

Oxford House Profile Series 2012



Oxford Houses in Wyoming

and

The People Who Live in Them

This report is an evaluation of the network of Oxford Houses in the State of Wyoming – the state sponsored program that has enabled over 300 recovering individuals to help themselves stay clean and sober without relapse.

Oxford House, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit umbrella organization dedicated to helping recovering individuals achieve comfortable, long-term sobriety without relapse.

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OXFORD HOUSE TRADITIONS

1. Oxford House has as its primary goal the provision of housing for the alcoholic and drug addict who wants to stay clean and sober.
2. All Oxford Houses are run on a democratic basis. Our officers serve continuous periods of no longer than six months.
3. No Member of an Oxford House is ever asked to leave without cause -- drinking, drug use, or disruptive behavior.
4. Oxford House members realize that active participation in AA and/or NA offers assurance of continued sobriety.
5. Each Oxford House should be autonomous except in matters affecting other houses or Oxford House, Inc. - as a whole.
6. Each Oxford House should be financially self-supporting.
7. Oxford House should remain forever non-professional.
8. Propagation of the Oxford House, Inc. concept should always be conceived as public education.
9. Members who leave an Oxford House in good standing should become associate members

This evaluation of Oxford House development in Wyoming covers a relatively new tool for combating alcoholism and drug addiction in Wyoming. The first Oxford House in Wyoming did not start until January 2007.

Oxford House is concept and system of operation for recovering alcoholics, drug addicts and those with co-occurring mental illness to live together in an environment supportive of long-term recovery. Started in 1975, Oxford House has provided a safe place for recovering individuals to become comfortable enough in sobriety to become comfortable enough in sobriety to avoid relapse. Since it began more than 200,000 individuals seeking recovery have lived in an Oxford House. Most have stayed clean and sober without relapse. More than 150 academic research articles about Oxford House have been published in peer-reviewed journals. A complete list of such publications is available at the Oxford House website: www.oxfordhouse.org at “About Us/Resources.” Since 1989, most of the research has been funded by grants issued to academic researchers by the National Institutes of Health [NIAAA and NIDA].

Recently the federal government has listed Oxford House on the National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices [NREPP]. The National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices is a searchable online registry of mental health and substance abuse interventions that have been reviewed and rated by independent reviewers. The purpose of this registry is to assist the public in identifying scientifically based approaches to preventing and treating mental and/or substance use disorders that can be readily disseminated to the field. NREPP is one way that the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMHSA] is working to improve access to information on tested interventions and thereby reduce the lag time between the creation of scientific knowledge and its practical application in the field. The Oxford House Model was recognized as a successful evidence-based intervention in February 2011 and the certification is available at <http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=223>.

The catalyst for the expansion of Oxford Houses from a small network of 13 individuals houses in the vicinity of the Nation’s Capital to a national network of more than 1,500 houses was § 2036 the 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Act [PL 100-690] that was based on the then 13-year successful Oxford House Model. That law mandated that states utilize self-run, self-supported recovery homes based on the Oxford House Model. Many states – including Wyoming – turned to Oxford House World Services for successful development of self-run, self-supported recovery homes.

Oxford House World Services – the nonprofit umbrella organization – utilizes trained outreach workers [on-site field representatives] and start-up loan management to develop new houses and uses a time-tested system of quality control to make sure that houses once started stay on track. At least once every two years the organization completes an in-depth review of performance of Oxford Houses within particular states. Part of that process is the administration of standard profile questionnaires. Each resident completes a standard questionnaire [available at the Oxford House website: www.oxfordhouse.org under “Publications/General” by scrolling to bottom of the page] used to compare resident profiles and recovery progress since 1989. During the winter 2011 - 2012, 39 Wyoming Oxford House residents completed the standard survey. Data from that survey provides the basis for the profile of Wyoming Oxford House residents used in this evaluation.

