



## COMMUNITY BENEFITS PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY 2021

The Attorney General states, “Community Benefits is health and wellness programming in response to identified community needs which meet one or more of four statewide priorities established by the Massachusetts Attorney General”:

1. Supporting health care reform
2. Improving chronic disease management in disadvantaged populations
3. Reducing health disparities
4. Promoting wellness of vulnerable populations

In 2021 we focused on #4 in our primary service territory. We selected the non-profit organizations that serve the vulnerable populations of the major cities in our service territory, and focus our time, money and energy on supporting them. We know that with COVID19 in our midst, proactive health literacy and support of essential non-profits in our service territory has taken on a sense of urgency. Therefore, we supported these organizations to provide food, shelter and support to those losing safety net payments, jobs, and housing. These are key social determinants of health.

The organizations that serve the largest numbers of underserved in our service territory are:

**Methuen:** Methuen Arlington Neighborhoods, Inc. **Youth and families:** serves a 14-street area of Methuen, primarily within the borders of the Spicket River, Horne Street, Lawrence Street, and the Lawrence City Line of Center Street. The Methuen Arlington Neighborhood is a densely populated area that experiences poverty, lack of employment opportunities, and social ills. Main focus areas include: public safety, youth programs, affordable housing, social services, transportation, employment, child care.

**Lawrence:** Lazarus House Ministries: **Men, women and children, families:** Lazarus House is a gospel-based ministry 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Its seven buildings and programs provide a continuum of care encompassing, but not limited to: food, shelter, clothing, advocacy, education, work preparation, “a listening ear, a welcoming heart and the restoration of dignity and self-respect to people who are poor and in dire need”. Programs include:

- Emergency women’s shelter
- Long term shelter, men, women, families
- Subsidized housing
- Financial literacy
- Housekeeping and professional Serve Safe culinary training
- Soup kitchen
- Food pantry

**Haverhill:** Emmaus House: **Women:** Programs include emergency shelters, affordable housing, homelessness prevention and housing stabilization services, education and job training, and community outreach. Facilities include:

- Emmaus Family House—Emergency shelter for up to 54 families
- Mitch’s Place—Overnight emergency shelter for up to 44 guests
- Emmaus Supportive Housing for Families: 26 affordable units
- Permanent Affordable Housing for Individuals- 68 units

**Haverhill:** Bethany Community Services – **Seniors:** Safe, secure, affordable housing for seniors as well as wellness and mental healthcare, personal assistance, *transportation to Holy Family Hospital Haverhill* (documented), meals and a wide range of activities and trips to prevent isolation and encourage cognitive and social health. BCS housing allows seniors to live independently within the Bethany Homes environment. In many cases it avoids, and in all cases, it delays nursing home admissions.

**With the exception of Bethany Community Services, none of these organizations have wellness programs for the people they serve.**

**Health literacy is essential:** In addition to financial, housing, and legal assistance, the people supported by these organizations must have increased health literacy to avoid chronic disease and improve wellness. It will help them to care for young children, get proper immunizations, avoid sexually transmitted diseases, and addiction. Our donations can help these organizations to integrate health and wellness literacy into their programming.