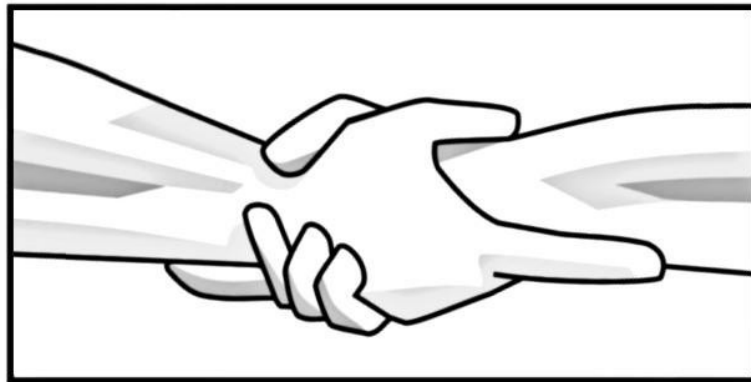


ROCKY MOUNTAIN
REFUGE
for end of life care



2022 Annual Report

Version 1.2

Mission & Vision

Our mission is to offer dignity to our Denver-area neighbors with terminal illness - ***who lack the shelter of a home*** - by providing a stable, appropriate environment for hospice agencies to deliver care.



Our vision is to provide a safe, comfortable place where those without a home can live during their last days. Our staff and volunteers offer family-style custodial care such as help with laundry, cleaning, and companionship. Our referring hospice agency partners provide skilled medical services, and equipment.

Who We Are

Identified Gap in Care.

Providing hospice care for unhoused individuals can be difficult to meet because hospice agencies are designed to assist in a home and typically have few or no beds in their own facilities. They struggle to provide care on the streets. Denver's homeless shelters meet immediate, short-term needs and hospice patients need individual custodial care for weeks, with privacy and stability that shelters are unable to provide. Unhoused people at the end of life often literally and figuratively fall through the cracks on the side walk.

Our Response.

A working group began meeting in late 2017 to create an organization that could support of this vision. The group was inspired by the nationwide work of the Omega Home Network, and their prototype of a Social Model Hospice House was determined to be the best structure to pursue. The Board of Directors was officially established in 2018; and Rocky Mountain Refuge was approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization on April 15th, 2019.

How We Fill the Need.

Rocky Mountain Refuge is filling this need by operating as a specialized shelter, providing custodial care to our terminally ill neighbors on the streets. Our staff and volunteers operate as an extension of someone's family giving basic care such as help with laundry, cleaning, and companionship. Our referring hospice agency partners can then provide the skilled nursing and physician services needed. We welcome everyone regardless of status and personal identity and are a non-sectarian social service organization.

Others doing similar work.

The structure and vision of Rocky Mountain Refuge took inspiration from the Social Model Hospice movement. We are a member of the nationwide Omega Home Network. As far as we know there are only 3 other such shelters in the US that are focused specifically on the homeless population. We are the only such shelter in Colorado.

Our Story in 2022

What We Did.

We opened as a pilot project in early 2022 and were able to stay open for most of the year. We provided housing and custodial care for 12 individuals who were unhoused or housing insecure and needed hospice care. Of those served, 70% died while in our care and 30% were discharged. Of those discharged one discharged himself from hospice care and the rest were discharged to hospitals.

Why Did We Do It?

We did it because there is a gap in care for folks who need hospice care but are unhoused or do not have a safe home environment to receive that care. People with terminal illness but no home have very few options. Emergency rooms, often a last resort for people on the street, are the most expensive and least effective setting possible. Most skilled nursing homes won't accept unhoused folks due to the length of time to approve benefits.

What Did We Learn?

We constantly review our processes to determine what can be made better. This year we greatly streamlined our documentation of pharmaceuticals as well started a training program for our staff. Staffing has been increased by hiring an office manager who took over scheduling and direct staff communications and late in the year a program manager was hired to take over training, working with volunteers, and intake/discharge of residents. We also realized our need to improve our community awareness by explaining the need for unhoused individuals to have a safe place to receive hospice care to a wider audience. In addition, we also need to expand our ability to serve our clients by increasing our number of beds from 2 to 3.

