were people from our church who were moving and gave us all of this beautiful furniture. Then Pathways helped us out with all the bedding, bath and kitchen supplies. So we lucked out!

Having our own place is very comforting and relaxing. It's home! It's a beautiful place where we don't have to worry about getting woken up in the middle of the night and told we have to leave. I (Nichole) actually signed up for classes a couple of weeks ago. I'm going to get my G.E.D. and pursue a degree as a Registered Nurse. Finally! I've been talking about it forever, but now I'm situated. Once you have a home base, you can work from there. When we were floating around, there was no way I could focus on going back to school. Now we can focus on our goals, including our health care, which the Pathways Service Team has been great in that aspect as well.

What we've accomplished in the last year has been extraordinary! We've been blessed."

# HOUSING FIRST FACT SHEET

*Housing First ends homelessness. It's that simple.*

**Housing First is an evidence-based, permanent supportive housing program that supports individuals to maintain independent housing and lead meaningful lives in their community.**

The program immediately ends homelessness by supporting individuals and families to locate independent apartments in the community. Housing First clients are provided long-term, multidisciplinary community supports, including service coordination, drug & alcohol counseling, employment support, psychiatry, nursing care and representative payee services.

## ENDING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

Housing First is recognized by the Department of Housing and Urban Development as the most effective intervention for addressing chronic homelessness.

- Since 2010, the Housing First program has ended the cycle of chronic homelessness for **over 200 Vermonters**.
- The Housing First program maintains an **85% Housing Retention Rate**.

## SERVING THE UNDER-SERVED

The program targets the most vulnerable individuals, especially those who have “fallen through the cracks” of the system of care.

- The population served by Pathways’ Housing First program have experienced long histories of homelessness, involvement with corrections, frequent contact with emergency services and long periods of institutionalization.
- The program has supported 100+ individuals with long stays in hospitals, prisons and other institutional settings to successfully transition into the community.
- The average daily “cost” of homelessness for this population is approximately **\$91.51**.

## FY18 FUNDING

The Housing First program is funded primarily by contracts with the Department of Mental Health & Department of Corrections.

VT Department of Mental Health Community Rehabilitation and Treatment	\$856,215
VT Department of Mental Health Medicaid Fee For Services	\$967,426
VT Department of Corrections	\$1,039,663
United Way of Windham County, United Way of Addison County, Foundation Support	\$29,370
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,892,674.00</b>

## FAST FACTS:

**\$43**

AVERAGE DAILY COST  
OF HOUSING FIRST  
PROGRAM

**242+**

CYCLES OF CHRONIC  
HOMELESSNESS  
ENDED

**164+**

INDIVIDUALS  
SUPPORTED TO  
TRANSITION INTO THE  
COMMUNITY



# HOUSING FIRST CORRECTIONS PROJECT

## SUPPORTING COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

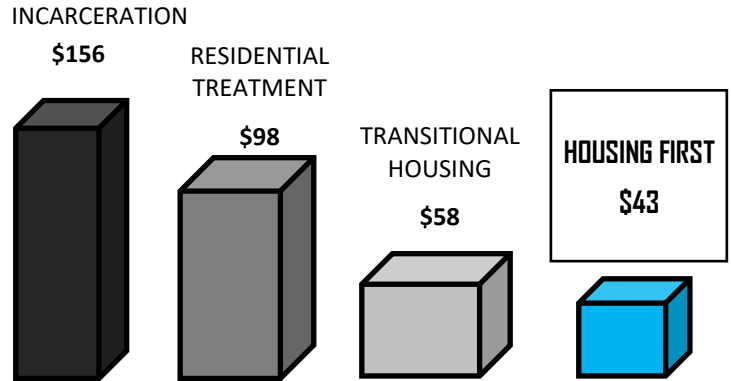
In partnership with the Department of Corrections, Pathways has adapted the Housing First model to serve individuals with long correctional histories to transition back into the community.

- Since 2010, the DOC project has supported over **164 individuals** re-enter the community.
- **66 persons** who were being held for lack of residence transitioned out of incarceration into the community.
- **84%** of program participants have not returned to long term incarceration.

