



TURNING OVER
NEW LEAVES
TO DISCOVER
NEW LIVES



MID-MICHIGAN RECOVERY SERVICES

FALL/WINTER 2024 NEWSLETTER

Transformations for all seasons



This is the early November view from one of the conference rooms in our new main building, The Pentecost Center.

We are blessed with a serene, contemplative setting next to the Grand River, with stately old-growth trees, next to Moores Park in the heart of Lansing.



**A letter from
Executive
Director
Patrick
Patterson**

When we moved in this summer, all was green. As months passed, we had front-row, postcard-worthy views of the seasonal transformation to shades of yellow, red and brown.

It's an apt reminder of the work

of recovery: gradual, unrelenting, transformational.

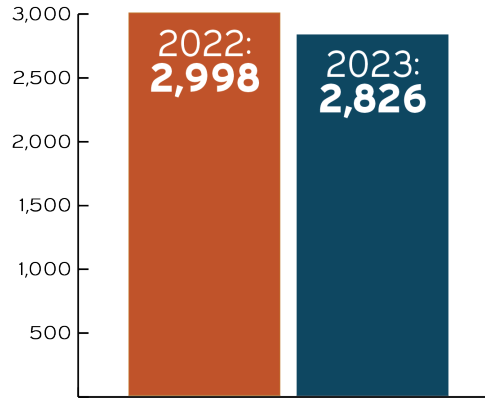
The men and women who entrust us with their care are in the hardest, most courageous fights of their lives. One of our jobs is to help them see the transformation that is possible. To provide a window to a better, healthier future. To help them envision the new life within their reach.

It's worthwhile to remind ourselves that a better future is indeed possible.

Recent data from the state of Michigan gave us some much-welcomed hope: **Overdose deaths in Michigan fell 5.7% in 2023.** Combined with a decline in 2022, Michigan's overdose fatality rate fell almost five times more than the national decline.

Does this mean we have won this battle? Far from it. Michigan

MICHIGAN OVERDOSE DEATHS DECLINE 5.7%



Source: Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

still lost 2,826 mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, sons and daughters to overdose last year. That's not to mention those still trapped in the failed utility of drug use. Or struggling with alcoholism, a scourge as old as human history.

Now is not the time to declare

victory over alcohol and drug illnesses, but to redouble our efforts. The data proves what we know in our hearts: It's always possible to turn over a new leaf — and great things are within reach when we commit to change.

We see this every day at MMRS. And we are happy to share some inspiring examples in this newsletter.

Some day soon, the colorful display outside our windows will give way to the stark beauty of winter. And then, slowly, barely noticeably, the green shoots of spring will return.

Gradual, unrelenting, transformational. The seasons move on. And so does our work.

Thank you for being part of it.

— Patrick



Celebrating Kim: 30 years of taking it one day at a time

Kim arrived at Glass House fresh from hospitalization for alcohol and heroin withdrawal. It was her fifth try at recovery. She was so convinced she wouldn't stay that she left her bags unpacked.

She doesn't remember much from that first month at Glass, aside from trying to convince her boyfriend to pick her up. She watched out her upstairs bedroom window for a ride that never came.

The women's residential recovery staff would ask every night, "Kim, are you going to be here tomorrow?" And every night she

would say yes – thinking the whole time it was a lie.

"But I took it one day at a time," Kim recalls. "And the days added up."

Add up they did. With 30 years of sobriety and counting, Kim has done more than reach a remarkable milestone.

For the past quarter-century, she has used her own experience to serve women at Glass House, the place she never thought she would stay.

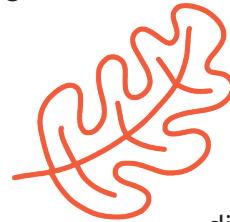
"Kim's story is inspiring for so many reasons," said Patrick

Patterson, Mid-Michigan Recovery Services executive director.

"She exemplifies not just the courage and determination needed to fight the disease of addiction, but also the power, love and acceptance you find within the recovery community," he said. "Kim didn't just come through the other side – she reached back to help others find their way, too."

From chaos to routine

Kim's problems had started in college and got worse from there. She lived on the streets for years, with no routine to her life





Marking a milestone: The Mid-Michigan Recovery Services team gathers at The Pentecost Center to celebrate Kim (center, in blue) for her 30 years of sobriety and 25 years of service at MMRS helping others find their way to new lives.

except using drugs and finding the means to buy more. Passing out at night, waking up sick in the morning, going out to try to score more drugs – it was exhausting. “I had hepatitis and my liver was

shot. They didn’t have treatment back then,” she said. “I was dying.” Like most people in recovery, she can tell you the exact date she entered detox for the last time and embarked on lifelong

sobriety: Aug. 19, 1994. She got referred to Glass House. Even though she didn’t want to be there at first, she liked the idea of a routine. Small things like putting **(continued on next page)**

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on pajamas at night. Cooking and eating at regular mealtimes.

