

Established in 1997, Crossroads for Women has become a lifeline for the women who enter our program. The mission and primary goal of Crossroads for Women is to provide comprehensive, integrated services to support women working to break the cycle of homelessness and incarceration and achieve healthy, stable, and self-sufficient lives in the community for themselves and their children.

Crossroads for Women provides housing and intensive supportive services for homeless and formerly incarcerated women, all of whom are living well below federal poverty guidelines and have co-occurring mental and addictive disorders. Until this year, the agency operated two housing programs. "Maya's Place," located in SE Albuquerque, a highly structured 15 bed, transitional housing program for homeless women exiting jail or prison, a substance abuse treatment program, a shelter, or the streets. The other program, "The Crossroads", is permanent supportive housing utilizing up to 30 scattered site housing units for the women (and their children) who are cycling between homelessness, street activity, and incarceration.

In 2015, Crossroads procured two additional contracts, one with the NM Department of Corrections, and one with the County of Bernalillo. These contracts support our housing efforts and will double the number of women and their children that we are able to serve. Our expansion includes the opening of two new transitional housing programs; HOPE House in Albuquerque, will house 11 homeless women with co-occurring disorders and, The Pavilions in Los Lunas, will house up to 30 women exiting directly from prison. Additionally, we will now provide an additional 24 units of scattered site housing in Albuquerque for women exiting jail or as an alternative to jail. We have said for many years that if we double in size we will still not meet the demand for our services. More than doubling our size is a move in the right direction, but the demand for our services and the lack of available resources for marginalized women indicates that we still have work to do.

The ability to house people is a critical safety net, but the wraparound supportive services we provide is the backbone to our service delivery model and provides a comprehensive continuum of care as our client's transition from incarceration and homelessness to successful community living. In each of our programs the women work with case managers to set individual goals, and services are designed to assist each woman in achieving those goals. Intensive case management assists clients in obtaining psychiatric and medical care, child care, public benefits, and other necessary resources. Case managers also assist clients in coordinating with other agencies, including probation officers, CYFD and schools.

While still incarcerated at MDC, women may participate in a weekly Crossroads sponsored Life Skills and Education Group. This group helps identify prospective program participants and serves as the initial stage of treatment planning and case management, allowing Crossroads staff to begin arranging for appropriate services for woman prior to their release. The process allows staff to begin connecting incarcerated women to community based services, a procedure which is proven to reduce the risk of recidivism in the initial days following release

Crossroads collaborates with P, B, & J to bring community health navigators to some of the most at-risk women in our community. Our Pathways Navigator serves women recently released from incarceration, sex workers living on the street or in hotels, and women who may be on a waitlist for housing at Crossroads or elsewhere. Despite the challenges inherent in reaching out to women who often make every effort to stay prefer to stay undetectable, the Pathways Navigator builds trust with these women using a positive development approach. The Navigator has supporting women in getting off the streets, finding employment, obtaining education, accessing healthcare, maintaining sobriety, improving parenting skills, and making other changes to move toward leading self-sufficient, safe, and stable lives.

Our Vocational Program provides group and individual support to women transitioning out of homelessness and incarceration. Participants in this program develop a plan outlining education, training, and employment goals, and connect with the support services required to achieve their goals. Goals are established through building on client strengths and interests utilizing a developmental perspective. Clients collaborate with staff to research career and educational options, training required, and labor market demand. Participants then create a plan that includes steps and timelines for achieving progress toward their vocational goals.

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Family Support at Crossroads engages the entire family unit to ensure our clients are receiving and accessing services that provide parenting support, strengthen the role of the parent, and foster successful parent-child relationships. In order to succeed in fully supporting the families, the Family Specialist at Crossroads collaborates closely with the members of our clinical team. The Family Specialist conducts group and individual parenting training, home visits and individual assistance with legal and other issues related to the process of reunifying with children.

An intensive trauma informed Day Program is an integral component of our wraparound model of service delivery. Each week a variety of groups are conducted by both Crossroads for Women staff and community collaborators which focus on issues relevant to supporting the women's success. All of our Day Program activities are rooted in an understanding that women respond most effectively to gender-specific and trauma-informed interventions, many of which are relational in nature and supportive of community building within the program. Topics include: life and social skill building, relapse prevention, recovery support, medication and mental health stabilization, access to entitlement programs, holistic health services, nutrition, relationship building skills, trauma recovery, reintegration support, and domestic and sexual violence recovery.

Aftercare programming, despite being currently unfunded, continues to be a priority in our program model. Our aftercare services assist graduates of our programs in maintaining their stability through individual services and support the women in returning for groups or individual support in one of the domains through which we provide services.

Our program maintains a detailed plan for measuring success. The progress of individual clients is constantly assessed by program staff and formally monitored through the 90-day review of their treatment plan. Clients are encouraged to assess their own progress, reevaluate their strengths, and identify further steps to achieving their goals. The 90-day review includes re-administration of assessment instruments designed to distinguish areas the client is most concerned about, their areas of greatest need, as well as the client's mental health status. These assessments allow staff to identify increased symptoms or potential crisis. Additionally, the Case Manager formally reviews the relapse prevention and discharge plans with the client.

Our Clinical Team led by an Independently Licensed Clinical Director monitors our program's clinical success by conducting weekly staff meetings and providing individual supervision for each clinical employee to client's progress and attends to professional or clinical issues from the staff. The Clinical Director and independently licensed clinicians at each of our locations review all progress notes and other documentation, prepare data to comply with reporting requirements, coordinate with other care providers, and provide clinical oversight for the programs. In addition to the regular clinical review, focus groups, pre and posttests, and exit surveys are often conducted with program participants. Client's goal attainment is tracked through data collected by the clinical team in seven primary domains: mental health, substance abuse, medical, legal, family/social, housing, and independent living.

Success is measured and is contingent upon successful implementation of the unique model of wraparound services tailored specifically to meet the needs of the women in our program. Every component of programming at Crossroads is designed to overlap, ensuring a cohesive continuum of care which attends to the many facets of each woman's life. It is clear that upon entry into the program, many aspects of the women's lives had unraveled and in order to achieve success, the support and services need to be multifaceted and addressed if not simultaneously, at least in realistic succession. For example: The women cannot learn to parent without substance abuse treatment; they cannot control their addiction while living in a crack house; they cannot get or maintain a job without some life skills development and so on. One area of service delivery is dependent on the others to ensure success of all.

The overarching goals of Crossroads for Women are to: 1) provide an opportunity to women who are homeless and formerly incarcerated and suffering from co-occurring substance addiction and mental health disorders to access the support they need to achieve healthy and self-sufficient lives in the community; **2)** achieve systemic changes so that all persons exiting the criminal justice system can access community based supports in a timely and effective manner thereby breaking the cycle of homelessness and incarceration; and **3)** expand services available in the community for persons with co-occurring disorders who are at risk for homelessness so that they can avoid life on the streets and subsequent incarceration.

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