## COST EFFECTIVE SOLUTION

By supporting individuals under the custody of corrections to transition back into community, Pathways' program reduces rate of incarceration and saves the state money. By providing individuals with acceptable housing and follow-up support, the program breaks the cycle of incarceration.

Pathways' approach is cost-effective in comparison to other re-entry programs, without compromising quality and quantity of care and long-term outcomes.



## Client Testimonial

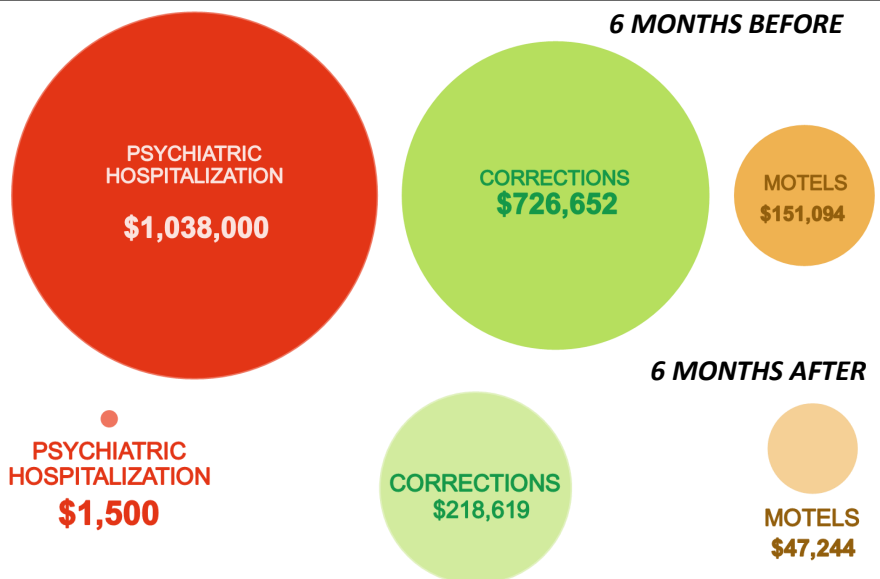


"My mother had started a non-profit organization and I worked there 32 years full time, I had a night job and went to school full time ... whoever would have thought, after 32 years of having my own place, [I'd be homeless]. They say you're one paycheck, two paychecks from being homeless ... sometimes I was staying with friends, sometimes in my car, sometimes in hotels and that's where I met John [from Pathways]. I had a good feeling about him ... Pathways was really good to me and they never made me feel small and John would say, 'It's just a new start.' I never felt so lost and afraid of the future and they told me that I could get training and get work part time ... I'm really grateful to them because I was so depressed with all the loss. When I finally got housing, it was much better. They helped me build a bridge back to my mother too and I can say the last few years of her life we were in a much better place. Every single person I've met from Pathways, they all have the same kindness, professional boundaries. They double check and worry about things and make sure things get accomplished. They are very good about keeping after things, so I believe that if I get through these next six months I'll have a second wind ..." - Mary from Westminster

## A DIRECT COMPARISON OF 129 INDIVIDUALS

The graphic to the right illustrates a direct comparison of the combined estimated service costs expended by 129 clients 6 months prior to entering the Housing First program and 6 months after entering the Housing First program.

Service cost estimates were derived using information from relevant agency reports.



Supportive Services  
for  
Veteran Families

FACT SHEET  
Ending Veteran  
Homelessness

**WHAT IS SSVF?**

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program is a national initiative funded by the Department of Veterans Affairs to address homelessness among veterans in the United States.

The SSVF program is housed in Vermont Veteran Services at the University of Vermont, with case management and housing services provided by Pathways Vermont. The program helps very-low income veteran households who are homeless or imminently at risk of homelessness gain and retain stable housing.

Services provided include needs assessment, intensive housing case management, assistance accessing VA benefits and financial assistance.

**Program Services**

The Supportive Services for Veteran Families program provides short-term supportive services to participants to help them obtain and/or retain stable housing in 90 days. The program uses a **Rapid Rehousing** approach, meaning the program's priority is to support participants in developing a permanent housing option.