Paul's Story

“Paul” had initially been set up in a hotel room for hospice care, however this care no longer suited his needs. When he arrived at Rocky Mountain Refuge for End of Life Care with a garbage bag filled with various medications, the hospice nurse and our staff were able to consolidate to a manageable plan tailored to his needs.

The day before he passed, he was looking at a painting on the wall in the room when a staff member asked him what he was looking at. He responded with his final words, “I’m going to a family reunion.” From the comfort of his bed, Paul was able to pass with a sense of peace.



*** Names of all residents have been altered to protect privacy.

Jane's Story

“Jane” lived with uterine cancer and consequent unmanaged pain for years, unable to receive the care she needed. She was in a perpetual cycle of being admitted to the hospital for intense pain, becoming medically stable, then getting discharged when she would find herself again without shelter and inevitably losing her pain medications to theft or overuse. Thus, she would return to the hospital. When she was transferred to Rocky Mountain Refuge, she was able to stay for 41 days. Rocky Mountain Refuge was able to break the hospital cycle and she was eventually able to pass away in comfort and surrounded by prayer.

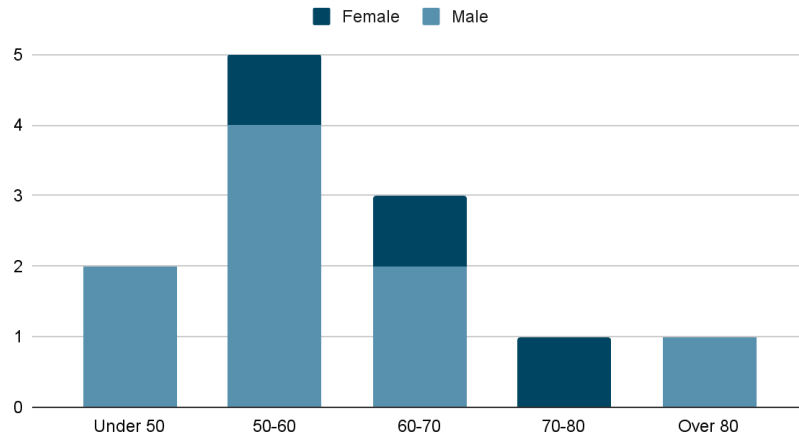
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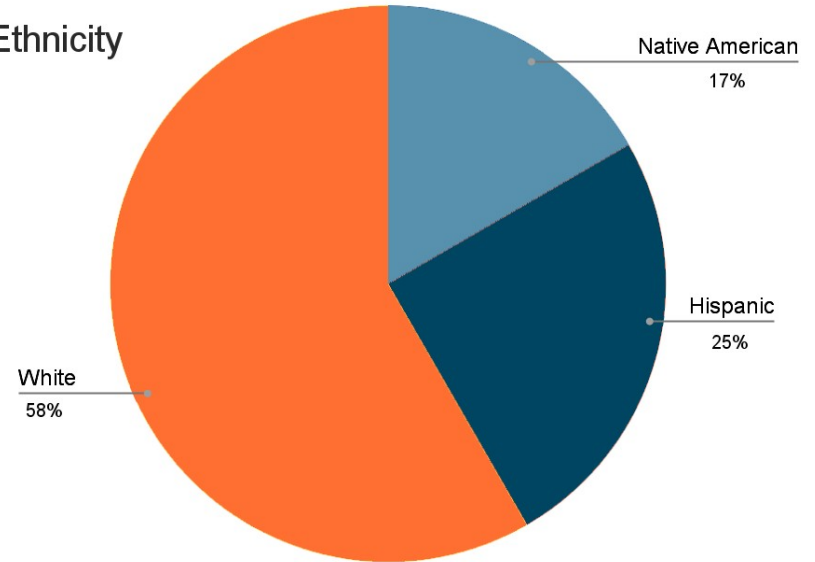
in
*Loving
Memory*

