



MINNESOTA RECOVERY CONNECTION

connect. recover. advocate. serve.

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July 6, 2011

MINNESOTA RECOVERY CONNECTION: WHO WE ARE

Minnesota Recovery Connection (MRC) is a Recovery Community Organization (RCO); a grassroots, independent, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization led and run by members of the local recovery community. MRC strengthens the local recovery community by connecting people to a network of resources needed by low- and moderate-income people who are working to initiate and/or maintain recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs. Types of support include guidance with regard to addiction recovery, employment, housing, basic needs, and family issues.

MRC provides peer-to-peer recovery support through two core programs: a Telephone Recovery Support program and a Recovery Coaching program. Through these programs, MRC recruits, trains, and supervises volunteers of local, established, recovering people to provide peer support to people who are especially vulnerable in their recovery—oftentimes people who are either waiting for treatment, just getting out of treatment, in Drug Court or DWI Court, or just getting out of jail.

THE NEED FOR RECOVERY SUPPORT

Despite Minnesota's national reputation as a leader in the recovery field, the gap between addiction treatment, for those fortunate enough to *receive* it, and long-term recovery is substantial. The intervening steps to a durable and enjoyable quality of life that ultimately leads to the health and safety of the public, have not been well constructed or accessible -- until the inception of MRC.

The 2007 National Survey of Drug Use and Health reports that approximately:

- 400,000 adults (age 18 and older) were dependent on or abused alcohol or illicit drugs
- 375,000 Minnesota adults were dependent on or abused alcohol – 361,000 (96%) need treatment but are not receiving it
- 92,000 Minnesota adults were dependent or abuse illicit drugs – 83,000 (90%) are not receiving treatment

As these numbers reveal, less than 10% of Minnesotans requiring addiction treatment are actually receiving it. At the same time, it is a fact that the cost of *not treating* addiction is much more expensive than the cost of treating addiction:

- One national study cited an almost 12:1 payback -- that \$100,000 spent on treatment **and other addiction recovery programs** prevented \$487,000 in healthcare costs (ambulances, doctors, emergency rooms, hospitals) and averted \$700,000 in criminal costs (courts, jails, police, prisons).

While this is one factor in the need for clinical treatment, we know that such care is not an all-encompassing solution. Rather, it is only the beginning of a life-long journey. Can clinical treatment be the initial catalyst for change and, therefore, increase a person's chances at long-term recovery? Yes. But does the path end there? No.

Rather, MRC, a recovery community organization conceived specifically for those who are most vulnerable, has emerged to bridge the gap so the core elements of one's dignity -- a cohesive family, gainful employment, personal growth and stable housing -- are achievable outcomes.

ARGUMENT FOR CONTINUED FUNDING DURING STATE SHUTDOWN

1. **MRC is funded by federal dollars from Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).** More specifically, our funding originates from the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment block grant that provided \$26 million to the state of Minnesota to fund community programs including ours.

The Court has ordered that the shutdown may not interfere with the flow of federal dollars to their intended recipients as required by the Supremacy Clause of the United States Constitution. To give meaning to that order, MRC's funding needs to be continued.

2. **MRC's programs and services are essential for the health and safety of the public.** Alcohol and drug abuse is the primary contributing factor for the vast majority of individuals who engage in behaviors dangerous to themselves, their families, and the community. Recovery support offered through MRC greatly increases the likelihood of long-term recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs for the individuals and families who use our services.

Our services decrease the occurrence of drunk driving, hospital emergency room visits, missed days at work leading to unemployment, babies being born addicted to drugs or alcohol, suicide, incarceration, illegal activity, and family dysfunction and neglect.

CONCLUSION

Recovery support offered through Minnesota Recovery Connection is a critical, core function of the State and therefore requires continued funding in the event of a government shutdown.

Sincerely,



Nell Hurley
Executive Director
Minnesota Recovery Connection