Intensive case management is the primary service provided. In certain cases, case management may be augmented by temporary financial assistance. This assistance is used to help with expenses related to securing housing, for example rental assistance, security deposits, utility deposits and other related expenses. It should be noted that financial assistance is limited in amount and cannot be guaranteed.

**FY18 FUNDING**

In 2014 Pathways Vermont was awarded a subcontract from SSVF at UVM to provide case management and housing services for a Supportive Services for Veteran Families grant awarded by the Department of Veteran Affairs. The SSVF program operates in **all 14 counties in Vermont**.

SSVF at UVM Department of Veterans Affairs	\$462,400
United Way	\$1,920
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$464,320</b>

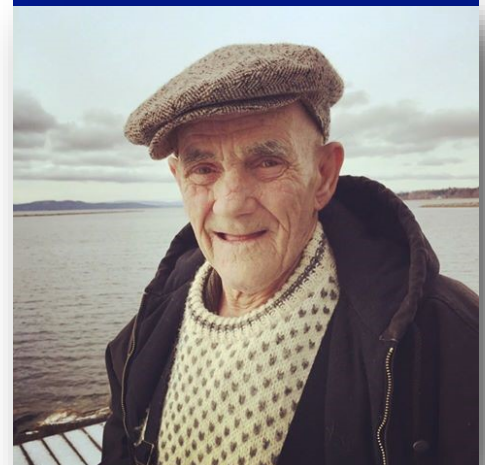
**FAST FACTS:**

*Since 2014...*

**315+**  
VERMONT  
VETERAN FAMILIES  
HOUSED

**230+**  
INSTANCES OF  
HOMELESSNESS  
PREVENTED

**200+**  
CHILDREN SERVED





## Client Testimonials



"I was a veteran for 12 years (when)... I started my PTSD therapy at the VA and immediately, within about a month, Pathways got in contact with me and we had an appointment within a week. John met us right near the house, we met up with him and he told us by August 1 he would get us moved in. Michelle and I were holding on for all hope we could and low and behold, by August 5 we moved into this apartment here in Winoo-ski.

Pathways has such a wonderful group of people who work with Annie our landlord. Annie met with us and she was wonderful ... she knows what great work Pathways does, how much they help people and she was all for it. It's been wonderful, there haven't been any issues – it's been so great. As soon as we moved in we had a new bed, two cribs, a voucher for housewares. Dave, our case manager, is so wonderful – he checks in, stops in and came by when I had a meeting with my VA manager. He's just been so on point. Joanna picked us up to go look at places because we've been traveling on the bus with two infants, so she would pick us up and drive us around. We love Winoo-ski... the babys' doctor's office is 5 minutes away. I feel like it can't get any better – every day feels like Christmas lately; I just can't believe how fast Pathways got everything together. It was lightening fast." - *Sabrina in Winoo-ski*

"My experience with Pathways has been awesome. They've come through with everything they said they would with no surprises and no hidden agenda. I got in touch with Pathways through the Vermont Veterans Services. My favorite thing about the apartment is that it's quiet ... the large yard will probably turn in to part garden next year, too. This was the fourth apartment we looked at and they were real receptive [to me], we came over on Tuesday of last week and Wednesday the landlord OK'd renting to me and Thursday I moved in. So it worked out well."- *Steve in Essex Junction*



"I was moving around with friends, hotel rooms, it was just a difficult situation. I was in the Marine Corps and Army National Guard ... a mutual friend of mine worked with the program before. He is a Vietnam vet and found himself in a situation where he needed help and he directed me towards Pathways. I first started working with Brenna and it was excellent – she is very nice and accommodating. Even after I moved in here she [brought us] stuff for the children. We had nothing. The kids love [the new home]. They were bouncing around just like I was. Children need a stable home ... When I had initially started working with Brenna at Pathways, I more or less made the point that I can afford to live but I can't afford to get to the place to live. I needed help standing up but once I get there I can stand on my own. Pathways made it easy for me to get to where we needed to be. We're doing Thanksgiving right here, at this table. It's been over four years for me since I've been in an apartment of my own." - *John in Rutland*



**Immediate access to support, 3 pm to 6 am, 7 days a week**

**The Pathways Vermont Support Line is a free, confidential resource for Vermonters seeking support. We provide nonjudgmental, peer-to-peer support by phone.**

The creation of a statewide warm line was mandated in Act 79, the legislature’s plan to redevelop the system of care following the closure of the Vermont State Hospital.

