



# Hope House of Milwaukee, Inc.

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*Ending homelessness and creating healthy communities*

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## PROTECTIVE PAYEE PROGRAM

### Annual Progress Report: January 1 – December 31, 2011

For many people, barriers such as mental illness or disabilities make it impossible to maintain employment or even to manage the financial resources that they have. Tragically, this population tends to slide from the brink of homelessness over the edge without careful and compassionate assistance. The **Protective Payee Program** is designed to provide financial oversight, budget counseling, and supportive case management for individuals with severe mental illness and other disabilities who need that little extra support to prevent homelessness. The program provides careful financial oversight for individuals with limited disability income, so that the individual stays in housing and has the resources to provide for basic needs.

### PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

The population served by the Protective Payee Program is chronically mental ill adults, disabled adults, or those in recovery from substance abuse that are receiving Social Security Disability and living in the City of Milwaukee. In addition, these individuals are either homeless, or at high-risk for homelessness due to fiscal mismanagement.

**During this year, a total of 47 households – 7 families and 40 singles – benefited from the Protective Payee Program. There were 12 new cases opened and 6 cases closed this year.**

### PROGRAM GOALS, OUTCOMES, & INDICATORS

The Protective Payee Program offers financial oversight, budget counseling, and supportive case management for individuals with severe mental illness and other disabilities who need that little extra support to prevent homelessness.

**GOAL 1: TO PREVENT HOMELESSNESS IN HIGH RISK POPULATIONS**

Outcome: ***Participants will maintain stable housing in the community.***

***Results: 98% of participants have maintained stable housing for six (6) months.***

**GOAL 2: TO IMPROVE FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SECURITY**

Outcome: ***Participants will develop, maintain and follow a structured monthly budget.***

**Result:** **100% of participants have developed a structured current budget with Protective Payee Case Manager.**

**GOAL 3: TO ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE**

Outcome: ***Participants will receive appropriate referral and linkage to necessary services as indicated in Individual Case Plan.***

**Result:** **100% of participants have developed a case plan appropriate to needs.**

### **PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

Based on research and agency experience, the **Protective Payee Program** is designed to help chronically mentally ill and recovering adults receiving Social Security Disability (SSI or SSDI) remain in the community while maintaining stable housing and meeting basic and treatment needs. Through careful monitoring of this stipend and close coordination with each individual, the Case manager is able to help prevent homelessness for chronically homeless and disabled men, women, and their families. The project involves four elements:

Fiscal Guardianship: The primary function of the Protective Payee Program is to provide sound financial oversight for individuals receiving SSD stipends. This is essential in helping those with impairments to make the “right” decisions on where to apply limited resources – toward rent, food, and other bills. In addition, the Case manager works with each individual to develop a clear monthly budget. Budgets are particularly helpful in demonstrating how the participant is doing more than just surviving.

As an added safety measure, every check is signed by both the Protective Payee Case Manager and the Program Supervisor. In addition, the Hope House Accounting Coordinator reconciles each individual account each month. This insures that every penny is clearly accountable.

Supportive Case Management and Applicable Service Planning: To ensure that services address the unique situation of each individual, Hope House staff work with the each client to identify needs and obstacles as well as exploring strengths and personal resources. Using the in-depth assessment, the Case Manager obtains input from family members and other sources, and identifies historical life contributors that may act as barriers to maintaining sustainable progress. Recognizing decisions and behaviors that have resulted in homelessness is the first step in developing a life-changing mindset, promoting permanent personal and emotional health as well as independence.

Building upon this foundation, Hope House is able to assist each individual in developing a concrete, measurable, and applicable work plan unique to each client’s situation. Once obstacles are known, the individual can work in concert with the Case Manager to develop a “real” plan for success. Known as the **Individual Service Plan**, clearly defined goals and objectives are made for maintaining within the community. Instead of a “one-

size-fits-all” approach, each family or individual is able to receive specific, targeted services and programming, increasing the probability of personal investment, effort and long-term success. This plan provides a roadmap for success while participating in Protective Payee Program.

Education, Development, and Resource Opportunities: Applicable, useful education and development opportunities are readily available at Hope House. This supports the tenet of Hope House to offer an array of options – in one place - in a positive, supportive environment promoting success – educationally, vocationally, and ultimately, economically. These include -

- **Adult Education:** Guests are informed of adult education opportunities available onsite and at no cost at Hope House via the Pathways to Progress Adult Education Program. This a comprehensive series of education and personal development workshops activities designed for adults to reach their goals. In partnership with Milwaukee Area Technical College, the program offers training in subjects ranging from personal finance management, employment readiness, and basic computer operation to General Education instruction.
- **Emergency Food Resource:** The United Southside Food Pantry offers emergency distribution of food and hygiene products as needed to residents in need.

Referral, Linkage, and Engagement to Community-Based Services: The Protective Payee Case Manager refers residents to necessary and appropriate external resources. Hope House staff will also facilitate linkage and engagement to needed services from initial assessment through discharge, building a support network around guests and families; thereby increasing success in self-sufficiency and stability.

Respectfully Submitted by –