



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Another chapter in Substance Use Disorder Treatment: Friendship House programs seek new future**

For the last three years, the Friendship House and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Clinical Services, managed by the North Country Health Consortium (NCHC), has included Residential Treatment for the disease of addiction, Intensive Outpatient and Outpatient services to residents of Northern NH and beyond. A complete transformation included setting up a new building, expanding treatment beds from 14 to 28, and achieving a prestigious designation from the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Since that time, NCHC has provided addiction-related treatment and counseling services to 533 people for residential treatment, and more than 800 individuals for evaluations and outpatient treatment, addressing this significant public health need.

After much discussion, in a special board meeting, the NCHC Board of Directors made the decision to seek another home for the SUD Clinical Services programs, with a full transition by the end of December 2020. The Governor has allocated CARES Act funding to NCHC that will allow the programs to remain open through the end of December, and NCHC will be working with the State and the community to identify potential providers of these critical services in the North Country. Mike Lee, NCHC's Board Chair noted "North Country Health Consortium assumed operations of the Friendship House when there was no apparent home for it because there was, and still is, a significant need for high quality treatment. Unfortunately, it has been a continuous challenge to cover costs for the high-quality services delivered, which was significantly magnified by COVID. The Board of Directors applauds the dedicated staff for all of their efforts and successes serving people with substance use disorder."



In an agreement in 2017, Friendship House was transferred from Tri Country Community Action Program, Inc. (TCCAP) to the NCHC. In true north-country fashion, a team-based effort ensued that included a rental agreement for a new building with Affordable Housing Education and Development, Inc. (AHEAD), support from elected and other government officials, individuals at New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, New Hampshire Community Development Finance Authority, USDA, private donations and the Northern Borders Regional Commission, to name a few.

“We greatly appreciate the hard work and dedication of our clinical services staff who have provided Outpatient, Intensive Outpatient, Impaired Driver Care Management, and Residential Services to hundreds of NH residents over the past three years. While the transition of the clinical programs is unavoidable at this time, the North Country Health Consortium is otherwise primarily grant-funded, and our public health programming is on solid ground” says Becky McEnany, Interim CEO for NCHC. “Our work to improve the health status of the region will continue as usual,” explains McEnany.

Recovery resources continue to exist and are accessible in the area. NCHC’s Wellness and Recovery Model (WARM) will continue to connect those in need of recovery services with specially trained Community Health Worker/Recovery Coaches. In addition, NCHC’s AskPETRA program is available by phone, text, and webchat at AskPETRA.org to share resources and connect people in need with treatment and recovery services in the area, at no charge. More resources are on the way with NCHC’s newest grant to address Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome with outreach to pregnant women, mothers, and women of childbearing age who have a history of, or who are at risk for, Substance/Opioid Use Disorder (SUD/ODU).

The North Country Health Consortium (NCHC) is a non-profit public health organization based in Littleton that collaborates with health and human services providers serving northern New Hampshire. NCHC is the hub of the North Country Public Health Network. For more information, contact Francine Morgan, Director of Communications, at [fmorgan@NCHCNH.org](mailto:fmorgan@NCHCNH.org) or visit the website at [NCHCNH.org](http://NCHCNH.org).

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