



improving lives, strengthening communities

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### August 27 “Our Place” Drop-in Center Grand Opening Fostering Mental Health Recovery

Helena MT. On Thursday, August 27, 2:30 to 3:30, at 631 North Last Chance Gulch, community members are invited to celebrate the Grand Opening of Our Place, a consumer-driven, consumer-run Drop-in Center.

“Consumers” are those who have experienced mental illness and/or co-occurring substance abuse issues and so are “consumers” of mental health services. Our Place offers social activities, peer support, help in obtaining services, and, most critically, a place to relax and have fun, especially when other traditional mental health services are closed during evening and weekend hours.

Rocky Mountain Development Council, working with the state-created Helena Local Advisory Council, took the lead in seeking funding for and helping to launch Our Place. Board members, RMDC staff and community leaders including Lewis and Clark County Commissioner Andy Hunthausen and Helena Mayor Jim Smith reviewed other consumer-run best practice drop-in models around the state and Nation, including a California center with a 20-year success record.

Primary funding for Our Place program development, training and staffing came through contracted grant funds from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Addictive and Mental Disorders Division. Over time, Our Place Board members intend to assume full financial and managerial responsibility.

Our Place is designed to promote and encourage recovery and wellness through positive interactions and experiences within a peer-directed, community based environment. As Elaine Bruce, RMDC Community Mental Health Program Manager, explains, “Our Place isn’t a treatment or crisis facility. Instead, consumers can socialize and support each other in a comfortable, accepting setting.”

Mayor Smith, Commissioner and RMDC Board member Andy Hunthausen, RMDC Executive Director, and Our Place Board members will speak at the grand opening. Board members will provide tours and host a light reception. “We really want the community to come check us out,” notes Board member Quentin Schroeter. “We want folks to understand who we are and what we do. We want consumers to feel at home here.”

“With the new Drop-In Center,” says RMDC’s Director Gene Leuwer, “Helena will have gained one more critical service needed by people working to recover from mental illness.”

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Senior Citizen Centers

Senior Companions

Senior Transportation

For further information about Our Place Drop-in Center, Elaine Bruce, Community Mental Health Program Manager, RMDC, 457-7326 , [ebruce@rmdc.net](mailto:ebruce@rmdc.net).

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