



Day by Day

The mission of Christ House is to provide comprehensive and compassionate health care to sick and homeless men from the District of Columbia, and to assist them in addressing the critical issues to help them break the cycle of homelessness.

TAKING CONTROL OF DIABETES

Care and education gives patients hope for a healthier life

One-third of all Christ House patients are diabetic. As a result, managing this demanding disease is a central component of our medical care.

Our patients often present additional complications due to years of either neglecting to manage their diabetes or not even knowing that they have the disease.

Complications can include heart disease, nerve pain, kidney disease, vision problems, and circulatory problems which delay healing of wounds. Severe circulatory problems may lead to amputations and limited mobility.

Without intervention, a person with long-term, unmanaged diabe-

tes has a higher risk of early death.

Managing diabetes requires a predictable schedule, the opportunity and ability for consistent exercise, and access to healthy food. These ideal conditions are rarely a reality for someone experiencing homelessness.

Individuals who are homeless often do not have a choice in what, how much, or when they eat. And when their primary focus is on safety and survival, exercise is rarely a priority.

Unlike some conditions which require taking just one pill every day or week, diabetics may need to adjust the amount and

type of medication based on recent food intake and blood sugar levels. For those whose ability to plan meals and test levels is sporadic, not being able to adjust medication appropriately will make it less effective.

Another obstacle that we encounter is the thought that diabetes is unmanageable. Because some diabetics don't believe that they can prevent complications, they ignore their disease altogether.

While a person experiencing

Facts & Figures

- **9.3% of the general population** in the U.S. has diabetes
- **33% of our patients** arrive with diagnosed or undiagnosed diabetes
- Some patients have to check their **blood sugar levels up to four times per day**
- Diabetes is the **primary medical concern for 1/4** of our diabetic patients
- **Risk of early death is 50% higher** for adults with diabetes than adults without diabetes



A patient and nursing assistant test blood sugar levels

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homelessness certainly encounters high barriers to managing diabetes, we know that our patients can control their disease with proper education, encouragement, treatment of existing complications, and the building of a more stable future.



A nursing assistant provides a diabetic foot treatment

Our approach to diabetes treatment is two-fold.

First, we stabilize a patient's blood sugar levels and address any existing complications. Our medical team performs blood sugar checks during scheduled time slots each day. Many patients need to be checked two to four times a day as they stabilize and learn to eat properly.

Next, we provide educational opportunities for patients to learn how to manage their condition once they become independent. We teach nutritional principles and the proper techniques for checking blood sugar levels and delivering insulin.

We will soon start a four-part

series on diabetes in our weekly health promotion class. We believe this will benefit those who have been diagnosed with diabetes, those who are at risk to develop it in the future, and those who may have a friend or family member with the disease.

One former diabetic patient,

Theodore, was cognitively and developmentally impaired. He could not grasp the principles of proper nutrition and after years of uncontrolled diabetes, his health declined rapidly. He lost the ability to work his long-

term custodial job and was sent to Christ House with the goal of stabilizing his diabetes.

With thoughtful and regular care from our medical staff, Theodore improved dramatically. He is now a member of the Kairos Program and with minimal support, he manages his diabetes and is able to volunteer and participate fully

in community life.

While diabetes can be a daunting disease for

someone who is already in a vulnerable state, we are determined to use every resource to minimize its effect on our patients' lives. With your support, we will continue to help our patients take control of this disease and make a healthier future possible.

GIVE THE GIFT OF HOPE

This holiday season, give your loved ones the gift of a donation to Christ House in their honor. They will be happy to know that your thoughtful gift provides healing and hope to a Christ House patient.

A gift of...

- \$28** provides a month's worth of supplies for a patient with diabetes
- \$40** buys one week's worth of bus fare for patients and their escorts
- \$70** pays for a tank of gas for the patient transport van
- \$90** buys groceries for one lunch for everyone at Christ House
- \$140** pays for one nursing assistant's work day

We can send you a special Alternative Christmas Gift card for each person that you designate, or we can send the card directly to the person(s) with a description of the work your gift supports. You will also receive a receipt for your gift.

For delivery before December 25, please contact us by noon on December 16.

To place a special order for an alternative Christmas gift, please contact Sarah Katz in the Development Office at (202) 328-1100 or sarah.katz@christhouse.org.

A SEASON OF CHANGE & GRATITUDE



Lizzie Bebbler, Executive Director, and Allen Goetcheus, Pastor

In early August, after 30 years of service as President of Christ House, Allen Goetcheus stepped down from his administrative duties to fully focus his time as Pastor and Director of Spiritual Life. Allen has faithfully led our organization with unending commitment, wisdom, and creativity for the past three decades. In so many ways, Christ House is what it is because of his wonderful leadership.

Allen led Christ House to serve over 8,300 patients and began the Kairos program which has served 192 men. He also developed a meaningful spiritual program that incorporates both pastoral counseling as well as weekly spiritual services available to patients, Kairos members, staff and volunteers. We are truly grateful to Allen for the gift of his life's work and celebrate he and Janelle remaining in the Christ House community where he will serve as Pastor and Janelle will continue as Medical Director of Christ House.

Christ House is blessed to have Lizzie Bebbler serve as the new

Executive Director/CEO, assuming all administrative responsibilities for Christ House.

Lizzie came to Christ House in 2008 as the Director of Volunteers and most recently served in the capacity of chaplain and Director of Yearlong Volunteers. She received her Master's in Divinity degree from George W. Truett Theological Seminary and brings strong administrative talents and a deep commitment to the ongoing vision of our community.

Additionally, Margaret Wanjui retired from her position as a cook in the Christ House kitchen after over 30 years of service. Marga-



Margaret Wanjui, served as a cook for 30 years

ret was the very first staff hire at Christ House and has truly served the community here with great love and dedication.

In the words of a Kairos Program member: "She treated us like family and always told us to take our time eating dinner. And she makes the world's best liver and onions!"

A volunteer shared, "Her faith has been an inspiration to me for many years. She'll never know the impact that she's had on us."

Allen Goetcheus said proudly, "She embodies the spirit of Christ House."

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE GIVING

When you designate Christ House on your Combined Federal Campaign pledge form, you are making a powerful impact on the life of someone experiencing illness and homelessness. Thank you for your generosity!



Christ House
CFC # 34256
UW # 8385

DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT



We're nearing the end of our fall matching challenge! We've raised nearly \$102,000 so far, will you help us reach our \$150,000 goal?

Through October 31st, your donations will be matched dollar-for-dollar!

The money raised during this matching challenge will make a lifelong impact on the lives of our patients and Kairos Program members.

You can mail your check in the envelope enclosed or give online at www.ChristHouse.org/donate.

KAIROS COMMUNITY ROOM RENOVATION

When we told you that the Community Room where Kairos Program men gather to celebrate and fellowship needed some work, you responded swiftly and generously. **Because of your giving, this renovation is fully funded!**

Work on the community room will start mid-October, beginning with the installation of new countertops, carpet, and kitchen flooring. We can't wait to share pictures of the new room with you. Thank you for making this much-needed improvement possible!



The Advance Advancing hope in Christ's name #381215

CFC #34256 • UW #8385

Return Service Requested
www.ChristHouse.org



CHRIST HOUSE
1717 Columbia Road, NW
Washington, DC 20009

