



Community Bridges, Inc. (CBI)

Off the Streets Operations and Maintenance Plan

Background:

Launched in May 2020 during the pandemic as a partnership with the City and CBI, the Off The Streets (OTS) program provides temporary housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. OTS prioritizes service for Mesa's most vulnerable unsheltered neighbors including seniors, Veterans, families and single women, in a coordinated effort to help people secure housing and become self-sufficient. Our current partner in this program, CBI will run and operate the Program.

The City of Mesa and CBI began the OTS program in 2020 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic by renting rooms at a local hotel in East Mesa. Fast forward more than three years later and the OTS intervention has been instrumental in not only responding to the pandemic, but also, in providing a targeted intervention for households experiencing crisis, eviction or homelessness in Mesa. The leased hotel rooms provide stable housing with stays long enough to secure housing support and transition the participants to their next positive placement in the community working towards the ultimate goal of permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

The OTS hotel has demonstrated that with strategic use of Mesa's resources our community is benefiting from these interventions that are ending crisis behaviors, addressing homelessness and helping to alleviate some of the demands on the Mesa first responders such as PD, 911, and Park Rangers.

CBI is a local non-profit that specializes in this work and the services needed. CBI uses a holistic—or integrated—approach to addiction treatment and behavioral health concerns. Their goal is to consider a person's unique traits and issues in order to design a housing plan that is comprehensive and meets each individual's needs. While there are some basic, foundational services provided with participants at the hotel aimed to get them stable and positively advancing on their housing plan. CBI also has off-campus services that OTS participants will be transported to. CBI services include therapy, medications, peer support, inspiration, hope and other supportive services. CBI also connects participants to other services or housing as needed including substance abuse counselling, family advocacy, A New Leaf shelters, Save the Family, Workforce Center @ Mesa, and other local programs.

Many of CBI's employees have previously experienced homelessness or a major life crisis. These 'peers' are the heart of CBI, and they know exactly what it takes to build trust and help people discover their road to recovery. They provide daily assistance, hope, education, and support to people through treatment.

How OTS works at a glance:

- Participants are referred by Mesa first responders or non-profit partners.
- Mesa's most vulnerable are given priority placement. At the Grand Hotel location participants will be limited to seniors, families and domestic violence victims experiencing homelessness.
- Community Bridges, Inc. provides 24-7 on-site oversight and case management, and connects participants to off-campus services tailored to each person's needs.
- Program participants must adhere to program rules, commit to completing their and agree to work with CBI on their housing stability plan.
- Temporary housing is provided (generally up to 90 days) based on positive progress on housing plan and adherence to program rules.
- Those who do not follow the rules, or who refuse to participate in services, can be removed from the program.
- Closed campus model with no walk-up or drop-in services available or allowed.
- Dedicated, onsite police presence 24/7 ensures the program's campus offers a secure and welcoming environment.
- The surrounding area benefits from a heightened focus from CBI and Mesa PD.
- A good neighbor policy is used to minimize the impact and maintain the health and safety of the surrounding area.
- Approximately 75% of program participants successfully graduated to progress in housing stability planning and continued recovery.

CBI Continuum of Care Model:

The CBI continuum of care is focused on alleviating the individual or household's crisis needs and sustaining prevention and chronic condition care (i.e., diabetes maintenance). Through the CBI continuum of services, an extensive number of services are available including physical medical stabilization (PCP), medicine management, Medically Assisted Treatment (MAT), Therapeutic Counseling, Living Skills, Case Management, Peer Support, Groups (i.e., Intensive Outpatient Services, Anger Management), and Employment Services. Higher levels of services are available, including but not limited to short-term and long-term residential treatment, and short-term psych stabilization. The goal of the continuum of care services in the institutional setting is to move the member as quickly as possible into stable preventative care. The goal of preventative care is to maintain health on a non-crisis level. Preventative care is care management done by visiting with a clinician for maintenance care such as routine check-ups and medicine management.

OTS provides CBI with the capacity to respond to the members' needs to carve a new path when it hits an obstacle. The ebb and flow between crisis and stabilization, and OTS is an integral part of the stabilization because it is offering those crucial services to help stabilize the member at the most basic needs level – access to housing, access to phone line to access services, access to the Crisis Response Van, and for those not yet engaging in servicing there is the CBI and Mesa outreach teams to meet the member where they are at physically, emotionally and mentally.

