



November 10, 2016

Dear Friends of ECS,

We are writing to inform you of a significant program change. You may have heard that we will be discontinuing operation of our Downtown Safe Haven transitional housing program in the first quarter of 2017. Since 1999, we have operated this program at 1425 C Street which has helped hundreds of mentally ill homeless adults stabilize their lives and go on to more permanent housing. We are tremendously proud of the excellent work done by dedicated and caring staff at this location, and it is with a sense of sadness that we acknowledge that to stay current with best practices in homeless housing, we must accept a new reality.

Transitional housing is being replaced with permanent supportive housing, which means that people go immediately into homes that they will not have to leave after a few months. Our 108-year-old building does not accommodate the individual housing units required in permanent supportive housing. The good news is that we have found a non-profit developer who builds and operates permanent housing to acquire and redevelop the site. The existing 1908 frame buildings that currently house 28 people will be demolished and a new, state-of-the-art permanent housing structure will be built to house 44 people. While our program is ending, we are pleased that a new provider will create a 50% increase in housing for this population.

When we began trying to determine how to move forward with this situation we set our priorities to (1) be sensitive to the needs of the people we serve, (2) be sensitive to the wonderful staff who have worked so diligently to care for our residents, and (3) to do it in a way that will leave the agency stronger by removing debt and obligations on the property that would have continued through 2054. We were able to achieve these goals in negotiations over the last two years. And so, in spite of the fact that we will say good-bye to an excellent program, we believe this is a win-win for the agency and the mentally ill homeless we serve and will allow us to continue in our mission of *Serving God by serving those in need.*

As always, please feel free to contact us with any questions, concerns or comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lesslie Keller".

Lesslie Keller
CEO/Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Turnbull".

Steve Turnbull
Board President