

Artists Helping the Homeless

Van Log - August 14, 2014

Met a new client in an Inpatient Treatment Program and learned his story and aims.

Picked up another client at a transitional living facility to ride along. The ride gives us a chance to follow-up on their progress while giving them something to do.

A mental health unit called about a woman who had not been homeless before. We arranged for her to get into an out of town facility where she could have support while getting a new start.

Day van took three people from Kansas City Community Release Center to KC Cares for medical care. As part of a pilot program, KC Cares set three standing appointments each week for people we bring from KCCRC.

Took third client to court. He had acted up after being sober for 5½ months --- the longest he'd experienced in over 15 years. We worked with the court to arrange his being in a locked down facility rather than jail. It was recognition of what he had accomplished, but a stern warning that acting up was not acceptable. Our staff then moved his belongings from where he had been to the new facility.

Followed up with two more clients, one in a hospital, one in transitional living

Then off to Olathe where we organize a dinner program that dishes up about 300 servings at the Center of Grace each Thursday. The church that signed up couldn't do it, so our full staff served.

Among the messages that came in during the meal was one from a man who, despite having a court set deadline looming, had not gone to counseling. We helped him identify, get into and pay for counseling the next morning.

On the way back, we dropped off food and supplies for clients at another transitional living facility. This gives us a chance to follow-up with them and to lend a little encouragement if needed. Tonight we arranged for one to go into inpatient treatment. Three others there are doing well.

Then to the detox facility to meet with a man that has been discharged from two transitional living facilities. Also talked with the facilities to determine the challenge. Will follow-up tomorrow.

Stopped by another transitional living facility to check on a client we've worked with for 3 years and pay his rent. He's been in transitional living for almost a year. Prior to that, he relied heavily upon hospitals and emergency services for even basic needs and had a hospital bill with a total in six digits.

Arranged for one of our vans to take a domestic violence victim from the hospital to a police station where she will be met by personnel from a domestic violence shelter.

Then we responded to a 2-1-1 call regarding a woman and her daughter stranded at the bus depot. At 91, the woman is the oldest person we've assisted. After talking with them, we were able to arrange for them to take the train the rest of the way home. Since the train didn't leave until the next morning, we put them in a motel overnight and arranged for one of our crew to start early to take them to the train station for the early morning departure. We felt a public shelter would not be appropriate due to the late hour, their age and having not been in one before. On the way to the motel, we stopped at QuikTrip and bought food for the trip.

While at the motel, we were able to follow-up with a paraplegic client and arranged for her to get into a facility in the morning.

Then out to Grandview to take food to and pay to extend her stay for another week's motel for a client. We do much of the street outreach as part of a hospital diversion program involving several agencies. This client is one of several clients we stay in contact with routinely.

Took food to a woman in another motel that is 16 weeks pregnant, had no food and called 2-1-1.

Got word a client relapsed. While disappointing, relapse is part of the recovery process, particularly for people that have been on the street for years.

Now after midnight, we completed our logs and called it a day. The stress in fielding 167 phone calls and crisscrossing town melted in the genuine tears of joy of the 91 year old woman as we left her in a safe place and back on her way home. It was a long, but rewarding day.