



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021

April 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021

## Our House Addiction Recovery Centre

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# HISTORY

Our House was founded by parishioners of St. Stephen the Martyr Anglican Church. At the time, the area around the church was surrounded by people in need, including many with substance use disorders who used the area as a safe place. The organization was originally founded as a halfway house, looking to give people a way to reshape their lives by providing drop-in services offered by a dedicated team of volunteers. Renovations allowed for short stays by young men and women who use drugs. Our House (Edmonton) Ltd. officially opened in May 1984 as a facility housing 14 residents – both men and women. Later it was changed to a 22-bed facility for men only. In 2008, an old motel was purchased to offer 60 beds for men recovering from addictions. The acquisition of the real estate property was made possible thanks to the generosity of the Edmonton Community Foundation.



*Staff Photo taken at the upcoming Our House site  
Boyle Street McCauley News, 1984*

# ABOUT

## Vision and Mission

### VISION

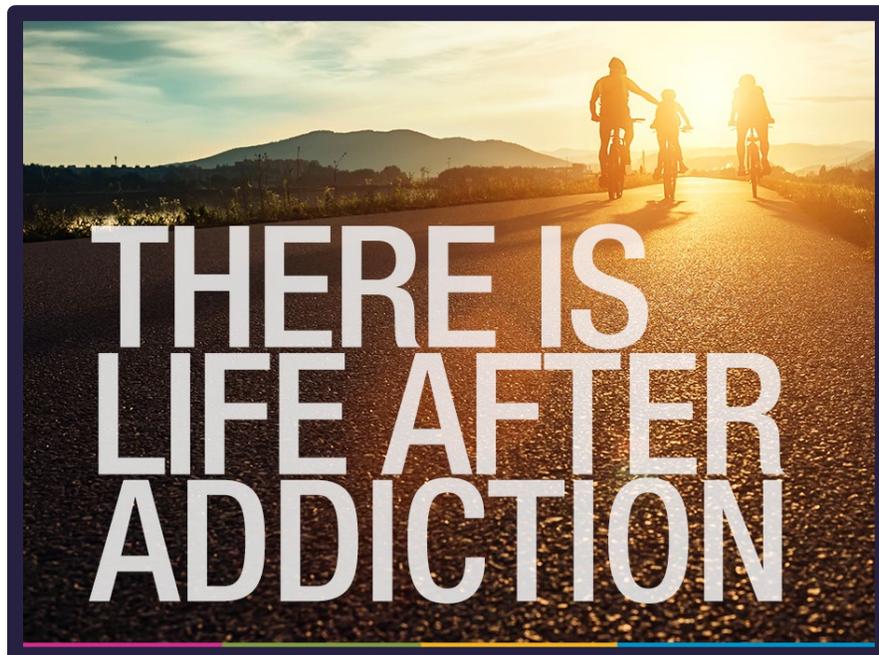
Our vision is a community where fewer people suffer from addictions.

### MISSION STATEMENT

Our House is an Addiction Recovery Centre, whose sole purpose is to provide an environment where individuals with addictions can embark on a recovery process directed towards a meaningful, productive lifestyle.

We fulfill our mission through:

1. A residential program for men eighteen years and over;
2. Recovery-directed programs for men and women; and
3. Education initiatives in the community.



## Board of Directors

<p><b>President/Chairperson</b> Kasia Zoledziowski Term: June 2014</p>	<p><b>Vice Chair/Medical Director</b> Dr. Daniel Ryan Term: October 2014</p>
<p><b>Treasurer</b> Scott Phillips Term: January 2018</p>	<p><b>Secretary</b> John Pfriem Term: January 2018</p>
<p><b>Past Chair</b> Madeline Sarafinchan Term: April 2013</p>	<p><b>Member at Large</b> Charles Fay January 2018</p>
<p><b>Member at Large</b> Dr. Andrew Greenshaw Term: January 2013</p>	<p><b>Member at Large</b> Lerena Greig Term: October 2019</p>
<p><b>Executive Director (ex officio)</b> Mark MacKenzie Term: June 2018 – October 2020</p>	<p><b>Director of Operations (ex officio)</b> Tyler Marshall Term: Dec 2020 – Mar 2021</p>
<p><b>Program Director (ex officio)</b> Rebecca Bernard Term: November 2020</p>	

## Message from the Board Chair

Our residents are men struggling with alcohol and drug addiction. The isolation requirements imposed temporarily in March distanced them from their loved ones. Overcoming addictions is extremely demanding and requires all the support one can get. At the present time, a virus smaller than a speck of dust has the power to impede this struggle. Our residents, determined to overcome addiction during these difficult times, deserve special recognition.