2012 Oxford House Profile Wyoming Survey Results

Confidential resident profiles derived from 38 responses house surveys taken in the March 2012.
See last two rows of table for Oxford House total capacity as of March 2012. We believe the detailed surveys from 38 residents reflects the entire population of the approximately 80 residents living in Wyoming Oxford Houses at any one time.

Total Number of Oxford Houses which responded:	13	Average Age:	35.6 Years
Number of Women's Houses:	2	Number of Women Residents:	12
Number of Houses For Men:	11	Number of Male Residents:	72
Cost Per Person Per Week for Rent [range \$85 to \$125]	\$100	Rent Per Group Per Month [average]: [range \$1,000-2,100)	\$1,200
Percent Military Veterans	13%	Average Years of Education	11.4 years
Residents Working 2/28/2012	78.9%	Average Monthly Earnings:	\$1,183
Percent Addicted To Drugs or Alcohol & Drugs:	45%	Percent Addicted to Only Alcohol:	55%
Race –		Marital Status –	
White	81.6%	Never Married	52.6%
Hispanic	7.9%	Separated	7.9%
Black	7.9%	Divorced	31.6%
Pacific Islander	2.6%	Married	5.3%
		Widowed	2.6%
Prior Homelessness:	68.4%	Average Time Homeless:	7.9 Months
Prior Jail:	97.4%	Average total Jail Time [excluding one individual with 28 years]:	26 Months
Average AA or NA Meetings Attended Per Week:	3.6 Times	Percent Going To weekly Counseling <i>plus</i> AA or NA:	50%
Average Length of Sobriety of House Residents:	14 Months	Residents Expelled Because of Relapse:	13%
Average Length of Stay In An Oxford House:	9 Months	Average Number of Applicants For Each Vacant Bed:	+4.0
Total Number of Houses [Mar 2012]	13	Total Recovery Beds [Mar 2012]	85
For Men:	11	For Men	73
For Women:	2	For Women	12

In March 2012, 8 individuals moved out on good terms and only 1 was expelled for relapse.

A Partnership – Wyoming and Oxford House 2007 to 2012

The development of a network of self-run, self-supported Oxford Houses in Wyoming began in 2007 when the state alcohol and drug agency entered into a contract with Oxford House World Services¹ to send an outreach worker to the state to begin the establishment of Oxford Houses. The ability of the state to enter into such an agreement was one-time funding from the settlement between states and tobacco companies. It followed the initial grant agreement with agreements in FY 2008 – FY 2012 using federal block grant funding for alcoholism, drug addiction and mental illness.²

The result has been remarkable. There are now 13 Oxford Houses in the state with two more slated for Gillette. In 2009, the state agency awarded Oxford House the annual “Starfish Thrower Award” signifying that a single life saved is worthwhile.



Laura Griffin, at the Chicago Convention, presented Oxford House the “2009 Starfish Thrower Award” that is awarded by the Wyoming Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division for service to those suffering from addiction and mental illness.

¹ Oxford House World Services is used interchangeably with Oxford House, Inc. – the formal name of the non-profit, 501(c)(3), national umbrella organization.

² At the present time the state may not continue the agreement for FY 2013 but hopefully Oxford House World Services can find money to continue development in Wyoming and assure the continuation of the existing network of 13 Oxford Houses in the state.

This evaluation report reviews the progress of Oxford House development in the state and discusses the profile of residents of existing Oxford Houses in the state. To put the progress in perspective it is valuable to examine the cumulative results from the first four houses that were established during calendar year 2007. In the first year of the agreement four houses for men were established – two in Cheyenne, one in Laramie and one in Casper.

All four houses have continued ever since and formed the backbone to further development within the states. Because individuals can stay in an Oxford House as long as they do not drink alcohol or use drugs and pay their equal share of household expenses turnover varies. However, the average turnover rate is about 2.1 times a year as individuals come and go in a particular Oxford House. Some will be expelled [13% in Wyoming] but most will move out voluntarily. It is estimated that in the first four houses alone – having a total of 24 recovery beds – more than 200 individuals have lived in them since they started and have stayed clean and sober. During the same time period twenty-six additional residents [13%] were voted out because they had relapsed – returned to using alcohol and/or drugs.

