



MASSACHUSETTS HOUSING AND SHELTER ALLIANCE

INITIATING SOLUTIONS TO END HOMELESSNESS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance (MHSA) has been awarded a grant of \$25,000 by Gillette for an initiative to prevent homelessness in Massachusetts, Joe Finn, Executive Director of MHSA, said today.

The program, entitled *The Greater Boston Consortium for Discharge Planning (CDP)*, will prevent homelessness by reducing the number of discharges of mentally ill individuals from psychiatric hospitals into shelters in Greater Boston. Very often, people coming through the “front door” of shelters have been discharged through the “back door” of systems of care, including psychiatric hospitals. In fact, people with mental illnesses are over-represented in the homeless population. 66% report either substance abuse and/or mental health problems.

“This generous grant from Gillette will allow MHSA to take steps to ease the plight of individuals who would be homeless upon discharge from psychiatric hospitals” said Joe Finn. “We are grateful to Gillette, a true partner in our effort to advance an approach to homelessness prevention that is effective, cost-efficient, and humane.”

The CDP will hire a liaison to collaborate with private psychiatric hospitals, DMH, and homeless and housing service providers. This liaison, also known as a case coordinator, will work with hospital and shelter staffs to identify the individuals who repeatedly cycle in and out of psychiatric hospitalization, the streets, and shelter. Once these individuals are identified, the liaison, hospital, and shelter staffs will implement a combined case management approach to ensure that mentally ill individuals are discharged into appropriate residential or treatment settings.

“The Greater Boston Consortium for Discharge Planning is yet another step forward in our struggle to prevent homelessness in the Commonwealth. The support of Gillette is crucial in advancing these efforts” Finn said upon acceptance of the award.

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