

History of Hope House

And Community Support Systems, INC.

As Of 2011

Hope House has existed since 1980 as a community support program for people with serious and persistent mental illness. Hope House began as “Apartment 3”, a state pilot project through Beltrami County, the MN Department of Human Services and the Brainerd Regional Treatment Center designed to meet the needs of clients returning from the state hospital. Apartment 3 was its first drop-in center location.

Through the early years, “Apartment 3” was alternately managed between local government and a nonprofit agency. It included day treatment, individual psychotherapy, and medication management. Though the services benefited consumers, the frequent administrative and personnel changes were stressful for consumers and staff.

In response to this, employees of “Apartment 3” formed a corporation in 1989 called Community Support Systems, Inc. (CSSI), designed to maintain consistent administration of services for people with serious and persistent mental illness. CSSI has operated the program since 1990. Consumers voted to change “Apartment 3” to “Hope House” in 1991. The program moved to its current location at 2014 7th Street in Nymore in 1992.

In 1995, a consumer board position was added. In 1998, a consumer mentor program was added. From 1999 to 2005, Hope House sponsored a “Supportive Community Project” involving a local church and after hours social activities. This program ended when the church had a split.

Hope House received the Community Support Program of the Year Award from the State of Minnesota in the year 2000. The 2001 State Consumer Satisfaction Survey placed Region II, of which Hope House members are a large part, at 10 to 20 points higher than the state average in access, appropriateness, outcomes, and medication. The REACH Facilitator of the Year Award from the Mental Health Association of Minnesota was also awarded in 2001.

In 2002, Hope House became the first agency in Beltrami County to offer adult rehabilitation mental health services (ARMHS). CSSI also developed a community support program/ARMHS program for Lake of the Woods County from 2002-2004 until Lake of the Woods was ready to operate it on its own.

Between 2002 and 2007, consumer positions for cook, newsletter, office, laundry, maintenance, and public speaking were added as part of the consumer employment project. In 2007, the Northwest Minnesota Foundation “Ruth Edevold Award for Excellence in Leadership” was awarded to the director. In 2008, consumer jobs for client/community housecleaning, housing

repair and furniture moving were added. In 2009, Hope House added an outreach position and a consumer employment garden project. In 2011, Robin Wold and Hope House received the Gloria Segal Award from the Mental health Association of Minnesota for advocacy during and after the state shutdown.

Hope House has served over 768 individuals and their families, including home/community skills training, diagnostic assessments, a drop-in center, family support group, and medication management.