The original four houses provide an illustration of the value of living in an Oxford House. Normally, more than 80% of alcoholics and addicts receiving treatment return to using alcohol and/or drugs within a few months following formal treatment. Dr. Arnold M. Ludwig found that 18 months after treatment only 10% were still clean and sober.³ Nevertheless, 87% those Wyoming residents in recovery who lived in one of the first four Oxford Houses stayed clean and sober. This result is similar to what the DePaul University group found in a national tracking of 897 Oxford

³ Arnold M. Ludwig, M.D., *Understanding the Alcoholic Mind*, Oxford University Press, New York 1988, p. 5

House residents living in 219 Oxford Houses across the country in an NIDA sponsored study.⁴ In that study the research followed the 897 individuals for 27 months and found that only 13.5% relapsed. The results in the first four Wyoming Oxford Houses track the DePaul University findings. The reason for this is that Oxford Houses provide a missing link in the treatment protocol for alcoholism, drug addiction and co-occurring mental illness. In brief Oxford House living provides the time, peer support and disciplined democratic operations that afford the individual resident enough time and support to become comfortable enough in sobriety to avoid relapse.⁵

Dr. George E. Vaillant, in his book *The Natural History of Alcoholism*, states the obvious goal in the treatment of alcoholism [or drug addiction] when he states that, "The treatment of alcoholism should be directed toward altering an ingrained habit of maladaptive use of alcohol. ..."

He goes on to spell out the four components of treatment, which can achieve that goal:

- (1) offering the patient a non-chemical substitute dependency for alcohol,
- (2) reminding him ritually that even one drink can lead to pain and relapse,
- (3) repairing the social and medical damage that he has experienced, and
- (4) restoring self-esteem.⁶

⁴ Jason, Leonard A., Davis, Margaret I, Ferrari, Joseph R. (2007) *Addictive Behaviors* 32 (2007) 803-818. [Funded under NIDA grant #DA13231]

⁵ In a more recent study by the DePaul group it was found that about half of Oxford House residents test positive on a standard PSI [psychiatric severity index] and still do well in an Oxford House setting because they learn to take the right medication at the right times thereby avoid abnormal behavior caused by their underlying mental illness. See Majer, Et. Al. in "A Longitudinal Analysis of Psychiatric Severity upon Outcomes Among Substance Abusers Residing in Self-Help Settings," 42 *American Journal of Community Psychology* 142-153 [2008] – Downloadable from Oxford House website under "Publications/Evaluations/DePaul."

⁶ George E. Vaillant, *The Natural History of Alcoholism* Revisited, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1995, p. 300.

Vaillant also points out that providing all four components at once is not easy by analyzing and comparing the various components that go into the transformation from addiction to recovery without relapse.

Disulfiram [Antabuse] and similar compounds that produce illness if alcohol is ingested are reminders not to drink, but they take away a cherished addiction without providing anything in return: they provide the second component but ignore the first. Prolonged hospitalization provides the first three components but ignores the fourth and eventually the first. Hospital patienthood destroys self-esteem, and when hospitalization ceases the patient loses his substitute dependency. Tranquilizing drugs provide the first component but ignore the other three. For example, providing the anxious alcoholic with tranquilizers will give temporary relief of anxiety but may also facilitate the chain of conditioned responses that lead to picking up a drink at the next point of crisis. Over the long term, providing alcoholics with pills only reinforces their illusion that relief of distress is pharmacological, not human.⁷

Vaillant does note "self-help groups, of which Alcoholics Anonymous is one model, offer the simplest way of providing the alcoholic with all four components referred to above." The same principle applies to Oxford House. The resident is able to take the time necessary to build the habits essential for assuring long-term recovery without relapse.

