

Pathway Homes Overview

Overview of Pathway Homes, Inc.

Pathway Homes is a private, non-profit agency serving Fairfax and Arlington Counties in Northern Virginia, which develops and operates non-time-limited housing along with comprehensive supportive and rehabilitative services for adults with serious mental illness. Pathway Homes incorporates a recovery-based model to provide quality services. Pathways' staff members work to integrate residents into the community and improve the quality of their lives by providing housing and supportive services which protect privacy, promote personal dignity and choice, and offer incentives and encouragement for them to assume increasing responsibility and control over their lives.

Pathway Homes was incorporated in April 1980, through the combined efforts of community professionals and family members. The name, Pathway Homes, emerged from the involvement of Pathways to Independence, a family support group which later became the Northern Virginia Chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI). Pathway Homes was initially formed to manage a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to develop residential programs for adults with mental illness. In April of 1982, the first two homes opened.

One of the unique aspects of the ways in which Pathway Homes chooses to pursue its mission is through the development of a variety of partnerships and cooperatives agreements with a wide range of other public and private agencies and organizations, both those specific to mental health and not. Pathways has found that one of the best ways to serve the housing and support needs of people with mental illness is to rally the resources of others.

Another distinctive element of Pathway Homes is that from its inception in 1980, Pathways has recognized the necessity of providing not only decent, safe, and affordable housing, but also stable housing. The agency was founded on the principle of filling the need for permanent, non-time-limited housing versus the transitional model which too often subjects consumers to repeated dislocations, with their progress being rewarded by forced moves to new and less supportive living arrangements.

Pathways strives to serve those adults with mental illness who have historically been underserved. These are consumers who either are typically unsuccessful in other residential programs due to their low skill level or intolerance for structure, or have been homeless or are at great risk for homelessness because they are forced to leave transitional housing programs and shelters, or have no place to be discharged to when leaving an institution or

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hospital. Other undeserved consumers come from homes with aging parents and other community settings inappropriate to their needs.

Over the years, Pathways capacity and programs have expanded, providing a comprehensive array of housing and service options with varying levels of flexible and individualized support. The services and settings which are currently available include:

- An Assisted Living Facility (ALF) serving 36 residents providing 24-hour supportive mental health care and comprehensive services for medical, nursing and personal care needs.
- Group homes providing highly structured, closely supervised homes with staff support seven-days-a-week.
- Townhouses and single-family homes providing semi-independent supervised settings.
- A range of supported living programs that provide flexible and individualized on-site case management and mental health support services, enabling residents to maintain independent living in their own houses.
- The Supported Housing Options Program (SHOP), which has been developed and operated in conjunction with the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board adult Residential Services. This program has been designed with an emphasis on the utilization of consumers of mental health services and families in a variety of roles.
- The area's first Consumer-directed Program, serving 6 individuals and a peer Recovery Coach in a single-family home.

Pathways' ongoing commitment has been to provide comprehensive, flexible and recovery-based services to all of its residents. All the residences, whether owned by Pathway Homes or not, are in community neighborhoods with access to public transportation, mental and physical health facilities, shopping, and recreational areas.

Pathway Homes involves residents by having them participate in the development of their own service plans, offering participation on the agency Consumer Advisory Council, and assuring their right of access to any and all of their records and the full confidentiality of those records. Furthermore, consumers of mental health services and family members sit on the Board of Directors.