In March 2013 the Pathways Vermont Support began taking calls and providing connection to Vermonters in need. The Pathways Vermont Support Line is intended as an alternative resource for individuals who regularly contact crisis and other emergency-level services in search of support.

**FILLING AN UNMET NEED**

The Pathways Vermont Support Line fills a previously unmet need in the system of care: immediate access to nonjudgmental, compassionate support.

- Prior to the launch of the support line, access to this form of support was limited to areas where local warmlines were operating. This is the first time this service has been accessible to all Vermonters.
- Approximately 90% of callers to the line identify that there is no other service they would call to meet their need.
- Almost 50% of callers choose not to leave a message for callback, suggesting there is still a larger need to be met.

**REDUCING CRISIS SERVICES’ BURDEN**

By providing a low-barrier, non-emergency level of service, the Pathways Vermont Support Line prevents the utilization of resources such as mental health crisis, 911 and emergency departments. Last year alone, the Support Line diverted 112 calls from emergency services.

**FY18 FUNDING**

The Pathways Vermont Support Line was created by Act 79. It is funded through a grant from the Department of Mental Health with additional support from the Vermont Community Foundation.

Vermont Department of Mental Health	\$481,958
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$481,958</b>

**FAST FACTS:**

*Since 2013...*

**28,872**

COMPLETED CALLS

**1,149**

EMERGENCY CALLS  
DIVERTED

**2,746**

CALLS FROM  
VETERANS

**97%**

CALLER  
SATISFACTION RATE

**\$33.06**

AVERAGE COST PER  
CALL



### Pathways Vermont Support Line user testimonial:

“I call your support line frequently. I want to let you know how much I appreciate each and every (person) on the support line. The last time, 9 years ago, I had a nervous breakdown and I was in the hospital for over 4 months, went to the State Hospital for 2 months, 1 month at Central Vermont Hospital and 1 month at Home Intervention and it was devastating. I’ve been an advocate for myself since then and I’ve managed to stay out of the hospital for 9 years, Yes I owe a lot of it to myself, but I owe even more if it to people like (your operator) who came to my rescue the last time I spoke on the Vermont Support Line. She really helped me to meet what was going on inside of me. I thank you so much for all that the people of The Pathways Vermont Support Line do for us.” Anonymous caller



## COST IMPLICATIONS

Since it’s inception in 2013, the Pathways Vermont Support Line has diverted over 1,149 calls from emergency services, an average of **229 calls** each year. The Support Line is an important service which has the potential to prevent unnecessary visits to the emergency department and subsequent psychiatric hospitalizations, as well as ancillary services such as screeners and emergency transportation. This not only reduces the burden on these resources, but has the potential to save state dollars, given that the majority of callers to the line have state-funded insurance.

<b>229</b>	<b>x</b>	<b>\$692.50</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>\$158,582.50</b>
CALLS DIVERTED FROM CRISIS		AVERAGE COST PER E.R. VISIT		POTENTIAL DOLLARS DIVERTED

## CALLER FEEDBACK

*“The support line is one place where I don't feel alone in the world . It's so good to be able to pick up the phone and hear an empathetic voice on the other end I call each day because I find this line very effective.”*

*“I am really glad the VT support line exists, it is 1000 times better, you listen, and it really helps. I have gotten more help the past two weeks, then what the crisis line has done over the past two years. Thank you.”*

*“I really wanted to end it, I was happy to feel a connection with another human that had been through so many of the same things...thank you for saving my life.”*

# SOTERIA HOUSE FACT SHEET

An alternative path for individuals experiencing an early mental health

In July 2012, Pathways Vermont was awarded a grant by the Department of Mental Health to develop a five bed residence for individuals “seeking to avoid or reduce use of medications during an initial episode of psychosis,” The creation of this program was mandated by Act 79, the legislature’s plan to redevelop the system of care following the closure of the Vermont State Hospital.