This phenomenon is essential but generally costs too much to be available. Because all Oxford Houses are rented ordinary single-family homes and the residents run them and pay household expenses long-term support is affordable. Oxford House development in Wyoming and elsewhere depends on two outside expenses: [1] small loans to help the initial group to rent a suitable house, and [2] available technical assistance to teach the residents the system of operation and mutual support. The

⁷ Id.

four oldest Oxford Houses in Wyoming are below:



Oxford House – Yellowstone
5015 Yellowstone Road
Cheyenne, WY 82009
Home to Seven Men: Establish Jan 2007



Oxford House - Oil City
2510 Knollwood Drive
Casper, WY 82604-4724
Home to six men: Established Feb 2007



Oxford House – Cheyenne
736 Hirst Street
Cheyenne, WY 82009-2507
Home to six men: Established May 2007



Oxford House – Laramie
2155 N 13th Street
Laramie, WY 82072-1808
Home to six men: Established Nov 2007

On a current basis the network of houses in Wyoming consists of thirteen with two new houses slated to join the relatively new house in Gillette. From the beginning Oxford House has tried to make certain that Oxford Recovery Homes are throughout the state. Wyoming covers a large geographic area. Nevertheless the network of Oxford Houses is distributed throughout the state. However, cluster of houses work best because they can be organized into mutually supportive chapters. Therefore, the second round of house development was to foster clustering.



Oxford House – Platte
2912 E. 9th Street
Cheyenne, WY 82001-6106
Home to six women: Established Dec 2008

Clustering Oxford Houses is part of any development plan to foster mutually supportive chapters. In a chapter the officers of each house in an area get together once a month to help each other to stay on track. That help can range from teaching newcomers the democrat-

ic system of operation to confronting a house that may not be in compliance with it charter.



Oxford House – Archway

911 E. 14th Street
Casper, WY 82601-4407

Home to six men: Established Jan 1, 2009

With the opening of Oxford House-Archway [above] Casper had a cluster of two houses, Cheyenne three and with Laramie having just one house.



Oxford House - Big Horn,

410 E. Works Street
Sheridan, WY 82801

Home to eight men: Established May 2009

Also reaching out to a new area in the state was the establishment a house for eight men in Sheridan. As in relatively other moderate sized communities, it is necessary to open one house at a time to begin the development of a cluster of houses.



Oxford House - Central Platte

3411 Saratoga Road
Casper, WY 82604

Home to seven men: Established Dec 2009

Because the two houses in Casper had more demand than beds available a third house was opened and a fourth [below] six months later.



Oxford House – Seminole,

520 Seminole Street
Casper, WY 82609

Home to six men: Established Jun 2010



Oxford House – Dell Range

132 Dell Range Blvd
Cheyenne, WY 82009

Home to six men: Established Jun 2010

The fourth Cheyenne house was started in June 2010 expanding the chapter to three houses for men and one for women.



Oxford House - Centennial Hills
1121 Derby Street
Casper, WY 82609
Home to eight men: Established Oct 2010



Oxford House – Rohan
307 Rohan Avenue
Gillette, WY 82716-3542
Home to six men: Established Mar 2012



Oxford House – Bison
515 Bison Circle, Mills, WY 82644
Home to six women: Established Dec 2011

Opening a house in Mills – close to Casper – provided expansion and the mutual support offered by the five houses in Casper. This chapter is the largest in Wyoming but is likely to double in size with the next two years because of demand for supportive housing.

In March of this year, the first Oxford House was established in Gillette. Two additional houses will be established there in May and June. The distances between communities in Wyoming suggest that several houses need to be started even in small cities. The smaller cities may take a couple of months to match supply and demand. However, experience has shown that a population center of 20,000 can easily support three Oxford Houses.

Residents of Wyoming Oxford Houses

At least once a year Oxford House World Services conducts a survey of residents in statewide networks of Oxford Houses. In March, the residents of Wyoming Oxford Houses were asked to complete a standard profile survey. The statistics below are based on those results.

