

A SYSTEM OF SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY

*Loretto Brings Community Organizations Together to
Provide a Continuum of Care in Central New York*

T rue systems of care for the aging—which provide a continuum of support services to the elderly and disabled—are as embryonic as integrated healthcare information systems.

One exception is Loretto, a private, not-for-profit organization based in Syracuse, NY. For many years Loretto has worked to develop a system of long-term care services throughout central New York State.

Using innovative partnerships, Loretto has built housing and services for the chronically ill, frail elderly in urban, suburban, and rural sites dotted throughout the Syracuse community and in towns as far as 30 miles away. This complex entity serves 5,000 clients annually with a staff of

1,300. Loretto's average client (76 percent are women) is a widow in her eighties with a low income, although Loretto also serves middle-income persons in need. Most clients have multiple health problems and need assistance with several activities of daily living.

COMMUNITY CAMPUS FOR FRAIL ELDERLY

One of Loretto's most ambitious and innovative projects is its North Syracuse community campus for low-income frail elderly. Loretto is developing the campus with the goal of providing safe and secure housing, healthcare, and social supports so that residents can continue to reside in the community rather than moving to a nursing home.

Malta House Apartments, a HUD 202 project, was recently completed, and its 51 units are all occupied. Still under construction is a day health center, the Sally Coyne Center for Independence, which will house Loretto's PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) program. PACE enables persons eligible for skilled nursing care to remain in their own homes with intense care management and numerous support services. (See *Health Progress*, September-October 1998, pp. 41-45, for a full description of the PACE program.) Until the center for independence is complete, Loretto's Independent Living Services is managing the PACE program for 40 enrollees out of a temporary site located in Malta House. Loretto has been awarded a second HUD 202 grant to build another 48-unit apartment building, Malta Manor. The campus will also in-

Kathryn Ruscitto (right)
Loretto's senior vice president,
confers with Amelia Greiner,
long-time Loretto board member,
at the Nottingham.





Vicki Boyle, nurse manager, converses with resident Elias Waldman on the patio at Malta House.

clude a library, park, and farmers' market.

To make the project possible, several organizations joined forces with Loretto: St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, a 431-bed tertiary care institution that cosponsors Loretto's PACE program; Christopher Community, a subsidiary of Catholic Charities with 20 years of experience in developing housing; the Knights and Dames of Malta; and the village of North Syracuse. Members of the Order of Malta have provided volunteer services, an endowment fund for the campus, and homelike furnishings, wallpaper, carpeting, and artwork for the public areas of Malta House. The village is building pavements and roadways and will help develop the library, park, and market.

SOME EXAMPLES OF LORETTO'S SCOPE

Loretto's sites have evolved in response to changing community needs. Many organizations have collaborated in developing programs, so services and settings vary in size and function. Some examples are Loretto at James Geddes, Loretto Community Residences, Mahan Gorham Manor, and Castle Rest Nursing Home.

Loretto at James Geddes, located in the city of Syracuse, is a 48-apartment complex offering assisted and enriched living (which provides a lower level of assistance, day care programs, and meals) for low-income elderly adults. The Syracuse Housing Authority subsidizes rents.

Much smaller is the nearby Loretto at St. James. Loretto purchased the parish's old con-

vent as a group home for eight mentally ill older persons. In rural Elbridge, NY, Loretto leases Mahan Gorham Manor, a Civil War-era mansion, from the parish for \$1 a year. Its eight residents, who need some assistance with activities of daily living, receive home healthcare and meals.

The Nottingham Senior Living Facility, a 370-unit apartment complex in suburban Syracuse, provides independent and enriched living for older people of all income levels, as well as a 40-bed skilled nursing facility.

Castle Rest Nursing Home, a 160-bed skilled nursing facility, is located in a predominantly African-American community in Syracuse. Loretto assumed management of the home when it went into receivership in 1988. Since then Loretto, collaborating with the Syracuse Black Leadership

Continued on page 60

LORETTO'S HISTORY

Loretto originated in 1926 under the auspices of the Diocese of Syracuse as the first diocesan home for the aged in North America. The diocese governed and managed the home, Loretto Rest Home for the Aged, and the Sisters of the Third Franciscan Order provided daily oversight and personal care to the facility's residents until the early 1970s.

In 1973, Loretto, which was reorganized as a private not-for-profit organization, began to expand its services and add buildings to the 33-acre campus in south central Syracuse. Loretto is now one of the 35 largest providers of assisted living in the nation. It is one of 28 national PACE sites.

A SYSTEM OF SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY

Continued from page 59

Council, has helped secure funds for a major renovation and has aided in transferring ownership and management to the local community.

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

Loretto is owned by the community; 80 percent of community residents are Catholic. The organization consists of seven corporations, but these are all managed by one board of trustees. A seven-member corporation includes the ordinary and auxiliary bishops of the Syracuse diocese and annually elects the board.

Loretto hopes its collaborative model will be replicable in other parts of the country. Kathryn Ruscitto, Loretto's senior vice president, has consulted with organizations in the Diocese of Charlotte, NC, that are interested in developing a community campus similar to the one in the Village of North Syracuse. "Our unique strength," she says, "lies in Catholic healthcare working in collaboration with long-term care, Catholic Charities, and other public/private partnerships. Together we can offer stronger care to our communities."

—Judy Cassidy



Residents enjoy the porch at Mahan Gorham Manor, a home for eight older adults in Elbridge, NY.

PROFILE OF LORETTO

Loretto owns or manages a wide variety of services:

- McAuliffe Senior Health Center for Diagnosis, Treatment, and Rehabilitation Services (primary and ancillary healthcare)
- Four residential healthcare facilities for dementia care, rehabilitation, and subacute care
- Three home healthcare programs
- Two adult medical day care programs
- Four geriatric community residences for the mentally ill and developmentally disabled
- Two independent living facilities with optional supports
- One independent living facility for people with HIV/AIDS
- Three assisted living programs
- Six enriched housing programs and facilities, one of which specializes in caring for persons with Alzheimer's disease and other dementias
- Care planning and management services
- Personal emergency response systems
- Home repair and maintenance services
- Information and referral
- Caregiver support
- Transportation
- Prevention and wellness services

Help us light a new flame

A flame of hope that burns brighter for each child living with a seizure disorder.

A new light to guide us to a cure for epilepsy and a better quality of life for everyone affected by seizures.

Formerly known as the Epilepsy Foundation of America, the Epilepsy Foundation is a non-profit, charitable agency serving people with epilepsy and their families.

The Foundation's new logo is a flame of hope for more than 2 million Americans with seizure disorders.

Your gift today helps us make a significant difference.



**EPILEPSY
FOUNDATION**

4351 GARDEN CITY DRIVE
LANDOVER, MD 20785
1-800-EFA-1000
www.efa.org

JOURNAL OF THE CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

www.chausa.org

HEALTH PROGRESS®

Reprinted from *Health Progress*, January-February 1999
Copyright © 1999 by The Catholic Health Association of the United States