Demographics

Age and Gender Identity

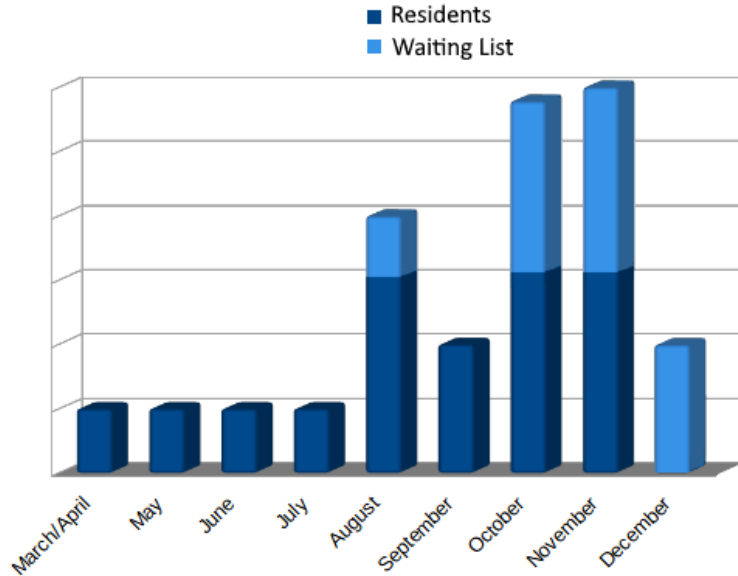


Ethnicity



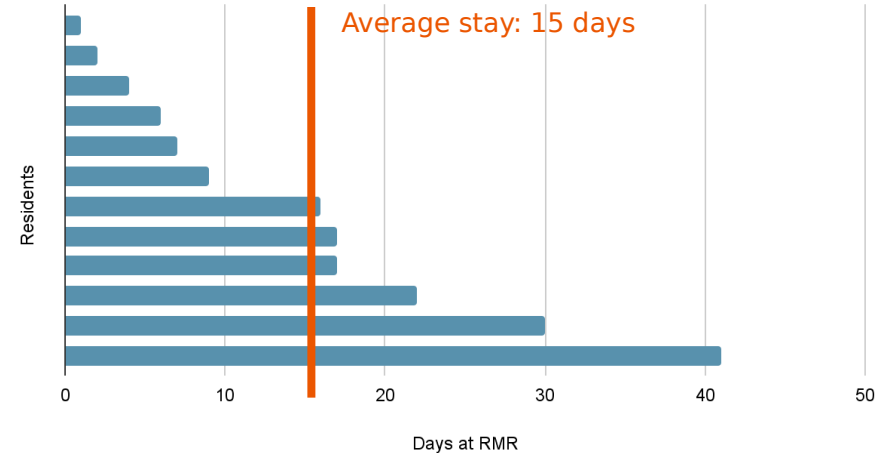
Rocky Mountain Refuge strives to serve all who come to us regardless of legal status or personal identity.

Demographics



As we became more well known in the community, beginning in August we established a waiting list.

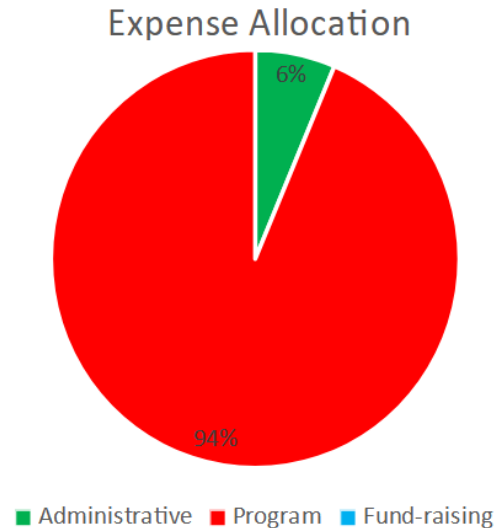
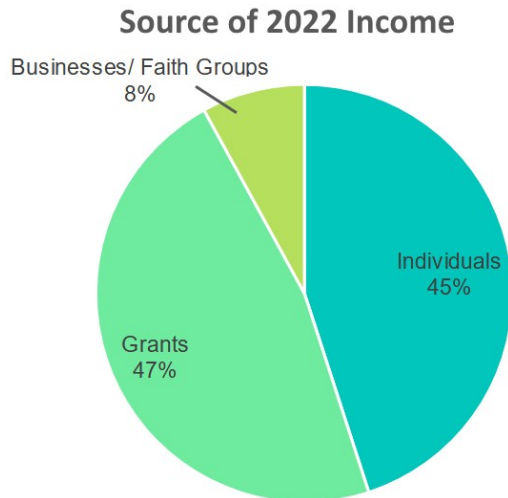
Length of Stay at RMR



