

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

Cornerstone Montgomery is celebrating its 50th Anniversary Year in 2021. Since a 2012 merger between St. Luke's House (founded, 1971) and Threshold Services (founded, 1981), Cornerstone Montgomery's focus has been to work with people throughout the behavioral health spectrum of acute crisis through long-term support. Today, Cornerstone Montgomery is a CARF-accredited nonprofit organization empowering more than 2,500 adults and transition aged youth in 88 locations throughout Montgomery County, Maryland. Growing to a \$26 million organization, Cornerstone Montgomery has more than 300 staff members, 100 volunteers and 300 partnerships with nonprofits, hospitals, business mentors and educational institutions to become the largest and most comprehensive mental health organization in Montgomery County.

Our primary aim is to keep people out of the emergency room, hospital or jail and into consistent, effective treatment and our programs help people find and keep housing, train for new jobs, and lead independent lives. We specialize in comprehensive, community- and evidence-based mental health and co-occurring mental health and substance use disorder treatments targeting individuals who are living in poverty and require severe behavior health interventions. Cornerstone Montgomery serves adults and at-risk transition aged youth with serious and persistent mental illness, behavioral disorders, and co-occurring substance abuse disorders. Clients represent all demographics in the county spanning education, literacy, race, ethnicity, etc. The majority of people served receive benefits/entitlements and/or other public assistance and are very low to low income.

TARGET POPULATION

Cornerstone Montgomery serves people with mental health and/or substance abuse disorders in Montgomery County, Maryland with a population of just over 1 million residents. In Montgomery County, approximately 17% of people over the age of 18 have experienced some form of mental illness.

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During the COVID-19 Pandemic, safety protocols have been put in place for delivery of essential medication administration or prescriptions and for our Residential Crisis Services, Residential Rehabilitation Programs, and Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) program, some of which are staffed 24-hours a day. Our clinics and client transportation operate on an appointment basis for emergent or critical needs. The Vocational Program provided many non-reimbursable services that clients required. Many clients employed in non-essential businesses are out of

work and do not know when, or if, they will find another job. Some cannot work due to underlying health conditions risks. They need support applying for unemployment and other benefits. Employed clients require help finding safe transportation to their jobs. These non-reimbursable services have been essential to client success and remain in great demand. Major depression is a qualified diagnosis for program entry; going forward, we expect more individuals will qualify due to trauma they experience during the current viral and economic crisis.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF BIOS

Cari Guthrie Cho, LCSW-C

CEO/President

Cari joined Cornerstone Montgomery (previously Threshold Services) in the early 90's and has held many positions spanning the entire organization. She first worked as a Residential Counselor and Site Coordinator. After receiving her Master's degree in Social Work at the University of Maryland, she worked at John Hopkins Bayview's capitation program. She returned to Threshold Services in 1997 as a Program Supervisor, and subsequently was promoted to Rehabilitation Director and then OMHC Director. In 2008, Cari was promoted to Chief Operating Officer and in April 2013 moved into the CEO position at Cornerstone Montgomery after the merger with St. Luke's House. Cari has a Master's in Social Work with a concentration in Clinical/Administration and a specialization in Mental Health. She is an experienced trainer and consultant for various evidence based practices. Cari is a member of Leadership Montgomery Class of 2016, a member of the Board of Directors for the National Council for Behavioral Health and President elect for the Board of Directors for the Community Behavioral Health Association of Maryland.

Marisa Sherrod-Gillum, MSW

Chief Compliance & Quality Improvement Officer

Marisa joined Cornerstone Montgomery in June 2015. Prior to coming to Cornerstone, she served more than 15 years in various Executive/Senior Management and consulting roles, overseeing quality assurance, grants procurement and management, compliance, accreditation, and quality improvement systems for both local and national nonprofit human service organizations. Marisa has a Bachelors of Science in Psychology and Sociology from Drexel University and a Masters of Social Work from Howard University.

Ben Hendricks

Technology Director

Ben came to the newly merged Cornerstone Montgomery in August of 2012. Prior to that, Ben worked for 501cTECH, an innovative non-profit providing technology consulting, helpdesk support, and capacity building for hundreds of small and medium non-profits in the Metro DC

area. (Threshold Services was a 501cTECH client for several years.) He has extensive experience in network design and implementation, document imaging and management, and applying software solutions to solve problems in civil engineering. Ben holds Bachelors and Masters degrees in Finance from the University of Alabama.

