



Catholic Social Services | Summer 2022

Faces of Hope

Above: Tommy (green jacket) is currently working with a CSS Case Manager to find permanent housing.

Complex Care provides supportive environment for medically fragile individuals

With the help of generous funding partners, Catholic Social Services adds 83 more beds to Anchorage's shelter capacity and helps reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness in our community.

On a sunny afternoon in Complex Care, Tommy sits next to the large windows in the communal kitchen, enjoying the sunshine and watching the traffic on C Street.

Complex Care opened on June 6th at 303 West Fireweed Avenue as a facility to care for elderly and medically fragile individuals experiencing homelessness. The facility provides private bedrooms and access to

community kitchens and living spaces, which creates a quiet, recuperative environment for guests with advanced needs to work toward permanent stability.

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On Complex Care's opening day, Tommy took a cab to a grocery store, bought some vegetables, and announced to Program Director Jessie Talivaa, "I'm going to make me something healthy to eat." Tommy was a veteran cook on the Alaska Pipeline and around Anchorage, and he's used the community kitchen to make several meals for guests and

staff in the weeks that Complex Care has operated, including soups and stir fry.

Complex Care exists to meet a specific need growing in our community – homelessness among our medically fragile and elderly neighbors. Living in emergency shelter while trying to manage chronic medical problems like kidney failure, mobility challenges, or heart disease can be overwhelming,

leaving guests with no energy left to work toward permanent stability. By providing a supportive environment and staff who can help manage their healthcare needs, guests at Complex Care find more capacity to work on long-term goals.

Within weeks of opening, Complex Care already saw the impact that such a recuperative environment can have:

2 guests are already permanently housed, and several more have been approved for emergency housing vouchers and are searching for apartments, including Tommy.



Robin Dempsey

Catholic Social Services
Executive Director

Anchorage needs a low-barrier walk-up shelter

For the first time in 40 years, Anchorage doesn't have a low barrier walk-up shelter. Closing the Sullivan Arena without another option has left our city in crisis.

For hundreds of our neighbors, safe emergency shelter is now impossible to find.

CSS is doing everything we can. We opened Complex Care, Clare House and Brother Francis Shelter continue to provide shelter, and case management teams are housing as many people as possible.

It's now time for our entire community to come together to find real solutions for our neighbors. The greatest results are achieved when we all work together.

Our community needs a low barrier walk-up shelter, and we need it quickly.

Winter is coming, and without accessible emergency shelter, our neighbors' lives are at stake.

Providing emergency shelter is practical. It's logical. It's the right thing to do.

Thank you for your ongoing support and care for our neighbors without homes. Your support saves lives.



Complex Care is the first of its kind, the result of decades of experience and learning

Complex Care provides the chance to demonstrate the benefits of smaller, specialized shelters, thanks to our partners: Calista Corporation, Chugach Alaska Corporation, Doyon, Limited, the Municipality of Anchorage, Providence Health & Services, Rasmuson Foundation, and Weidner Apartment Homes.

In the 55 years that Catholic Social Services has served our community, we've learned a lot about what works best to create both long-term success and dignity for our neighbors in need.

When COVID began, Brother Francis Shelter recognized the need to reduce capacity to keep our guests safe and socially distanced. To meet the needs of our community, BFS specialized its care to serve elderly and medically fragile guests who needed services like transportation to and from

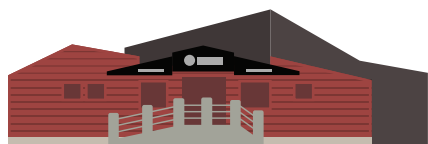
medical appointments, one-on-one assistance from staff, and wheelchair-accessible bathrooms.

That experience confirmed what we'd long believed: **smaller, specialized shelters and facilities are the best solution for Anchorage's homeless response system**, designed for serving chronic needs. Smaller, specialized shelters implement everything we've learned at other shelters with our research-backed, trauma-informed care, providing care in a manner that reinforces

guests' dignity and agency that empowers them to get back to stability and long-term success.

Together with Clare House, Brother Francis Shelter, and Medical Respite, Complex Care broadens our network of services to support people experiencing homelessness at every stage of life, from the very young to the elderly, from workforce-ready to medically fragile.

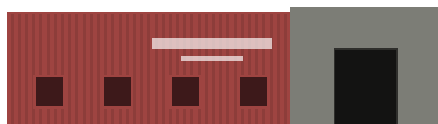
Providing shelter for mothers and children, adults, and medically fragile individuals



Clare House
serves 49 *mothers and children*



Complex Care
serves 83 *elderly and medically fragile individuals with chronic medical needs*



Brother Francis Shelter
serves 76 *adults, including 10 in Medical Respite with acute medical needs*

*Together with Clare House, Brother Francis Shelter, and Medical Respite, Complex Care broadens our network of services to **support people experiencing homelessness at every stage of life, from the very young to the elderly, from workforce-ready to medically fragile.***

Your support made our 31st Charity Ball a big success

We were thrilled to join so many of you at The Hotel Captain Cook for a night of supporting Clare House. This year's Charity Ball raised more than \$250,000 for Clare House, ensuring that it will remain a safe haven for children and families for generations to come.



If you would like to make a contribution to Catholic Social Services, visit cssalaska.org/donate.

If you have any questions about giving, contact Tricia Teasley at tteasley@cssalaska.org or 907-250-8040.