The OTS program in 2022 includes up to 85 hotel rooms at (hotel) for adults and families vulnerable to COVID-19. A CBI Program Manager and CBI Navigators, or certified Peer Support Specialists, will staff the site seven days per week, 24 hours per day from 7 AM to 7 PM for the day shift, and 7 PM to 7 AM for the night shift.

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The hotel temporary housing recently added two-night shift navigators that are also based out of hotel additionally covering nights and weekends. The additional two navigators can close the gap of being able to dispatch a navigator from the hotel to assist with outreach in the community as needed. In addition, the flexibility of the two staff helps transport when the situation is not in need of the Crisis Response Team Van but is still in need of the support service of a CBI navigator.

Role of CBI's OTS Navigators:

The CBI Program Manager oversees the Navigators and will be responsible for managing participants' use of the program. The Navigators will complete the program intake for each participant, assist participants with moving in, and provide participant orientation on the use of the hotel. The Navigators complete daily room checks to check on each participant and assess the condition of their rooms. Room checks are tracked on a spreadsheet and monitored by the Program Manager. After 9 PM, the Navigators conduct hourly perimeter checks and walk the property to ensure the safety of all participants. The Navigators will assess the property, ensure that participants are smoking in designated areas only, and are not loitering in undesignated areas. The Navigators will also coordinate with the hotel for room cleaning and any other housing needs. If needed, the Navigators will respond to crisis incidents to de-escalate the crisis and connect the participant to appropriate follow up care, as needed.

As individuals enter the program, they establish a housing plan with their CBI Navigator. This plan helps determine goals for steps in their housing plan and address any other barriers to housing stability. As part of housing plans OTS Navigators complete a VI-SPDAT (measuring vulnerability) assessment if needed to enroll the participant(s) in the coordinated entry process for housing, begin on-line application processes for benefits, help to secure essential documents, or connect to other needed services such as scheduling medical appointments and transportation. The OTS Navigators will update the participant's community-based support system at least weekly to share observations, any areas of concern, and progress in working toward transition.

If the participant is not engaged in the housing plan, fails to meet regularly with the CBI team, and fails to make positive progress in their plan, staff will seek to re-engage the participant first through strong peer support. If that does not produce positive results, they will be offered alternative placement and be exited from the program. If it is determined they are not a good fit for the program for other reasons Navigators may assist in connecting them to additional programs within CBI's continuum of care such as Comprehensive Community Health Program (CCHP), SMI Permanent Supportive Housing Program, Projects for Assistance Transition from Homelessness (PATH), Veteran Connections, and others determined based on the participant eligibility.

The Navigators will enter participant demographic and service data, outcomes, and contact notes into the Maricopa County Continuum of Care Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and generate project progress reports. Navigators must enter their case notes into HMIS by the end of each shift in accordance with CBI's medical records documentation policy.

Urgent Outreach and Emergency/Crisis Response:

The OTS project will provide: (1) Crisis Response Team Vans for 24/7 services dedicated to the City of Mesa, (2) Dedicated Off the Streets Hotline to support Mesa first responders, and (3) a telephone line (480-644-HOPE) for community members to call, get information, or for those experiencing homelessness to access resources. This community resource line will be monitored M-Th 7a to 6p, (4) Off-duty police officer on site day and night.

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(1) Crisis Response Team Vans: CBI will provide a 24/7 Crisis Response Team (CRT) van dedicated solely to the City of Mesa. CBI Crisis Response Team (CRT) includes a Peer Support Specialist and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT). CBI will provide crisis stabilization and peer support services to an estimated 675 Mesa residents. CBI's CRT will be involved in an estimated 450 crisis assistance episodes of care for Mesa residents in response to the request from police, fire, park rangers and hospitals or self-initiated contact with Mesa residents. The CRT Van will provide immediate community-based crisis intervention for members experiencing mental illness, medical or substance use-related crises. The CRT team can triage on-site to resolve the problem through access to the CBI 24/7 triage nurse to determine the intervention needed. CRT can transport to facilities if higher-level interventions are required and relieve our first responders of police and fire. In addition, the CRT van will assist with the transport of members to the hotel from Access to Care related phone calls.

The CBI CRT Van will be co-located during the day in high density areas that are experiencing homelessness such as Paz de Cristo, St. Vincent de Paul's and other locations as identified by City of Mesa and/or CBI. At night, the CRT Van will be co-located at the OTS hotel, or St. Vincent de Paul's, and/or other locations as identified by City of Mesa and/or CBI.