Age

The average age of the residents in Wyoming Oxford Houses is 35.6 with a range of age 21 to 59. Women are slightly younger [32.2] than men [37.1]. The overall average is a little younger than the national average for approximately 12,000 Oxford House residents. [35.6 versus 36.2] The difference is not statistically significant.

Gender

The balance of men and women in Wyoming Oxford House is slightly under the balance nationally. Nationally, women occupy 24.6% of the total number of Oxford House recovery beds. In Wyoming women occupy 14.1% of the total number of recovery beds.

While there is a need for more houses in the state, the need for additional houses for women is probably greater – at least compared to the national experience of Oxford House.

Race

Alcoholism and drug addiction know no racial boundaries. The disease can afflict anyone. Like the national profile of Oxford House, the residents of Oxford House reflect the universal nature of addiction. At the same time the diversity in Wyoming Oxford Houses reflects the diversity in the state as a whole. 81.6% of the residents are White; 7.9% are Black; 7.9% are Hispanic and 2.6% are of Pacific Island heritage.

Employment

Since Oxford Houses are self-supported, it is necessary that residents have some source of income. In Wyoming employment provides the source of income for 78.9% of the residents. The March survey is really a snapshot and some individuals will have employment soon or are between jobs; others rely on unemployment benefits or social security. The 78.9% employment among Wyoming Oxford House residents compares to 92% employed for the approximately 12,000 individuals living in the national network of Oxford Houses. It is part of the Oxford House culture that residents get a job unless they are disabled or retired. Because residents are willing to take low paying jobs, the employment percentages are high even though the national economy has been weak.

Income

The average cost to live in a Wyoming Oxford House is \$102 a week [range \$100 to \$110]. Therefore, a minimum job is sufficient for a resident to meet his or her equal share of household expenses. In Wyoming the average income per month for the Oxford House residents is \$1,550 – slightly lower than the national average for Oxford House residents at \$1,660. The range of income is between \$580 and \$3,500 a month.

Military Service

Nationally 18.8% of Oxford House residents are veterans. In Wyoming 13% of the residents are veterans. The percentage of Wyoming residents who will be veterans will likely increase as the statewide network of Oxford Houses becomes better known.

Education

The average level of education among Wyoming Oxford House residents is 11.39 years, which is lower than the national average of educational attainment of 12.2 years. Since alcoholism and drug addiction are egalitarian diseases and afflict individuals across the board, it may be that Wyoming Oxford Houses are not attracting the better educated and more affluent individuals. Better effort should be made to attract individuals going through private treatment because an Oxford House reflecting all strata of society tends to work better than one having a less diverse population.

Past Homelessness

The greatest cause of homelessness is alcoholism and drug addiction. Therefore it is not surprising that most Oxford House residents have been homeless. Nationally, about 60% of Oxford House residents have been homeless an average of 6 months. In Wyoming 68.4% of the residents have been homeless for an av-

erage of 7.9 months. The length of time homeless sometimes is accumulated periods of homelessness. For example, the Wyoming Oxford House residents reported that they had been homeless an average of 3.2 times.

13% of the Wyoming Oxford House residents reported that they had been homeless just prior to moving into an Oxford House. Clearly, but for Oxford House, they would have been homeless following detoxification and treatment and most likely would have quickly returned to addictive use. Since development of sobriety comfortable enough to avoid relapse requires behavior change, living with the instability of homelessness is unlikely to result in such a transformation.

Prior Jail Time

Most residents of Oxford House have done jail time – usually as a result of their addiction. In Wyoming, 97.4% of the Oxford House residents have done jail time. This percentage is higher than the national average [78%] and the length of jail time is greater [35.6 months versus 13 months].