Throughout this period, our staff has been showing remarkable commitment to fulfill the mission of our organization and support the residents the best way possible. The additional challenges posed by the pandemic are forcing our staff to re-think how the care is provided and how it can be made more individual-centered. Some exciting new plans are in the works.

Just to be sure, the pandemic is also affecting our partners and stakeholders so instrumental in providing resources that enable our success. The economic contraction has had an adverse impact on all levels of government as well as private enterprises, putting additional pressures on Our House to do more with even less than before.

With all the negative impact the pandemic has had on our lives, some positive signs are emerging: we find ourselves caring more about each other, building more meaningful relationships, focusing on our own health and wellbeing, and finding new ways of doing business.

In closing, we would like to extend a special thank you to our outgoing Executive Director, Mark Mackenzie, and heartfelt welcome to our interim Director of Operations, Tyler Marshall.

Kasia Zoledziowski  
Chair, Board of Directors

# PROGRAM REPORT

This year has been focused on keeping all the clients, staff and volunteers safe. As of the date of writing, the house has not had any COVID cases. This speaks to how vigilant the clients have been when out in the community. The men are working incredibly hard to maintain safety. They have been expected to enhance cleaning protocols around the facility, ensure that handwashing/sanitizing has become a priority and be continuously masked all while fully participating in the recovery program.

Some changes this year has brought is the introduction of counseling via video, and many programming and scheduling changes to ensure that social distancing can occur during groups. Since January staff have been put into cohorts and each cohort is in office for two weeks and then working from home for two weeks. As a result, the counselors are facilitating four hours of group each day. This has been challenging for all, however the resilience and adaptability shown by everyone in this therapeutic community has been amazing. The clients have been in “lockdown” for most of the year, only permitted in the community for essentials. The clients have not been permitted to take public transit or go on passes for much of the year. Many times, visits with loved ones have been outdoors and for short periods of time. It is often said that adversity can bring people together or tear them apart. This community has banded together and adapted to the frequent changes due to covid in a beautiful and graceful way. The support the men show each other is heartwarming.

Funding has been secured to initiate two new programs. A noticeable gap in the continuum of care occurs when clients have completed detox and are waiting for a treatment bed. The new Community Outreach Program will provide services to clients who have been in the house and clients waiting to get into the house. Along with Community Outreach, Peer Support will also fill a gap in service. The Peer Support Program will allow for current clients to be trained, as well as alumni who would like to continue to support the men in the house.

Our House has also experienced some staff changes. In October our Executive Director left, and the leadership structure of the house was changed. In December Tyler Marshall was hired as our Director of Operations and Rebecca Bernard became the Program Director. This change has been a very positive one, and the insight and knowledge Tyler brings to the team is exemplary. The future for Our House is a bright one, hoping to continue program expansion, providing the best possible treatment to our clients, and fostering our therapeutic community to continue to be as successful as we are.

The impact of addiction varies greatly from client to client. Therefore, it becomes difficult to offer a concrete definition of “successful” recovery from addiction. Success is subjective and looks different for every client we encounter. Despite this caveat, our completion rate for this year was 20.30%. While this statistic captures the number of clients who graduated our program, it fails to capture the number of men who benefited tremendously from our program without graduating. This is especially true since many of our discharges occurred due to self-discharge (30.57%), not relapse (9.33%). Many of the men who come through our program continue to benefit from what they learn here and the help they receive, even if they transition out before graduation. Many of the men that transition out of our program before graduation or after graduation continue their counseling with either their previous counselor or with another counselor that is available to see them. This has proven successful with guiding the client to stay connected with recovery. This year has looked a little different because past clients are not allowed on site due to COVID-19, however the counselors have been doing virtual sessions. With the counselors working from home on two-week rotation due to COVID it has given the counselors opportunity to do outreach.

We have maintained 94.6% occupancy for this year. Our occupancy rate was below this year due to rooms being renovated. As well due to having to quarantine men when they come in, we were unable to put them with men that were already residents of Our House. Our waitlist stayed consistent with 60 men due to little discharges because of COVID. Majority of our referrals come from word of mouth and other treatment centres. Word of mouth is imperative to keeping our waitlist and our beds full.

By attending meetings and recovery focused events outside the house, our clients interact with men who share similar attitudes towards recovery. These men enter our program with the admirable willingness to surrender a year to building the necessary skills, and gaining the necessary habits, to ingrain new, sober ways of living into the foundation of how they navigate the world. Spreading the word about the benefits and availability of our program has been hindered since the COVID-19 outbreak. The outbreak has severely restricted the ability of our clients to come and go from the house. Many of the programs available to our clients that are imperative to a well-rounded recovery such as meetings, sweats, community events, and even access to the gym and recreation facilities has had severe impacts on our ability to fill beds. This year, many of our clients were between the ages of 25 and 54 and the two primary drugs of choice listed were alcohol and meth. Meth use has drastically increased in the Edmonton area and the effects that it has on individuals mental and physical health are often much more severe than for alcohol, or other hard drugs. This includes symptoms of psychosis and many confounding mental health issues such as schizophrenia and general deficits to cognitive functioning. Our team of counsellors work very patiently with these clients and do their best to ensure they feel safe and develop the tools they need to cope with their situations without turning to drugs.