The residence was developed based on Dr. Loren Mosher’s Soteria model. This model is a non-medical hospitalization diversion that supports individuals through an early episode of psychosis focusing on interpersonal relationships and “being with” the individual in need.

Soteria is a Therapeutic Community Residence licensed by the Vermont State Department of Aging and Independent Living. It opened its doors in April 2015.

## SPECIALIZED INTERVENTION

According to epidemiological research about the national incidence of first episode psychosis, approximately 200 Vermonters have such experiences each year.

Soteria creates a specialized resource for early episode psychosis within the state system of care. There is significant evidence that suggests that intensive, early intervention programming can drastically improve the long-term outcomes of individuals experiencing psychosis.

## CREATING ALTERNATIVES IN THE SYSTEM OF CARE

The predominant treatment available for initial experiences of psychosis entails the prescription of antipsychotic (aka neuroleptic) medications and inpatient hospitalization. However, a significant portion of individuals going through the experience are not interested in this form of treatment and alternative forms of care are not readily accessible, especially to those with limited resources.

Soteria offers an alternative approach to the experience of psychosis by providing person-centered adaptive care. Soteria has on-site psychiatry, but treats psychiatric medication as a personal choice and offers alternative modalities, including dream-work, breathwork, herbalism, and meditation.

## FY18 FUNDING

Total Funding	Amount
Department of Mental Health	\$1,020,000

**200**

ESTIMATED VERMONTERS WHO WILL EXPERIENCE FIRST PSYCHOSIS THIS YEAR

**\$547**

SOTERIA DAILY COST PER RESIDENT

**\$1,862**

AVERAGE NIGHTLY COST PER PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITALIZATION



# Pathways Vermont- Soteria Fact Sheet 2017

## Soteria Staff Member Testimonial:

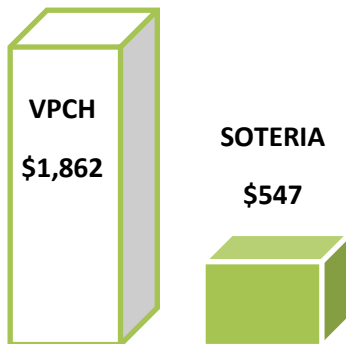
“Just as Pathways had renewed my strength in life when they rescued me from the cycle of jails and institutions, Soteria has restored my faith in humanity. The values that are being upheld at Soteria are allowing people to come through our home and be cared for, have their dignity restored, and given the ability to start a new life. I’ve been through the mental health system as a client since I was 18 years old, having been mistreated in grossly inhumane ways. If I had the option to stay at Soteria instead of being admitted to the hospital I would have been spared so much hardship. Soteria is cutting edge when it comes to the effective and humane treatment of people experiencing altered states of consciousness. Having experienced these things first hand, I can tell you with assurance that here in Burlington, in Vermont, and throughout the whole world, we are blessed to have Soteria as an alternative to hospitalization.” - Matt



\*Katie Bourque ( Soteria Services Manager) and Matt Kaigle (Soteria Staff Member) pictured.

## EXPENSE COMPARISON

Psychosis is considered to be one of the most expensive mental health conditions. Frequent and long-term hospitalizations combined with high rates of disability among individuals diagnosed with a psychotic disorder carries a high price tag.



**Soteria is remarkably cost effective compared to inpatient hospitalization, largely due to its less restrictive nature. The comparative nightly costs per individual range from:**

- **\$1,862 at the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (post-Irene)**
- **\$547 at Soteria**

Additionally, by providing early intervention services, there is a great likelihood that Soteria will improve the long-term functional outcomes of residents. There is a documented trend that the number of people enrolled in Social Security Disability for a psychiatric disability has exploded in recent years, growing from 1.25 million Americans in 1987 to 3.97 million Americans in 2007<sup>4</sup>. Soteria hopes to combat this trend and support individuals to go on to lead meaningful lives in the community. By focusing on abating distress, building resilience and identifying future goals, individuals are able to obtain functional recovery.