As noted below 36.8% of the Wyoming Oxford House residents came to an Oxford House directly from jail or prison. This is nearly four times greater than the national average – even where Oxford House has an active outreach into prison to help recovering individuals to re-enter society from incarceration. Expansion of the number of Oxford recovery beds available in Wyoming would have the likely effect of lowering the percent of individual returning from incarceration. The more diverse a recovery population the greater opportunity there is for integration into a recovery oriented society.

Length of Current Sobriety

The average length of current sobriety among Oxford House residents in Wyoming is 22.7 months. The average length of sobriety nationally among Oxford House residents is

about 13 months. Part of the reason the average length of sobriety is higher in Wyoming houses may be that a number of residents coming directly into Oxford House from jail may bring some period of sobriety with them.

Whatever the cause the fact that an individual has almost two years of being clean and sober is a good indicator that the individual is likely to achieve long-term recovery. The DePaul studies and other studies have shown that most relapses occur within the first year of sobriety. Since there is no time limit for how long an individual can live in an Oxford House, most individuals will stay until they feel comfortable enough in sobriety to avoid relapse – forever.

Past Treatment History

There are approximately 25 million Americans who are addicted to alcohol and/or drugs. Of that number about 4 million will get some sort of treatment each year [2.9 million self-help – AA/NA – 1.1 million specialty treatment – hospital, 28 day residential or outpatient]. The roughly 1 in 25 who get into treatment will become part of a recycling machine. The TEDS data produced by the Federal government [SAMHSA] shows that nearly 60% will have been through treatment at least three prior times. This data conforms to the finding referred to earlier showing that fewer than 20% in treatment stay clean and sober. Relapse has become the norm.

In Oxford House the norm is recovery without relapse. This is true even though most of the residents in Oxford House have been part of those recycling in and out of treatment or incarceration. In Wyoming Oxford House residents reported that they had previously been through treatment 4.2 times. Because Oxford House provides the time, peer support and discipline democratic avenues to responsible behavior most will stay clean and sober and stopped recycling in and out of treatment and incarceration.

12 - Step Meeting Attendance

Periodically AA and NA conduct surveys to measure attendance. Both show the average AA/NA member attends an average of two 12-step meetings a week. Nationally Oxford House residents attend an average of about 5 meetings a week. In Wyoming Oxford House residents attend an average of 3.56 12-Step meetings each week or about twice as many as the AA/NA participant not living in an Oxford House. Moreover, 50% of the Wyoming Oxford House residents go to a counseling session each week in addition to their 12-Step meeting participation. This compares to 45% for the national Oxford House sample.

Importance of Oxford House

Each survey asks the residents of Oxford House to rate the importance of Oxford House to their sobriety and wellbeing. The following table shows the response.

Importance of Oxford House to Sobriety

Very Important	84.2%
Moderately Important	2.6%
Somewhat Important	7.9%
Not Really Sure	2.6%
Insignificant	2.6%

A second element to measure the importance of Oxford House is whether current residents would recommend living in an Oxford House. The Wyoming residents answered as follows:

Recommend Oxford House to Others

Yes	100%
No	0%

Not a single resident would fail to recommend to a newly recovering person that he or she apply to live in an Oxford House. Why is that so significant? First, the residents are expert on addiction because they have all suffered from it. Second, if all were not completely happy with living in an Oxford House they would not all recommend Oxford House to

others. The self-reporting of satisfaction with Oxford House and the willingness to recommend Oxford House living to others is an indication that something positive is inherent in the Oxford House model.

Prior Residence

Where an individual lived just prior to moving into an Oxford House is significant. First, it provides a frame for self-evaluation of the value of Oxford House living. Second, it offers an indication of whether or not the recovering individual alternative living situation would have been likely to make recovery without relapse a viable option. The following table shows where Wyoming Oxford House residents had lived just prior to admission to an Oxford House.

Prior Residence

Apartment	10.5%
Owned House	7.9%
Rented House	23.7%
Rented Room	7.9%
Jail	36.8%
Homeless	13.2%

Notice that almost 60% had been living either in jail, a rented room or were homeless. All those situations lack the stability and structure needed to develop behavior change comfortable enough to avoid a return to addiction. Therefore, Oxford House becomes a valued alternative and the individual is apt to change behavior to be able to remain a resident of Oxford House in good standing.

