



FRESH off the *STEPS*

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

*A place for help, a place for hope,
a place for healing...*



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www.firststephome.org

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings!

FY 2019 was another outstanding year for First Step Home. We continue to be mission driven and dedicated to addressing the identified needs of the women who enter our doors. Offering direct services for the children who enter with their moms in treatment and bringing on line long term housing were two major accomplishments of First Step Home this fiscal year.

This past year, we opened the 23 unit apartment building, 2160 Fulton Avenue. Offering safe, affordable, apartments had been a long awaited goal of our agency. The site based voucher program through the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority, allows First Step Home to offer long term housing for women. The apartment building provides eleven studio apartments and twelve one-bedroom apartments. Moms with one child living with them can occupy the one bedroom apartments. All residents will have a one year lease and the opportunity to renew or apply for a larger apartment in the community in the future.

Over the past year, with the Terry Schoenling Home for Mothers and Infants and the Maternal Addiction Program, our awareness of the need for direct services for the children had become more apparent. We were awarded grants through the State of Ohio, private donors and the City of Cincinnati to provide a variety of therapeutic services on the First Step Home grounds, launching the Child Resiliency Program. As you read our Annual Report, we hope we successfully convey our appreciation for those who support our work and the outstanding generosity of our community

Sincerely,



MARGO SPENCE
President & CEO



MARY SCHWADERER
Interim Chair

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HOUSING

First Step Home currently owns eleven homes and apartment buildings, which includes our main Residential Treatment Home. Women typically begin their treatment in the Residential Home. The next step is Campus Housing as the women continue to work on their recovery. If housing is still a barrier to sobriety after living on campus, clients move to Sober Living and work with their case manager to find permanent supportive housing.

In May 2019, First Step Home opened a 23-unit apartment building at 2160 Fulton Avenue. The units are subsidized through Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority. 2160 is independent housing for women practicing sobriety, with access to full integrated services right across the street. These services include individual counseling, outpatient groups, case management, medical and psychiatric services, along with mental health counselling. The building is 96% occupied and has a waiting list, demonstrating the need for permanent supportive housing for women that are active in their recovery and leading productive lives.

Renovation will soon begin on the Residential Treatment Facility. The funds have been made possible by OHMAS (Ohio Mental Health and Addiction Services). The repairs will be done in phases with priority given to the replacement of the roof and the elevator. Repair and replacement will also include carpet, painting, electrical and new furnishings for the eight bedrooms. The front desk and entrance will be completely remodeled, along with the parlor, front steps and playground areas.

The housing department continues to support our key programs and the women who need safe and sober housing in addition to ongoing recovery services.

HUMAN RESOURCES

First Step Home provides services for 400 women in addiction recovery, along with 90 children able to live with their mothers on their path to wellness and sobriety. Forty-six staff, including therapists, case managers, medical personnel, housing services and general administration facilitate and support First Step Home's mission. Training dollars are allotted each year to allow staff the opportunity to learn the latest best practices for the work they do each day.

As a result of the Child Resiliency grant received from the City of Cincinnati in 2019, we were able to contract with a Pediatric Trauma Therapist and a Pediatric Speech Therapist, along with increasing the hours of the part-time Pediatric Nurse to provide services to all the children living at First Step Home. In addition, First Step Home's Medical Director has begun to see pregnant clients on-site a couple days a week.

First Step Home has a talented and diverse staff committed to helping women recover from substance abuse, mental health issues with trauma-informed care.



DEVELOPMENT

This has been our third year of having a Development Department and we had our most successful year to date. Leading the Development Committee is Sara Breiel, who is joined by Brent Dapper, Mary Schwaderer, Maureen Heekin, Carole Montroue M. Miles, Lisa Tuck Loring, Dee Stone and Laura McIntire. This year we raised over \$1 million in grants, individual contributions and corporate contributions during the fiscal year.

Major grants included \$250,000 from the City of Cincinnati and \$100,000 from the Substance Abuse Management & Development Corporation (SAMAD) for the renovation of 2160 Fulton Ave. Other grants include \$70,000 from bi3, \$60,000 from the George B. Riley Trust, \$40,000 from the Wells Fargo Foundation, \$34,500 from the Joseph A. & Laura L. Klunk Family Foundation, \$25,000 from the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile Jr./US Bank Foundation, \$25,000 from the Deaconess Association Foundation, and \$20,000 from the Scripps Howard Foundation. We're honored to have several return foundation grants, such as from bi3, the Wohlgemuth Herschede Foundation, the Louis and Melba Schott Foundation, the Care-Source Foundation and the Williams Foundation.