We had two residents who stayed with us 30 days or more in 2022, but the majority stayed two weeks or less.

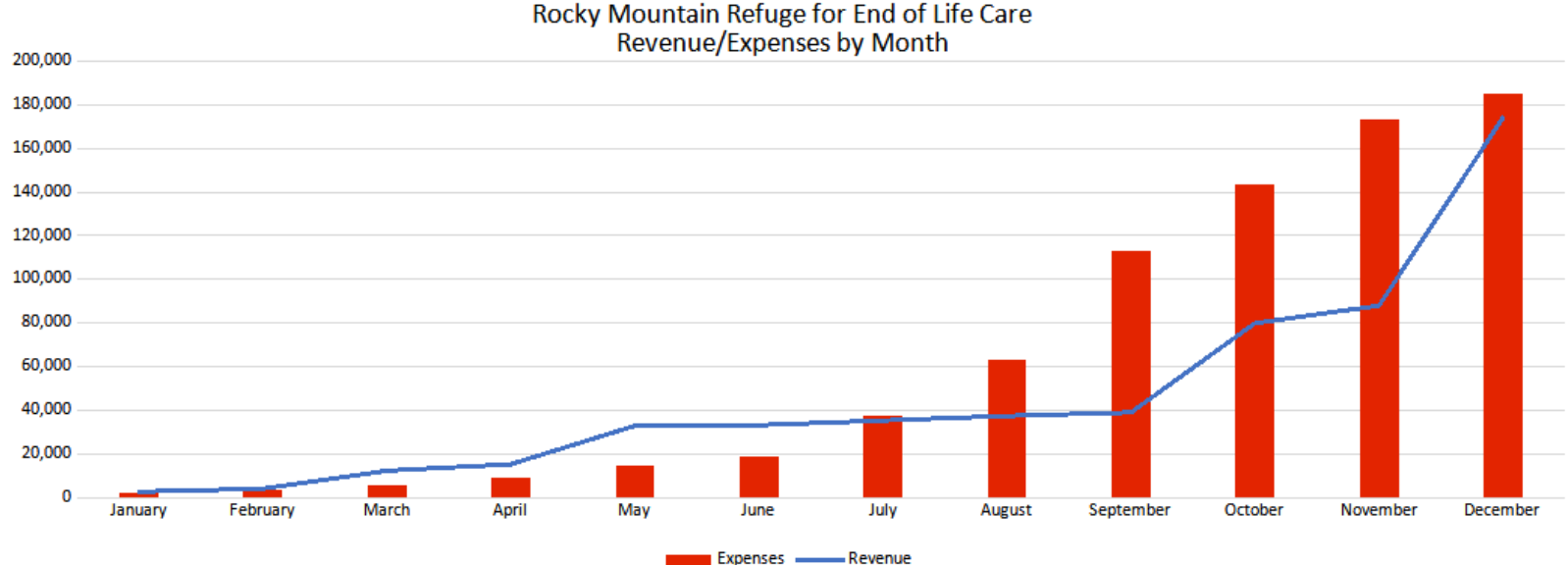
Our Income in 2022

Rocky Mountain Refuge provides our services to our residents free of charge. To do that, we seek funding from various community organizations, foundations, and individuals. We raised a total of \$174 thousand throughout the year. Most of our income (94%) went directly to resident care. The source of our income was nearly evenly split between individuals and foundations.