Anne Peyer

Director of Vocational Services

Anne came to St. Luke's House in September, 2006. Prior to being promoted to Vocational Director, she served as a Supported Employment Specialist and as Supervisor for an Employment Focused Cluster. She received a B.A. in Psychology from the University of Northern Colorado, and an M.A. in Forensic Psychology from the Chicago School of Professional Psychology.

Susan Wilkoff

Director of Utilization Management

Susan is the Director of Utilization Management. She worked at St. Luke's House since 1990, first as a crisis counselor at Fenton/McAuliffe House. From 1993 to 1997 Susan was a researcher for the National Institute of Mental Health's MCPATH Study which assessed the effectiveness of McAuliffe (Fenton) House, a hospital alternative to psychiatric hospitalization. and later becoming the Program Director of General and Intensive Residential and Supported Living Services. In 2000 she became the Director of Utilization Management and received a Board commendation for her outstanding service to the organization in 2001. She has owned and operated three businesses, has a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and a Masters Certificate in Human Services Management from the Graduate Department of Social Work at the University of Maryland.

Gwen Zecha, CPA

Chief Financial Officer

Gwen joined St. Luke's House in December of 2005. She started her career with over 10 years in banking and was Controller/CFO for what was originally First Women's Bank of Maryland. Prior to coming to St. Luke's House, she had spent 13 years primarily working as a consultant with various nonprofit organizations in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area. She received her BS in Accounting from Bucknell University and obtained her CPA license in the State of Maryland. She has also served as treasurer for Norbeck Manor HOA and Flower Valley Bath and Racquet Club.

Lisa H. Katz, LCPC

Chief Program Officer

Lisa is a licensed counselor with a Master of Science in Psychology from Loyola College in Maryland. She began her career right after earning her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from

Hood College with a position as an RC in a Residential Rehabilitation Program. She came to Cornerstone Montgomery in 2018 with nearly 30 years' experience providing and overseeing behavioral health services in both Maryland and Virginia, working at several well-known non-profit organizations and one local government. Lisa's background also includes selecting and implementing the first Electronic Health Record for her last employer as well as overseeing IT and Billing operations. Lisa has worked at several CARF-accredited organizations and has been instrumental in helping three different agencies to prepare for and pass their initial CARF surveys. She is a member of the Leadership Montgomery CORE class of 2021.

Elise Alexander Bhagwat MS, LCPC

Director of Crisis Services

Elise received their Master's Degree in Clinical Counseling from Johns Hopkins and they have been in the Mental Health Field for over 30 years in a variety of settings including: Inpatient Psychiatric Hospitals, School Settings, Community Mental Health and Private Practice. They have served in leadership roles for the past 18 years. They enjoy the balance between helping individuals and families in need, and finding ways to improve processes and systems to better serve our community at large. Additionally, they find mentoring employees and interns to be rewarding and an innate duty helping to groom future therapists and clinicians to be empathetic and effective providers. They are pleased to participate in a number of work groups and committees both at Cornerstone Montgomery and in partnering with other agencies in the State and County to improve quality of care and find creative new approaches to shared areas identified for improvement in the population we serve.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (AT A GLANCE)

PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION PROGRAMS

Integrated Treatment for Co-occurring Disorders focuses on integrating mental health and substance use disorder treatments for individuals who are dually diagnosed. ***Foundations Day Programs*** provide daily living skills development through a variety of four and eight week seminars as well as individual training to build confidence and proficiency in all phases of daily life. ***Residential Rehabilitation Program*** provides comprehensive and individualized psychiatric rehabilitation services at all levels of care for individuals who choose to live in a Cornerstone Montgomery operated residence. Cornerstone Montgomery operates 71 properties utilized for residential services, with a total capacity of 212. ***Supported Living and Community Outreach Program*** provides the same comprehensive and individualized supports as the Residential Rehabilitation Program for individuals living in their own home, or living in housing provided by other nonprofit organizations in the community. This program serves nearly 300 individuals throughout all regions of Montgomery County.

INTEGRATED HEALTH Cornerstone Montgomery's Integrated Health Program is a part of National and State based effort to improve the health of individuals with chronic health

conditions. Integrated Health supports a broader effort to integrate somatic and behavioral health services in Maryland. The program targets populations with behavioral health needs who are at high risk for additional chronic conditions, including those with serious persistent mental health disorders and chronic health issues like diabetes, obesity, etc. Integrated Health offers participants enhanced care coordination services from providers with whom they regularly receive care. Cornerstone Montgomery provides services through its Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program and Integrated Health staff.

