



**Date:** June 1, 2010

**Contact:** Mary Gear, administrator, SPD Office of Licensing and Quality of Care  
[Mary.Gear@state.or.us](mailto:Mary.Gear@state.or.us), 503-945-5833

## **Our House honored for helping people with HIV/AIDS and other disabilities**

---

**Salem**—Too often, one of the biggest issues facing people living with HIV/AIDS is finding stable and safe housing. One long-time care organization, Portland's nonprofit Our House, has addressed the issue head-on with creative, patient-based supports that keep people from homelessness. In recognition of the organization's work, the Oregon Department of Human Services Seniors and People with Disabilities (SPD) Division recently awarded Our House the 2010 Innovative Practice Program award.

The Innovative Practice Program recognizes long-term care providers that have implemented programs, policies and services that contribute significantly to the quality of life and care of those living or working in long-term care communities. It also provides the opportunity for others to learn from and replicate these model practices.

"We look for innovative practices that make a real difference in people's lives," says Mary Gear, administrator, SPD Office of Licensing and Quality of Care. "Our House's program enriches and expands opportunities for some of our most vulnerable fellow Oregonians to stay housed, safe and healthy."

One Our House model practice is providing assistance to those who are defined as "too healthy" to meet qualifications for 24-hour residential care. Our House provides them with medical, mental health, addiction and rental services, as well as opportunities to engage with others and avoid isolation. In addition, Our House monitors clients' health and well-being to help prevent their health from deteriorating, thus preventing costly medical bills.

**About Our House and the Neighborhood Housing and Care Program (NHCP):**

Our House is a nonprofit agency that provides a continuum of health care, housing and community service options for low-income individuals with HIV/AIDS. Services include a licensed 14-bed residential care facility (Our House), a five-bed adult care home (Swan House), rental assistance, free food bank and thrift store and payment of pet care services that cannot be met through any other source.

Our House partners with Cascade AIDS Project, the Partnership Project (OHSU) and Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare, Inc. to provide assistance with housing and health care to support the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of clients.

Services are provided by RNs, occupational therapists, social workers, a housing specialist and a drug and alcohol counselor — all working together with individuals to help them live better and healthier lives.

**About the Innovative Practice Program:** The Innovative Practice Program was launched in 2007 by the Department of Human Services Seniors and People with Disabilities Division, the Oregon Alliance of Senior and Health Services, Oregon Health Care Association and other stakeholders to support quality improvement initiatives in licensed assisted living, residential care and nursing facilities. The annual call for applications invites providers to describe innovative care and services that meet a set of identified criteria.

**For more information** about programs in the DHS Seniors and People with Disabilities Division, please visit [www.oregon.gov/DHS/spwpd/index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/spwpd/index.shtml).

# # #