

Supportive housing nonprofit opens sprawling, \$87M Bronx residence



Community Access—a nonprofit focused on supportive housing and social services for New Yorkers—has opened a 215-unit residential building on Bruckner Boulevard in the Bronx.

The \$87 million project will house low-income families and those experiencing chronic homelessness as well as individuals living with mental health concerns.

Dozens of people have already moved into the building, the largest for Community Access to date, said CEO Cal Hedigan. The development also marks the

nonprofit's first project with the Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative.

Support services will help residents—many of whom have never had their own apartment or have transitioned from shelters and psychiatric facilities—acclimate to their new neighborhood, Hedigan said. They'll also assist people in understanding what they'd like to do next in their lives.

"Once you have achieved [a safe home], people can start to think about other goals they might have," she said.

Due to the Covid-19 crisis, many of the support services are being provided telephonically. And, although social distancing is being promoted for the time being, the building has been designed with multilevel lounge areas to encourage the development of microcommunities between floors, Hedigan said.

She added that there is concern that the development of affordable-housing buildings in the future may be hindered by budget cuts precipitated by the pandemic. That's especially troubling as more New Yorkers could face homelessness as a result of the crisis.

"If there's this pause now, we may not see the impact for three or four years," Hedigan said. "But then, there will be a point in time when there's no new housing."