RESIDENTIAL CRISIS SERVICES Cornerstone Montgomery's Residential Crisis Services are community based, alternatives to inpatient hospitalization for people in acute psychiatric crisis. 24 hour counseling and crisis stabilization residence located in suburban single family neighborhoods, these programs provide short-term interventions on referral. The programs seek to reduce unnecessary admissions to inpatient mental health facilities. Fenton-McAuliffe Homes are 8-bed voluntary, community based, alternative to inpatient hospitalization programs for people experiencing an acute psychiatric crises.

CASE MANAGEMENT & HOUSING FACILITATION Cornerstone Montgomery provides management and housing related services and supports for individuals not otherwise eligible in the public mental health system. Through our Montgomery County Case Management Program, staff provide linkages to community based services and resources, crisis intervention services, and facilitate client relationships with individuals and organizations in the community which the client finds supportive. The services may not be mental health related but are intended to support the individual's ability to function as independently as possible in the community.

OUTPATIENT MENTAL HEALTH CLINICS (OMHC) Cornerstone Montgomery's OMHC provides a full range of mental health, psychiatric and therapeutic treatment services. OMHC serves clients of the Cornerstone Montgomery Psychiatric Rehabilitation Program, as well as members of the community. Cornerstone Montgomery operates three outpatient mental health clinics in Bethesda, Silver Spring, and Rockville, with a service capacity of over 1,650 individuals annually.

ASSERTIVE COMMUNITY TREATMENT ACT is an evidence-based practice that improves outcomes for people with severe mental illness who are most vulnerable to homelessness and hospitalization. ACT utilizes a multi-disciplinary team approach, providing services directly in the community, maintaining a small staff to consumer ratio, and works with consumers for as long as they need. ACT works with consumers on medication management, physical health needs, housing, and employment goals.

VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS *Back to Work Program* is an Evidence Based Supported Employment program that helps people recovering from mental illness choose, find and keep employment. This program serves almost 500 individuals per year, and has an employment rate of nearly 68% compared to the national average of 19%. *Career Transition Program* serves individuals ages 16 and above and who are in the process of completing high school. *Career Academic and Psych-*

Rehab Services program serves youth ages 18–25 who have completed high-school and are transitioning into the adult mental health/social service system.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND KEY STATISTICS

Where do your referrals come from? We receive referrals from all over the state and county – hospitals, providers, county government, family members, police, corrections, and individuals.

How can I refer someone to your programs? Our request for services can be found on our website. Questions may be directed to referrals@cornerstonemontgomery.org. All programs can receive direct referrals except for the residential rehabilitation program which needs a referral through the county – 240-777-1400.

What types of insurance do you take? Most of our programs required Medicaid eligibility which is based upon income. Our outpatient clinics and residential crisis programs can also accept some private insurance. Contact us directly for verification.

What types of therapy do you provide? At our outpatient clinics we provide medication management, individual therapy, group therapy, family therapy, dialectical behavioral therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy and others.

What your clients do during the day? We encourage all of our clients to work. Many attend college or vocational training. We also have a psychiatric day program where people can participate in psychoeducational groups, employment preparation groups, and social/recreational groups.

Mental Health

- 1 in 5 Americans will be diagnosed with a mental illness each year
- Approximately 7.9 million adults had co-occurring disorders in 2014.
- At least half of people with a mental illness will also experience a substance use disorder in their lifetime.
- Mood disorders, including major depression, dysthymic disorder and bipolar disorder, are the third most common cause of hospitalization in the U.S. for both youth and adults aged 18–44
- In FY15 we helped 30 people in our residential program move to less restrictive housing
- The support that Cornerstone Montgomery provides, helps individuals stay out of the hospital. In FY15, 95% of our clients remained out of the hospital.

Substance Use

- People can and do recover from addiction. About 10% of adults in the US (23.5 million people) are in recovery from addiction.
- Addictions are addressed through a full continuum of prevention, treatment and recovery services. Cornerstone Montgomery offers treatment and recovery services.
- In 2014, approximately 17 million Americans 12 years or older met criteria for alcohol use disorder but only 9% received treatment. (NSDUH 2013)
- Nearly 88,000 people die from alcohol related causes annually and more than 47,000 die from overdose from other drugs. (NIDA 2015).

