



CHW Helps Homeless Client Find Housing and other Essential Resources

The Rural Office of Community Services CHWs provide services to those facing hardship.

The Rural Office of Community Services (ROCS) has 7 outreach office sites where clients can come into the office and apply for assistance. Furthermore, ROCS has a website and a Facebook page that explain the services and provide direct links to apply for needed services. Between the food banks, dining services, volunteer opportunities, transportation, service coordination, and remote/virtual presence, ROCS has a multitude of ways to assist those in need no matter their social position.

ROCS CHW staff works with partner agencies and clients to help identify the gaps, needs, and areas of concern. This includes advocating at meal sites, partnering with healthcare providers, and educating the general public. This education informs individuals of all the services ROCS can assist them with in helping achieve their healthy living goals.

CLIENT BACKGROUND

A 59-year-old woman was dropped off on the side of the road with her cat in Mitchell, SD. In July, 2023, she found the Rural Office of Community Services (ROCS) and received help moving into a hotel. ROCS also took care of her cat for a small amount of time during this. The CHW, Karli, made contact with this client in the middle of July.

When Karli began working with this client she could barely walk, she had no money, no phone, no ID or birth certificate, no insurance or other resources, and needed dental and vision care.



KARLI (ROCS CHW) HAS DONE AN AMAZING JOB ENCOURAGING THE CLIENT THAT THESE ARE BUMPS IN THE ROAD AND THAT SHE WILL HELP HER GET THROUGH THEM.

- LEXI GARNES, ROCS COMMUNITY CARE COORDINATOR

SERVICES PROVIDED

Karli worked with the client to get her birth certificate and ID replaced by using resources that were available through the ROCS Outreach office in Mitchell. Karli worked with her and found a program through a service provider to get a phone. Once they had these things, they moved on to getting the client signed up to see if she could qualify for Medicaid.

Karli then helped the client get set up with a Primary Care Provider (PCP) at Avera to figure out what was going on with her knee. Karli attended several appointments with her client and eventually discovered that she was going to need surgery. Karli had appointments scheduled with an eye doctor to get the client glasses, the oral surgeon for her teeth, and a new PCP when her PCP moved away.

The client became discouraged when she was told that none of her appointments for her knee replacement would be covered, but Karli was very encouraging and kept pushing forward with Medicaid to get everything updated and back on track for the client's knee surgery. They found a doctor in Sioux Falls who would perform the total knee revision that was needed for the previous failed knee replacement. Karli worked with the client to get her to attend the pre-op appointments. The client had the knee surgery and was picked up at the hospital in Sioux Falls by the ROCS transit and brought back to Mitchell. She has since been recovering and doing physical therapy.

There were still bumps in the road after this. The client needed a wheelchair but got the wrong size and her

nerve block was taken out four days after surgery when it should have stayed in for 14 days. Karli worked diligently to get her client set up with the correct size wheelchair, shower stool, toilet seat raiser, more food in her pantry than what she previously had, and applications for housing.

CLIENT SUCCESSES

Karli continues to work with this client. They have run into obstacles several times, but Karli has done an amazing job encouraging the client that these are bumps in the road and that she will help her get through them. Karli has seen the client overcome these obstacles and start to become more independent. The client is now moving out of the hotel and into more permanent housing.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Rural Office of Community Services (ROCS) is a private non-profit agency serving the residents of South-Central & South-Eastern South Dakota since 1981.

ROCS strives to stimulate a better focus of all available resources to provide those in need with abundant opportunities to meet their needs. ROCS is passionate about enabling low-income individuals and families of all ages and backgrounds, to attain the skills and encouragement to build a better future.

This CHW success story was submitted by Lexi Garness, Community Care Coordinator for ROCS, agarness@rocsinc.org.



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