



The Chippewa Valley Street Ministry: Support in the Street, and Beyond

by Cindy Halfen, Northwest Association Division of Church in the World member

We are available to support our friends in other places beyond the street!

We first met D the week before Easter this year. She had been on the street for three days; she had left her home in order to feel safe due to a conflict with another tenant. She had a black eye and small laceration with sutures above that same eye from a recent fall. With chronic respiratory problems and recent homelessness, this middle-aged woman was obviously distressed, overwhelmed and in need of immediate help. The Street Ministry provided a night's motel stay. The next day when she went to Urgent Care to have her sutures removed, she was hospitalized for her chronic respiratory problem due to a flare up of her symptoms.

After a week of hospitalization, she moved to a local rehab center where she lived until about a week ago, when she moved into her new apartment that she found through a local housing agency. As I helped her move in that day, seeing her confidence, ability to list off all the tasks she need to follow up on during this transition and the general "calm" she exhibited made my heart leap for joy. Her face beamed with the pride of a person who has overcome obstacles and arrived at a better place.

Karen (another Ministry volunteer) and I kept contact with D throughout her recuperation process. Karen went to several "care planning" meetings at the hospital and the rehab center. She walked D through some of the paperwork and other steps she needed to take to find housing. At these meetings, Karen advocated for D and pointed out of the challenges that our friend was facing (including the complexities of getting a portable oxygen system delivered to

someone living on the street not to mention the ability to be able to use her nebulizer machine in a shelter).

My role was to find a few articles of clothing for her, but mostly to stop by to visit her. D liked to sit outside on nice days so whenever I would go by I'd look for her and if she was outside we'd chat for a while.

Thank you all for everything you do to help our neighbors that need our love and support.