Employment

- The national average rate of employment for people with disabilities is 19% - 70% Cornerstone Montgomery's vocational clients are employed and they earned an estimated \$3.6 million.
- Serious mental illness costs America \$193.2 billion in lost earnings per year

Integrated Health

- Individuals living with serious mental illness face an increased risk of having chronic medical conditions
- Adults in the U.S. living with serious mental illness die on average 25 years earlier than others, largely due to treatable medical conditions
- Recovery from addiction and mental health disorders is associated with improvements in all areas of life – decreased cancer, heart disease, depression, anxiety, smoking and tobacco use, obesity, and diabetes. (CDC 2015, 2016) as well as increased employment, participation in family activities, and education. (Life in Recovery Survey 2013)

Financing

- It costs the state \$115/day for intensive RRP services and \$50/day for general RRP services in the community instead of the \$700/day it costs to be in a state hospital or \$900/day to be in a community hospital. Cornerstone provides a continuum of housing options so that people can live in a setting that is as independent as possible while providing them with the services that they need.
- PRP services in the community cost the state \$9000 per year. It costs \$40,000 per year to serve a homeless person and it can cost \$700 – 900/day to be in a hospital. Cornerstone provides support and skills training to help people manage their symptoms and stay in the community.
- As part of the Public Behavioral Health System, we get 75% of our funding from Medicaid and Medicare. Over the last 20 years, these rates have only been increased 7 times – far below inflation and less than our Developmental Disability counterparts.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS, KEY PARTNERSHIPS AND AWARDS

- Cornerstone Montgomery, Interfaith Works, and CCI Health and Wellness co-located in 2017 at its Rockville Hub to streamline service delivery, referrals, and coordination.
- Cornerstone Montgomery is improving access to behavioral health services for underserved communities through telemedicine enabling current prescribers to participate in treatment while the clients are admitted to a hospital. Cornerstone Montgomery also works with homeless shelters/services to provide comprehensive behavioral health care to the homeless community and veterans.
- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) is an evidence-based practice that improves outcomes for people with severe mental illness who haven't responded well to

traditional treatment. Using a multi-disciplinary approach, ACT works with individuals for medication management, physical health needs, housing, and employment goals.

- Cornerstone Montgomery has three houses for Residential Crisis Services where staff monitor medications and provide crisis support to stabilize clients so they can return to their home or other community placement. Psychiatrists and Nurse Practitioners provide medication management and regular evaluation.
- Cornerstone Montgomery is working with Westat Researchers on a Supported Employment study looking at the impact of nurse care management on employment success.
- Cornerstone Montgomery has secured National Continuing Education Unit (CEU) accreditation as a provider for educational programs for social workers and licensed counselors.

Awards and Honors:

- Above and Beyond Award, National Guard and Reserve Forces
- Workforce Professional of the Year and Employee of the Year awards, Maryland Works for Employment for People with Disabilities
- 2019 Nonprofit of the Year, Rockville Chamber of Commerce
- Achieved Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) status in 2018
- Achieved Second CARF accreditation in 2021

Since each individual that Cornerstone Montgomery treats has a unique profile of needs, our approach is to provide wraparound services to help ensure that each individual receives a full complement of services. The integrative method leverages Cornerstone Montgomery's strengths in providing behavioral health care and related support services to this population, while also connecting with other partners in various capacities to provide continuous flow of care. Cornerstone Montgomery is proud to annually partner with over 300 organizations from businesses, foundations, to other community-based organizations and civic groups.

Some highlights of these specific partnerships include:

1. To ensure effective employer relationships, Cornerstone Montgomery maintains partnerships with approximately 300 businesses for its Vocational Program.
2. Maryland Legal Aid services are offered at the Rockville, Southport and Bethesda Hubs weekly
3. Cornerstone Montgomery training partners include the Montgomery County Collaboration Council, Montgomery County Office of Human Resources, Nexus Montgomery, and the Maryland Department of Labor and Licensing Regulation.
4. Cornerstone Montgomery offers clinical services within county shelters through a partnership with Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless.

5. Partnerships with Nexus Montgomery support implementation of an Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACT)
6. Joined forces with Interfaith Works, and CCI Health and Wellness in 2017 to create the Taft Hub, a one-of-a-kind service delivery model to help streamlining service delivery
7. Partners with Montgomery County Public Schools and Montgomery College, in particular linking with the Disabilities Services office, for the Transition Aged Youth program
8. Secured National Continuing Education Unit accreditation as a provider for educational programs for social workers and licensed counselors.

DIGITAL ARTWORK

For additional file types please contact: Nicole.Graner@CornerstoneMontgomery.org

[Branding Guide](#)

[Color Logo](#)

Knockout Logos:

[Black](#) [Yellow](#) [Blue](#) [White](#)

Mark:

[Color](#) [Black](#) [Yellow](#) [Blue](#) [White](#)

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