"The routine was so important. The love was really important. The love, the support, and the schedule," she said.

"You don't have any love out on the street. Simple things like food, bathing, clothing — none of that is important on the street. It's such a hard life, so tiring."

So she stuck with the program.

Days turned into weeks, then months.

Eventually, that boyfriend she was waiting for came back and joined her in Lansing. He attended Alcoholics Anonymous and got clean, too. They were married for

20 years, until his death two years ago.

Joining the Glass House staff

Soon after her time at Glass, Kim had returned to college and graduated with a nursing assistant degree.



She was working at the former Lansing City Market when she ran into one of the staff members she knew from Glass House. She said they were hiring. At first, Kim was hesitant. Even though she was attending three 12-step group meetings a day, she didn't think she was ready.

"I thought everybody there must have their lives all together," she said. "Of course, nobody *really* has it all together."

That was in 1999. She applied and got the job. For about seven

years, she worked a wide range of shifts. Then she switched to working overnights, and now her days end at 7 a.m. The women in the program know her history, how her journey began at Glass.

"When I hand out the chores, I tell them I've done every chore at least six times — I'm not asking you to do anything I didn't do," she said.

Kim knows some of the women at Glass struggle with the same doubts she had all those years ago. She understands they are in the hardest fights of their lives. Maybe some are thinking of leaving.

She knows the feeling. But she also knows they can get to where they need to be, the same way she did: one day at a time.



Leafing through words of wisdom

Deana, one of our Outpatient therapists, came up with this idea for clients and staff to share words of gratitude and encouragement on leaf cutouts. We're posting the collection on our hallway walls at our main office. Be sure to check them out if you visit The Pentecost Center!



VOICES OF THE CLIENTS: COMMENTS FROM THE PAST YEAR



Honesty with one's self is essential to the recovery journey. We hold ourselves to the same standard, so we survey clients to collect their opinions about our programs. Responses are guaranteed to be anonymous, so clients can be candid.

"This program is really helping me get my life and recovery together."

— Glass House resident

"The staff here at Safe Harbor and MMRS are approachable and are full of resources."

— Safe Harbor resident

"This is a great recovery center. It provides you with the tools and sharpens them to take with you when you graduate this program."

— Holden House resident

"This place has made a huge difference in my life."

— Outpatient client

"They are helping me save myself."

— Intensive Outpatient client

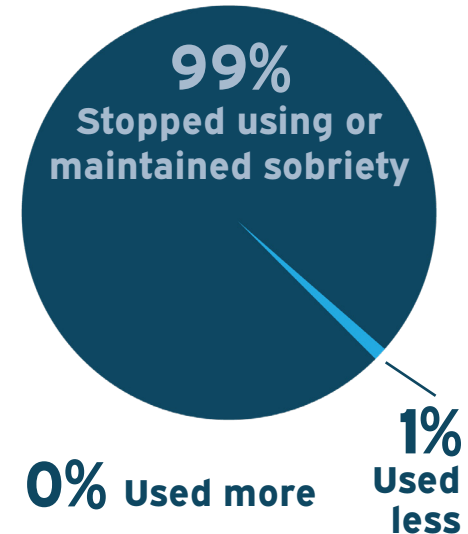
"This place gives you the opportunity to get help and work on yourself."

— Intensive Outpatient client

"The staff is great. The group is awesome. They show they really care and want what is best for you." *— Outpatient client*

A key question on our monthly survey asks about use of alcohol or drugs since entering treatment.

RESULTS FOR FY 23-24:



Last year, by the numbers

RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT: Provides highly structured, safe communities where alcohol and drug patients engage in three months of hard work to restore health of mind and body.

Women served at Glass House: 155
Men served at Holden House: 165

SAFE HARBOR: Homes – two for women, four for men – provide small, supportive communities for tapered-down care after treatment, with case management to find the next place to live, healthcare, jobs, relationships and other recovery capital.

Men and women served: 124

OUTPATIENT: Many thousands of hours of one-on-one and group sessions every year. Licensed therapists provide social support, case management and much more.

Men and women served: 788



ADDITIONAL SERVICES: Certified **peer recovery coaches** serve across all programs. They use their own experiences to provide support, case management, and guidance to clients – and help them navigate the requirements of sobriety courts.

And our one-of-a-kind **Lightkeepers** program provides paid, on-the-job training to participants in Safe Harbor. Lightkeepers played a **huge** role in getting The Pentecost Center ready so we could move in on June 24!

On the next page, learn more about Lightkeeper Shannon, shown above preparing the Pentecost Center roof for recoating.



