

FAQ's

Don Guanella Village Transition to the Community

1. What drove the decision to move from campus to community?

The decision was driven by program/service demands and fiscal realities. Several years of dialogue with the State Office of Developmental Programs have indicated that residential care in community settings reflects best practice thinking. The State has gradually downsized larger public and private licensed facilities. Our 125 beds, with particular attention to the main building of the Cardinal Krol Center (CKC) of 84 beds, was a focal point of concern.

A brief proposal was given to the state in summer, 2011 that had a Phase 1 plan that depopulated the main building through usage of the former Don Guanella School (DGS) cottages then followed by a Phase 2 that would gradually move some men to community group homes. State accepted that plan in February, 2012.

It is fiscally unsound for the Don Guanella Village (DGV) program to remain in the CKC because it will be significantly underutilized as the men move to the community.

The depopulation of the campus residential program and the underutilization of the buildings on the campus coupled with the financial difficulties of the Archdiocese have also led to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia marketing the property for sale, which the Archdiocese owns, on which Don Guanella Village sits. A first round of bidding has taken place with 15 bids being received and a second round of bidding is in process with the probability that the buyer of the property will be announced in the upcoming months.

2. What is the timetable for moving men to the community? What are the potential sites?

Thirty men will move into 5 group homes by June, 2013—there will be a complement of 4 to 8 men per home. These are rental properties. A second proposal and budget was submitted and informal acceptance was given in August, 2013 and we await inclusion in Governor's budget July 2014.

We looked within Chester and Delaware County for properties for both rental and new construction sites. Our first goal is to explore existing parish properties that have adequate land space whose pastors and parish councils are willing to approve and accept us as part of their parish community service programs. This process will then move to zoning within the townships. Ongoing information will be made available as well as we go through these processes.

We have currently identified three parishes within the local area and one existing facility within Catholic Social Services, located in Northeast Philadelphia. These parishes seem to have enough available space to accommodate the homes anticipated for next fiscal year.

3. How will decisions be made as to which men will move? How will families be involved?

Our regulations require that we work within the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) model. The standards of the regulations are quite specific as to how to achieve compliance to this end. Additionally, the regulations require that every person meets the criteria established by definition of need for Active Treatment.

To break this apart in more easily understood terms, we will be looking at the following to assess which men will move:

- A. Assessment following an Essential Lifestyle Planning
- B. Lifetime medical history.
- C. Current and projected physician services and orders identifying medical needs.
- D. Individual “choice” with support of IDT and education relative to alternatives available.
- E. Family opinions regarding future planning.
- F. Individual transitional plan developed through IDT prior to move.
- G. County and advocacy participation in transitional plans.

4. What will the homes look like?

Each home newly constructed home will be rancher style, 8 bedrooms and 3000-3250 sq. feet of living space with 8 residents living in the homes. The homes will be constructed with a contemporized exterior with gable roofs and with porch entrance and a patio or courtyard area.

5. How will the homes be staffed? How will they be monitored?

Our regulations require 24 hour awake staff. Each home would have a minimum of 2 staff persons per shift and have management on site. We would operate under the administrative supervision of Catholic Social Services of the Archdioceses, Developmental Programs.

6. What are the plans for the relocation of the Day Program services?

All members of CKC, Divine Providence Village, and current day student members will be offered the opportunity to continue participation in our day program services at an off-campus location at Our Lady of Fatima School in Secane.

7. How will we ensure that necessary medical services be provided when we are in the community?

Medical services will continue to be delivered as they are now as mandated by regulatory bodies. The manner in which they are delivered may change commensurate with a community-based model, but there will be no decrease in medically necessary services.

8. What are the plans for the relocation of the administrative and program teams?

Administrative and program staff will be relocated to St. Gabriel's parish school in Norwood.

9. What is the profile of a man who will live in the group home?

Typically, he will be from 40 to 60 years of age. Approximately one quarter of the men will likely be a Down's syndrome individual. Although all will be intellectually disabled, these men will have the emotional and social capacity to live and participate in community and parish life. They will be screened carefully and supervised by the DGV professionals.