

RIVERHEAD NEWS-REVIEW

New Recovery Home Open In Riverhead

Amanda Olsen | November 25, 2024



On Nov. 20, Stony Brook Eastern Long Island Hospital opened the first of two new recovery homes in Flanders that will provide housing for women and LGBTQ individuals overcoming addiction. The homes were established through a Suffolk County Opioid Grant, and the new facility holds 12 beds and is already receiving clients.

“It’s really an opportunity to start somewhere safe and new. We talk about people, places and things when it comes to a person’s recovery,” said Elizabeth Donner Day, director of SBELIH’s Quannacut Outpatient Services. “[It may be] leaving a home environment or an unsafe, domestic violence relationship to a place where a person can just take care of themselves ... The opportunity to just focus on yourself in early recovery is really important so that you can build that foundation and go forward, whether it’s getting a full time or part

time job, saving up to move into a new place, or gaining custody or visitation back with children.”

The homes join the already established recovery residence for men in Mattituck to provide supportive housing for up to 34 residents at a time. Residents receive services through Stony Brook Medicine’s network, including medical and mental health care, substance use counseling and vocational guidance. Each location is tailored to meet the needs of different populations and address housing and health disparities for the East End.

This home is part of the hospital’s addiction continuum, one step in a multi-part process to help people suffering from an addiction disorder to get back on their feet. “We’re very proud to open these two new recovery homes. These are exclusively female homes, which are in desperate need in Suffolk County. They’re open to anyone who qualifies,” said Paul Connor, chief administrative officer for Stony Brook ELIH. “We have another 12-bed home in Mattituck. [There are] 10 acute detox beds at the hospital and 27 rehab beds in Riverhead. We have a large outpatient addiction program.” Non-binary and transgender patients are also accommodated in the new homes.

Estimates from the 2021 National Survey on Drug Use and Health indicate that 2.8 million New Yorkers aged 12 years and older had a substance use disorder in the past year. Substance use disorders are associated with numerous potential adverse impacts to the health and well-being of an individual as well as their family and community. Of New Yorkers admitted to treatment in 2022, 27.9% were female. In 2023, the American Addiction Centers reported that 20.7 million females 12 and older had a substance use disorder. Additionally, National Institute on Drug Abuse research suggests that women are more susceptible to cravings and relapse.

One of the most compelling success stories from the overall program involved a young man from Stony Brook who went through the continuum. “He went through our program, he got his act together, went out west and is a ranch hand on an active horse ranch,” said Mr. Connor. “He was a young kid who got into trouble, and we provided some stability and training for him to be able to contend with that.” While the patient experienced a relapse, which is often part of addiction recovery, “the second time around, it worked, and he continues to be sober.”

Ms. Day sees the establishment of these recovery homes as a bridge towards a better future for individuals affected by substance use disorder. “It really is very humbling to work with a person who’s on their path to recovery, and it’s not always easy, but I think that mental health, addiction, physical health, they all have their own stigma, and they touch everyone in some way,” said Ms. Day. “So being able to have a home where women can find support and resources to rebuild their lives, working on their healing, working on their recovery, and working within our community, I think that’s what I’m most excited about, is just that it’s an opportunity for hope and healing.”