We were also awarded a grant \$175,000 for the MOM's program from the State of Ohio. Additionally, we raised \$96,000 from the City of Cincinnati for our new Child Resiliency Program, which was launched in January and have received awards for two new grants supporting that program for FY 2020. Finally, we raised over \$90,000 from our gala celebration this year, thanks to you!

Mark Your Calendar

May 9, 2020 for the First Step Home
Award Celebration

Consider a legacy gift to First Step Home

For more information contact Rachel Lyon.
rachel.lyon@firststephome.org (513) 961-4663 Ext. 107

FINANCIAL

Fiscal year 2019 shows a promise of being a good year financially and programmatically. We started our first full year of required billing of the six Medicaid HMO's. July through September 2018 was definitely a learning curve for not only First Step Home but for all behavioral health organizations across the entire State of Ohio. Like most of our sister agencies in the beginning of billing in the new environment of Behavioral Health Redesign (BHR) we had challenges on many fronts and have resolved most of the bugs in the system, at this time. Yes, we have more work to do but feel we are making real gains.

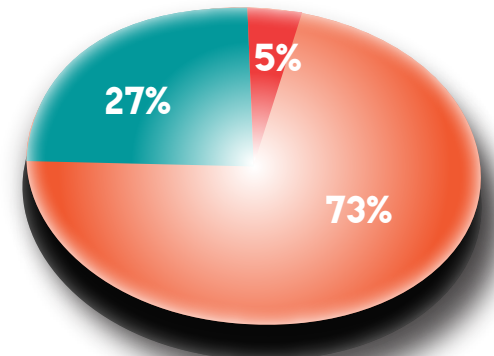
Our next major accomplishment was the completion of the Lillie Lee Apartments, now just called 2160 Fulton Avenue to be consistent with our other properties. We finished the renovations in April 2019 and received our Occupancy Permit in early May. The apartments are nearly all occupied with approximately 20 ladies on a waiting list for the next possible opening. It is a good feeling to finally see "rent income" on the financial reports instead of red ink from only incurring the expenses of going through the renovation and opening process. Additionally, the apartments will be exempt from property tax due to our charitable status, which will save First Step Home \$23,000 per year.

As managers we review our "Services Dashboard" weekly reviewing therapist individual productivity, residential census, intensive outpatient group units and other reports that keep us in the know both clinically and financially. If we are providing good levels of clinical services, both our residents and First Step Home finances benefit!

- Development/Fundraising – For the first time in First Step Home History we have raised over \$1,000,000 during FY2019! We more than doubled the budgeted amount.
- Government grants and fees exceeded FY2018 by nearly \$400,000.
- We continued to watch expenses carefully including salaries & benefits, business insurance, utilities, professional fees and several other categories. We did incur increases in facility repair & maintenance as we needed to take care of several delayed and new repair projects (with much help from

FY 2019 REVENUES (PRE-AUDIT)

- Government Grants & Fees - \$2,976,707
- Contributions, Fundraising & Donations - \$1,163,458
- Other Operating Income - \$217,554



CLINICAL SERVICES

Opioid use disorder is at a crisis level across the country. First Step Home recognizes that this is an ongoing and difficult issue for women in our community, especially those with children to care for, and we have chosen to continue the pursuit of growth in client care options. Our services are provided by staff who are well trained in best practices for substance use disorder treatment and mental health services.

Our three main programs are the Maternal Addiction Program, the Terry Schoenling Home for Mothers & Infants and the new Child Resiliency Program. For the Maternal Addiction Program, a core service of our organization, we support the care of mothers and infants. We value the team approach and continue our commitment to community partnerships where the needs of our clients are met by multiple providers. These partners include Good Samaritan Hospital's HOPE Program, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and Child Protective Services. Our pregnant clients receive medical services and education on their pregnancy through these partner relationships. Infants are provided with immediate pediatric care. Child Protective Services helps develop a Safety Plan for mothers to care for their infants while in their recovery at First Step Home. Our outside partners, Center for Addiction Treatment and Crossroads, are instrumental in recovery support of our clients through Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT), along with our internal service model that now includes MAT services.

Significant new directives include additional maternal groups for pregnant and post-partum clients. The expertise of our Medical Director and Registered Psychiatric Nurse contribute greatly to First Step Home's group support model. The Terry Schoenling Home, now over two years old, continues to be a vital part of recovery for mothers and infants with specialized living arrangements for mother-infant bonding. Additionally, we have contracted with providers for the new Child Resiliency Program for services for infants and children focused on child behavior models and speech and hearing evaluation and services.

We are committed to our clients, and we are always mindful to recognize the vulnerability of the disease and the impact it has on their lives while still celebrating the success of their recovery. We believe client rights and respect are vital on that road to recovery.