# Pathways Vermont Community Center

# FACT SHEET

**Cultivating community, creating alternatives & supporting resiliency**

Pathways Vermont Community Center supports young adults, aged 18-34, who are at risk of contact with crisis services due to mental health distress, addiction or trauma - but are not accessing traditional support services.

Formally known as the Wellness Co-op, Pathways Vermont community Center (PVCC) opened it's doors in May 2012 and has been a valued resource for individuals seeking community and alternative resources for mental wellness. Pathways Vermont Community Center is located at 279 North Winooski Avenue, in Burlington's Old North End.



## CREATING COMMUNITY ALTERNATIVES

Pathways Vermont Community Center aims to cultivate a vibrant community that supports resilience through collective learning, creative exploration and mutual support. PVCC offers a range of services including support groups, individual peer support services, supportive employment services, art and music activities, wellness workshops and a welcoming space for people to spend unstructured time with access to free Wi-Fi, public computers, snacks, tea and coffee.

## PROMOTING RESILIENCE & WELLNESS

Pathways Vermont Community Center provides alternative mental health resources within the community, including:

- Hearing Voices support groups,
- Mindfulness Meditation,
- Employment Seeker's Support Group,
- Laughter Yoga,
- Open Ears, Open Mind Peer Support Circle

## FY18 FUNDING

Pathways Vermont Community Center is currently funded through the Department of Mental Health and Vocational Re-Hab.

Department of Mental Health	\$296,378
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$383,824</b>

## FAST FACTS:

15,451

TOTAL VISITORS

131

JOB STARTS (SINCE 2013)

2,379

INDIVIDUAL MEALS SERVED (SINCE 2016)

5,888

VISITORS RECEIVING SUPPORT SERVICES (SINCE 2015)

# Pathways Vermont Community Center Fact Sheet 2017

## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

The Pathways Vermont Community Center's employment team combines the principles of peer support with the evidence-based practice of **Individualized Placement & Support- Supported Employment (IPS-SE)** to help community members achieve employment goals. In addition to one-on-one employment support, the employment team facilitates two Employment Seekers Support Groups each week to allow for mutual support and low-barrier engagement in supported employment.

In 2015, Pathways Vermont Community Center was invited to join the Dartmouth Individual Placement and Support Collaborative due to its high performance in implementing the model. This relationship will not only support the strength of our Vermont-based program but will also allow the program to be involved in the ongoing development of the IPS-SE model.

SINCE 2013...

159

INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED IN EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

131

JOB STARTS

215

EMPLOYER CONTACTS

## Peer Support

Pathways Vermont Community Center is staffed by individuals who identify as having lived experience with issues such as mental health crisis, trauma, substance use and homelessness. Staff are trained to provide what is commonly referred to as "peer support." Peer Support is a service delivery distinct from traditional mental health services. The peer approach to services encourages individuals to draw from their own lived experience when supporting others. This unique approach to relationships with service recipients has been proven effective in engaging individuals who might otherwise avoid mental health services and at promoting hope, resiliency and wellbeing.

"On the first day I got [to the Community Center] I thought it was a great place. The people in here were so receiving ... it makes you just feel comfortable and relaxed. I wanted to come every day after that. It's neat because you get to know other people in the community at the same time ...I have made new friends right here in this place and they have a great staff working here. Every time I come I try to bring snacks or some things because I feel like when I come I want to share too. Out of all the places I've been in Burlington, this is the one I think is the best because there's something in this place that when you come in, you don't want to leave. I come in at 12 and I leave when it closes. I have told friends about this place and I think this is a great program ... this idea of serving a meal here on Wednesday is right on the mark. It brings new people in sometimes and once they come one time they want to come back. The food is great and I want to start doing some cooking too but I need to take a class....It's so peaceful here. That's what we want people to feel when they come in here, that they're welcome and well received and that we care for them. That's the way I felt. That's how they made me feel and now that I'm here, that's how I try to make other people feel when they come in. I'm part of this family; that's why I bring things because I want to share it." - Howard