Finally, it is interesting to note that only 5.3% of the Wyoming Oxford Houses were still married. 31.6% were divorced; 7.9% separated and 52.6% had never married. For most Oxford House provided the most stable living environment they had lived in – ever or for at least a long time. Alcoholism and drug addiction are terrible diseases. Oxford House can provide the opportunity to thwart the bad consequences of addiction.

How Oxford House Works

There are two significant things that make the Oxford House model work: [1] small start-up loans to enable groups of six or more recovering individuals to rent an ordinary house to live together in sobriety, and [2] the availability of a trained individual to teach the newly constructed “family” the disciplined, time-tested, system of democratic operation and financial self-support.

Wyoming beginning in 2007 provided the assets that enable the development of a statewide network of 13 Oxford Houses and the money to pay trained outreach workers to teach the successful 37-year old system of operation. Once an Oxford House is established it is almost totally self-sufficient.

In 1995 Oxford House World Services tested the proposition that once houses are established there is no continuing need for technical assistance. Between 1989 and 1995 it had help establish a network of 33 Oxford Houses in New Jersey and it stopped having outreach workers in the state so that they could be utilized elsewhere. The hope was that a few houses could be started and would continue without the need for monitoring by a trained outreach worker. By 2002 the original network of 33 houses had been reduced to 22 houses because of attrition. Without on-site technical support some houses failed – either because a landlord wanted his house back and the group in the house was unable to rent another house or because the house itself stopped functioning as a disciplined Oxford House.

In 2003 New Jersey asked Oxford House World Services [OHWS] to come back into the state. It did and today there are 76 Oxford Houses functioning well. In Washington State, OHWS has stayed in the state from 1991 to date. The state provides money to support six outreach workers. There are 234 Oxford Houses in the state with more than 2,000 recovery beds. In effect each outreach worker

monitors about 40 Oxford Houses and continues to add new houses to better meet the demand. Last year 4,200 individual lived in the Washington State Oxford Houses with a total cost to the state of about \$500,000.

Washington also set up a \$100,000 start-up revolving loan fund in 1991. Since that time the fund has loaned more than \$900,000 from the original loan fund. Individual houses were able to get \$4,000 start-up loans repayable over 24 months. [The houses pay back the loan at the rate of \$170 a month for 23 months with a final payment of \$90 in month 24.]

The cost for a trained outreach worker in Wyoming and Washington state average \$80,000 a year. The cost breaks down roughly as follows: average salary of \$35,000; health insurance for the employee \$7,200 a year; Payroll taxes [FICA] \$2,700, expenses [telephone, printing, travel] \$33,000. Male outreach workers open and supervise houses for men. Female outreach workers open and monitor houses for women. A male worker can open 5 men’s houses per year. A female worker can open 2 houses for women each year because women’s houses take longer to establish than houses for men.

The math is simple. The result is the most cost-effective way to deal with alcoholism, drug addiction and those with co-occurring mental illness. Hopefully, Oxford House will continue to have the funding needed to expand and maintain the Wyoming network of Oxford Houses so that all individuals in recovery who need a safe place to master recovery can do so.

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Oxford House™

1975-2012

37 Years of Organized Self-Help To Enable Alcoholics and Drug Addicts to Recover Without Relapse

- Providing Sole Authority for Oxford House Charters
- Providing Technical Assistance to Establish New Oxford Houses
- Providing Technical Assistance to Keep Existing Oxford Houses on Track
- Providing Organization of Chapters to Help Houses Help Themselves
- Providing the Time, Living Environment and Support to Enable Alcoholics and Drug Addicts to Achieve Recovery Without Relapse
- Providing the Legal, Philosophical, and Scientific Framework for a Cost-effective, Worldwide Network of Supportive Recovery Housing.

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