Shine A Light 2024: Showing our work

We chose the name of our annual fundraising event, Shine A Light, for several reasons.

One was because we invite supporters to join us in providing a beacon of hope to those who are lost in the dark, struggling with the illness of addictions.

Another reason is that we are putting a spotlight on the needs our clients face.



We took that to a new level at this year's event, on Sept. 24, when we invited guests

to observe the journey of two fictionalized clients.

One was a married father of two whose alcoholism had him facing jail and the loss of his family,



Demonstrating the journey: Mid-Michigan Recovery Services staff members, from left, Raj, Abigail and Joanna present a fictionalized example of how we connect clients to help..

home and job. The other was a homeless single mother of three who was exhausted by a life addicted to heroin and fentanyl.

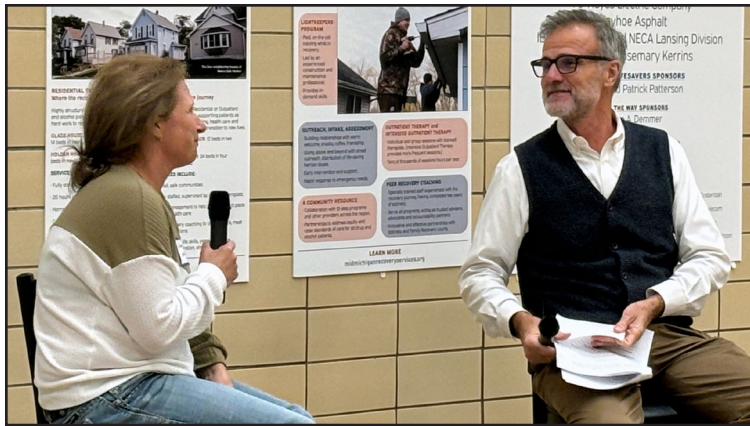
Both had endured years of traumas that were heartbreaking because they are all too common in the lives of those we serve.

With staff playing the roles of these clients, we walked through the months of hard work ahead: The grueling challenge of finding detox. The three-month commitment to residential treatment. Multiple Outpatient therapy sessions every week. Meeting court requirements. Seeking stability in Safe Harbor. Finding work and housing.

One of the most rewarding parts of the exercises came from our guests. Their insightful questions helped shine a light on how we and our clients work toward a brighter, healthier future.

We concluded by celebrating an inspiring example of just that.

Shannon told us how she used all of our services, starting at Glass



Celebrating Shannon: Executive Director Patrick Patterson interviews Shannon during the Shine A Light event.

House, continuing to Safe Harbor and Outpatient Therapy. As a Lightkeeper, she learned new skills in building and maintenance trades.

Today she has her own place, and used her Lightkeepers experience to land a job with good pay and benefits. The biggest news came after the event: *Shannon recently marked one full year of successful sobriety!*

We applaud Shannon, our staff and everyone who attended for helping to Shine A Light brighter than ever.



You can save a life.

Many of us know the heartbreaking helplessness of seeing a loved one struggle with addiction. The good news about recovery and healing: **It can be done!**

We see it every day. Mid-Michigan Recovery Services provides bold solutions thanks to our supporters. Contributions can be sent with the enclosed envelope or by mailing:

Mid-Michigan Recovery Services
316 Moores River Drive
Lansing, MI 48910

Or, donate securely online at bit.ly/Give2MMRS.

We also accept stock transfers and other modes of giving — including If you are age 70½ or older and need to take a Required Minimum Distribution from your IRA. **As always, consult your tax adviser.**

Mid-Michigan Recovery Services is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, EIN 38-2032352.

Contact us any questions at info@mmrsinc.org.

On the road to recovery

One of the biggest challenges in the early stages of recovery is transportation.

People who have lost their licenses or can't afford a car or even bus fare still have appointments to keep.

Our Transport Specialist Alexis knows all about those challenges, as a certified peer recovery coach.

This year, Alexis has been putting her experience to work, using our new 15-passenger van to take clients to treatment, medical appointments, court obligations, meetings and other supports.

"I enjoy it, because I get to talk to everybody and take them where



they need to go," Alexis said. "If someone has had a bad day, I talk to them about it, about the importance of waking up each day and doing something that fulfills them."

Since August, Alexis has provided more than 650 trips, and MMRS has distributed more than 1,150 free bus passes – another component of the state grant that funded the van's purchase and operation.

Lance Curtis, MMRS' program



Have van, will travel: Glass House staff member Diane, left, and Transport Specialist Alexis with our new van.

development coordinator, said the agency sought the grant because transportation is a significant barrier for those we serve, especially early in recovery.

"You can't succeed in treatment if you can't attend treatment," he said.



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