Even though this has been an unprecedented year with the viral outbreak, we have managed to continue providing support to the men in our society who suffer from addiction. Men continue to reach out for treatment and continue to require our services and it is imperative to the health of our society and its constituents that we continue to be able to provide the holistic and long-term service that we do. As an intake manager, I work with the clients from the moment they enter our doors to the moment they leave, giving me the rewarding gift of seeing the beautiful and drastic changes that each of them encounters as they work our program here.

Rebecca Bernard  
Program Director

## Testimonials

~ VICTOR ~

“Hello my name is Viktor and I am an addict. I have been battling addiction since I was 14 years old. I am now nearing my fourth birthday clean and sober at the age of 42.

Addiction almost took my life. I was fortunate enough to find my place in Our House Addiction Recovery Centre. I held on tightly as I navigated my way through that process for 18 months with the support of the wonderful staff.

My life, as a result, is full of promise. I have my family back, I have my business back. I also get to watch my kids grow up with a clear mind and heart.

Without recovery nothing is possible. With recovery, anything is possible. Keep up the good fight friends.”

~ SHANE ~

“My name is Shane, and I am a grateful, recovering addict. I began my journey of recovery 17 years ago after I lost my mother to suicide. My mother’s death was almost expected as she had been in and out of the mental hospital since I was 13 years old, but nevertheless it was a traumatizing event that sent me straight into a heavy downward spiral with an addiction to crack cocaine. After a hard bottom, I went to Henwood in 2002. I was relieved to have found a tried-and-proven formula to live a clean and sober life through 12-step meetings. Once clean, I decided to better my life by finishing my high school, upgrading, then going to college at NAIT. I graduated with a diploma in Construction Engineering Technology. I met the most beautiful woman in the world, both inside and out, and she invited me to church. I gave my life over to Jesus and we were married soon after. We had two beautiful daughters, bought a house, and life was amazing. In February of 2014 we had a son who we named Elijah. Elijah was in and out of the Stollery and when he was two years old, we found out he had a very rare genetic disorder. I did not deal with my feelings around Elijah’s disorder; I tried to stay busy working and disassociated. I relapsed after 5 years clean and started using opiates like fentanyl. I ended up separating from my wife and children, selling our house, and living on the streets for 3 months. My old sponsor and friend has been clean for 19 years and he recommended Our House. I went to detox, they helped me fill out an application to Our House and before I knew it, I was accepted into Our House, where I still live. God Bless Our House.

# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## Statement of Operations

REVENUE	2020	2019
Donations	\$ 138,817	\$ 76,776
Gaming revenue (note 5)	76,740	26,704
Grants	257,633	300,722
Room and board fees	860,294	855,967
Other	1,705	4,325
	1,335,189	1,264,494
EXPENSES		
Amortization	95,390	86,520
Advertising	885	2,894
Automotive	17,284	15,179
Bank charges and interest	38,648	5,088
Equipment rental	131	154,336
Insurance	22,019	24,788
Office	22,392	12,025
Professional fees	25,910	52,340
Programs and workshops	192,975	181,176
Repairs and maintenance	50,609	72,907
Salaries and benefits	674,249	781,956
Telephone and utilities	210,639	257,989
Travel	1,087	1,497
	<u>1,352,218</u>	<u>1,648,695</u>
<b>DEFICIENCY OF REVENUES OVER</b>		
<b>EXPENSES BEFORE OTHER ITEMS</b>	<u>(17,029)</u>	<u>(384,201)</u>
<b>OTHER ITEMS</b>		
Interest		32
Dividend income	4,857	4,672
Unrealized gain (loss) on investments	(1,115)	4,870
Realized loss on sale of investments	0	(1,589)
	<u>3,742</u>	<u>7,985</u>
<b>DEFICIENCY OF</b>		
<b>REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<u>(13,287)</u>	<u>(376,216)</u>

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the following government and community partners for their support to Our House during this time.

- Government of Alberta
- City of Edmonton Grant
- Edmonton Community Foundation Grant
- Stenebaugh Foundation Grant
- Alberta Health Services
- The Edmonton Food Bank
- Medicine Shoppe on 118 Ave and 92 St.
- Optimax Benefits
- Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis (AGLC)
- Holy Trails Canada – 12k Run for Recovery