



Note from our
PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Serving the residents of Mercy Hospice has been incredibly rewarding. This past year has been so tough for everyone, but your generous and consistent support has made it much easier for the Mercy Hospice staff and residents.

During quarantine, COVID precautions were taken very seriously. There was enforcement of masks, hand sanitizers, gloves and barriers separating spaces. Residents and staff frequently got tested, and if anyone tested positive, they quarantined in a nearby city-operated hotel for two weeks. Even with precautions Mercy experienced a small outbreak with residents and staff. When a resident came back from being quarantined, they explained how happy they were to return home to Mercy.

Operations still ran smoothly, but the isolation was a difficult adjustment for the residents losing direct contact to their outside support systems. I am so proud of our entire community, who pulled together and rose to the challenge.

When women first come to Mercy Hospice, there can be a lot of frustration and self-doubt built up in them. Recovery from addiction is a long and hard process. Our goal is to create a safe space for people to talk and understand what they are feeling. We provide a sense of family and community where mutual care and understanding are the foundation. We want our women to believe in themselves and feel proud of themselves, even for the smallest accomplishments. Our staff provide that support to the residents everyday.

I want to close by sincerely thanking all of you who faithfully support us throughout the year. I am moved by your constant generosity, and I want you to know that we work tirelessly to support the ladies of Mercy Hospice. It is because of you that we can continue to help them choose a better life. Thank you and God bless you!

Renee Hudson-Small, LSW, Program Director

SUMMER 2021



MERCY MATTERS



ANNUAL WALK FOR RECOVERY IS BACK!

We are excited to be able to join together and celebrate recovery through the annual PRO-ACT Recovery Walk! Current and former Mercy residents along with family and friends have been participating in the annual PRO-ACT Recovery Walks for over a decade as part of our observance of September as National Recovery Month.

This year, we hope to put a whole team together so keep your eyes peeled for more communications and mark Saturday, September 18th on your calendars. For more information, go to our website www.mercyhospicephilly.org.

Let's show our neighbors and the world that we are working together - and walking together - to support those in recovery!

We are a **community** grounded in faith, mutual **respect** and support where women in **recovery** and their families can **heal**, grow and pursue **new beginnings** on their way to self-sufficient and **sober** living.

MERCY HOSPICE MISSION STATEMENT

3 Ways to Support MERCY HOSPICE:
1 Make a one-time or recurring gift online at www.mercyhospicephilly.org
2 www.mercyhospicephilly.org
3 by mailing a check in the enclosed remit envelope with United Way Designation: # 00083

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MERCY MATTERS

FORMER
CLIENT

Lakisha

MERCY CHANGED THE COURSE OF MY LIFE

Lakisha struggled with alcohol and addictive drugs for over 13 years while she was a mother of three children. *“It was hard to care for them well while I was struggling with addictions. There was a lot of messiness and no stability in my life,”* she explained. Eventually, she was unable to take care of her children and found herself homeless.

“*Mercy Hospice is a place for anybody who is on a path to bettering themselves. I didn’t know places like Mercy existed, and it changed the course of my life.*” — Lakisha, former Mercy Hospice resident & current Visitation Homes resident

“I had become a totally different person through those years; a stranger to myself and to my friends and family,” Lakisha said. In 2016, she came to Philadelphia from New Jersey to stay in another transitional facility. They helped her get on her feet for the time being, although it was not permanent. She soon had a relapse and ended up being pregnant with her fourth daughter. *“That changed everything for me, and I had another reason to live.”*

In January 2020, Lakisha met with the Mercy Hospice staff. Lakisha and her newborn daughter stayed together at Mercy Hospice for 90 days, while the staff helped them transition into CSS’s Visitation Homes. They helped Lakisha heal and learn how to better care for her daughter.

“When I had my youngest daughter, I knew things needed to change in my life so I would be able to provide for her. The whole recovery process was tough but knowing that I was doing it for and with my daughter gave me extra strength. I don’t know what I would have done without Mercy Hospice allowing my daughter to stay with me.”



FORMER
CLIENT

Chenise

I FELT LIKE I BELONGED AT MERCY THE SECOND I WALKED IN

“*The staff is so helpful and very understanding of my struggles. They are there whenever I needed something and always supportive of me. The other women would share stories together, and we all bonded together, knowing that there are other women struggling with the same things as us. We are not alone.*”

— Chenise, former resident

money. This was incredibly helpful because once I left Mercy Hospice, I had a savings built up that I never had before.”

With that savings, Chenise found her own housing and was able to buy groceries on her own. She is careful to save a percentage of her paychecks so that she always has money saved in case of an emergency. *“I had never learned about money management before, and I am grateful that Mercy Hospice taught me.”* Now, Chenise works in a nursing and rehab facility and helps other women that are struggling like she was.

Chenise found herself at an in-patient rehab in October 2020 after struggling with addictions. In April 2021, she overheard women at the rehab facility talking about Mercy Hospice, and she mentioned it to her case worker, who thought Mercy Hospice would be a great fit for her. Chenise was looking for a transitional home where she could still go to work. So, she had a phone interview with Mercy staff. At first, she had some reservations and questions, but she knew it would be a great home as soon as she walked in the door. She immediately felt a sense of community and belonging that she had not felt in other homes.

“The thing I appreciated the most about Mercy Hospice was that they did not deny me going to work or school while I was living there. I wanted to improve my life through working and education, and they were able to be flexible with my case management meetings so that I could do that. They helped me get the necessary ID and paperwork done for my job, and they taught me how to save

THE MERCY RESIDENTS TAUGHT ME ABOUT HEALING, GROWTH, AND STRENGTH

Vivian has worked as the Office Manager at Mercy Hospice for the last 5 years. She answers the phone, monitors the front door, and is there to talk with residents whenever they need it.

Vivian creates a comfortable and welcoming environment for all the women at Mercy Hospice. She sees when the women need someone to talk to, and she wants them to know that they can open up to her if they want to. *“Residents sometimes look at the staff as flawless or having it all together, but I want them to know that we go through things too.”*

Vivian explained that one resident lost her son a few months ago, and she was very visibly upset. Vivian, also recently suffering the loss of her mother, felt that same grief. Vivian spoke with that client every day, and they were able to confide in each other and lift each other up.

When a resident is struggling with something in particular, the entire house is a support system for them. The women encourage each other constantly, and always celebrate the small victories. Vivian and the rest of the Mercy staff encourage each resident to be themselves and lift each other up. There is strength in community.

Vivian

DEDICATED
FRONTLINE
STAFF



“*Working at Mercy Hospice has completely changed my view on this community of women. The common belief is ‘They could do better if they tried harder,’ but that is simply not the case. Addictions and homelessness are often not a choice. People need real help to heal. Many people are only one missed paycheck or one bad decision away from being in their shoes. I have been so humbled by the women at Mercy Hospice, they have taught me so much about healing, growth, and strength.*”

— Vivian, Mercy Hospice Staff