The EMTs have access to CBI's 24/7 nurse (RN) triage line. The RN triage line connects the EMT to an RN to identify the appropriate level of care to coordinate for the member. Some of the common reasons for the EMT to contact the RN triage line include abdominal or chest pain, dizziness, detox symptoms, skin lacerations, sprained or swollen joints and limbs, sore throat, medication management issues, and mental health symptoms. The IHP clinic on-site at the HSC has a Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner (PNP) available for EMT referrals. The PNP can also complete disability verifications. In severe cases, the EMTs will utilize 911 or coordinate transport to a hospital or urgent clinic.

After the EMTs complete the initial assessment and determine the next step in the intervention, they are responsible for coordinating with internal and external agencies to meet the member's needs. The EMTs are part of the more extensive CBI program and can ensure that follow-up for coordination of member care is continued and does not stop after the crisis interaction with the EMTs. The EMTs also provide an opioid epidemic response such as naloxone education, naloxone distribution, and aftercare coordination when naloxone has been used on a patient. Between April and October, the EMT team specializes in health relief response and care, including education and training on health-related exposure and the management of heat-related emergencies such as heat exposure, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heatstroke.

The peer support specialist on the CRT team will help de-escalation and build rapport to minimize individuals' frustrations or concerns. The peer focuses on Motivational Interviewing to encourage the member to agree to voluntary services with dignity and respect willingly. A PSS supports a patient's engagement and continued participation in services for individuals who enter into any of CBI's systems of care. Our experience indicates that peer support is an important component in helping individuals engage in substance use and behavioral health treatment and take the necessary steps to maintain their recovery.

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(2) Off the Streets First Responder Hotline:

The OTS Hotline is a 24/7 phone line managed by CBI staff fully dedicated to assist Mesa first responders (Mesa PD and Fire, Mesa Park Rangers), and City of Mesa Employees when they are responding to a call or in contact with a person experiencing homelessness in the community.

Mesa first responders may call the hotline in order to request a CBI Navigator be dispatched to the field to provide peer support and offer transportation and support services to the individual experiencing homelessness so that First responders may return to their duties. This allows individuals in need to connect to services and allows the City of Mesa first responders to be able to enforce urban camping laws by offering safe alternatives to living on the street.

(3) Mesa Homeless Resource Line 480-644-HOPE (4673):

This line is operated by the City of Mesa Office of Homeless Solutions and provides assistance with questions, concerns or wishing to give back and provides assistance for people experiencing homelessness in Mesa. This community resource line will be monitored M-Th 7a to 6p.

(4) Mesa Police on site day and night

An off-duty officer will be part of this program and present 24 hours/day at the program location. This service is part of our Good Neighbor policy and is provided to support a safe environment and quality services so support the safety of staff and clients in crisis, and to help the surrounding community feel more comfortable and secure.

OTS Program Outcomes and Metrics:

CBI will submit a monthly data reports to include the following performance measures, specific to these emergency hotel/housing for OTS:

- *Hotel Temporary Housing Outcome Measure #1:* # of unduplicated residents that enter Mesa OTS
- *Hotel Temporary Housing Outcome Measure #2:* # of unduplicated program participants that create a case plan with one or more goals related to housing or addressing barriers to housing stability.
- *Hotel Temporary Housing Outcome Measure #3:* # of unduplicated program participants that transition from the program to a successful next step on their housing path.
- *Crisis Response Team Measure Outcome #1:* unduplicated program participants who have been connected to crisis stabilization and peer support services including support to fire, police, park rangers and hospitals as well as individuals on the street who are experiencing a behavioral health crisis. And of those connected to stabilization services, # who have entered into continued care and recovery program(s).
- *Crisis Response Team Measure Outcome #2:* Unduplicated program participants who successfully connect to substance use and behavioral health crisis needs stabilize their crisis, and of those connected, how many enter into continuing care services.
- *Crisis Response Team Measure Outcome #3:* 80% or more of the crisis admissions from program participants will transition into continuing care services on their crisis is stable.
- *OTS Hotline Measure Outcome #1:* number of calls received and dispatched.

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- *OTS Hotline Measure Outcome #2:* Outcomes of the calls and the number of calls that resulted in the participant getting off the streets, the average amount of time calls to this line took from call to temporary placement.
- *Post OTS Outcome Measure #1:* Number of unduplicated program participants who return to the program after graduating (recidivism).
- *Post OTS Outcome Measure #2:* (Longitudinal data) Percentage of former OTS participants (unduplicated) who graduated from OTS to their next housing step AND were successful in graduating from that placement. In other words, did our program help participants continue being successful after they graduated from the program?