Our Expenses in 2022

Rocky Mountain Refuge opened in February, 2022. We understood there were many things we did not know but felt the only way to learn was to live the mission. One thing we clearly struggled with was fundraising in mid-year at which time our expenses surpassed our income. Nonetheless, we were able to stay open until mid-November 2022 and with renewed fundraising are prepared to resume operations in early 2023.



Our Impact in 2022

Our most immediate impact has been in the lives of our residents who ended in comfort rather than in uncontrolled pain and alone. Many of our residents were so happy to be in our facility and were able to finally relax and let nature take its course.

We also want to remember the effect we had on the lives of the family members and loved ones of our residents. Family members are often at a loss about how to care for someone on the streets. They can suffer long term grief if their family member dies alone, afraid, and in uncontrolled pain. Rocky Mountain Refuge provided a great deal of comfort to these family members. These metrics of care in a shelter at the end of life compared with dying on the streets are distinctly more qualitative than quantifiable.

We significantly reduced to cost to various local hospitals and the wider community. Most (85%) of our residents were admitted directly from hospitals and of those only 23% had to be added to hospice care before we could admit them. The remainder were already on hospice care.



Plans for 2023

Add one more bed

Increases the number of residents we can serve
Reduces the number of folks on the waitlist

Remodel bathrooms

1950's style makes access challenging
Become ADA compliant

Increase safety for residents and staff

Reducing costs

Adding a 3rd bed would help us reduce the cost per resident

Staff will be challenged to find ways of reducing costs throughout the year

Memorial Services

There are
many people
who come and go
in our lives.

A few
touch us
in ways
that change us
forever.

Making us better
from knowing
them.



Each person who
came to us last year
was remembered
with a memorial
service.

“Most importantly, we will know that at least some of our unhoused friends died in a comfortable bed with some dignity and someone holding their hand.

No one should die alone, and we are doing something about that”

Thank you!

To each and every one who supported us in 2022. We are deeply grateful. We would like to personally thank some of our stand out supporters on the following pages.





Members of our Compassionate Care Circle

Belinda Waldron
Dr. Nancy Robertson
James Patrick Hall
Kate West
Lorena Fajardo
Mariah Quish
Marrton (Marry) Dormish
Mary Watson
Michele Ferguson
Peter DeBlois
Rachel Rogers
Rebecca Schuyler
Richard & Alison Rabinoff
Richard & Mary Kay Kisseberth
Ridgeway Financial, LLC
Sherri & Gary Schanbacher
Tim & Julie Mueller
Wendy W.

Supporting Foundations and Organizations

Brenda Sue Brown Charitable Trust
Brewability Lab
Brotherhood of Saint Gregory
Columbine Unitarian Universalist Church
Daniel's Fund
Denver Rescue Mission
Dietvorst Family Charitable Fund
Envestnet Asset Management, Inc.
Fidelity Charitable – Tony Blando
Gill Foundation
Kong Company
Regis High Jesuit Community
Schwab Charitable
Seraphim Capital Management
SS Cyril & Methodius Russian Greek Catholic
Community
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
St. Timothy's Episcopal Church
The Duffy Charitable Gift Fund
The Mary Jane Shewfelt Charitable Trust
Thrivent
Trinity United Methodist Church

Our Largest Individual Donors

Alexis Rodriguez-Carlson

Carolyn Kubena

Chad Hartmann, TRU Community Care

Cheryl Rottman

Chris McGuire

Claire Gosnell

Daniel Wright

David Nowling

Deborah Little Wyman

Grace Malacrida

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Roger Bowden

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Tony Blando

Tracy Magill

Wallace Smith, Ridgegate Financial, LLC

William Sweeney

Community Partnerships

Bayaud Enterprises staffing

Compassus Hospice

Completeco Hospice

Denver Hospice

Denver Rescue Mission

Elevation Hospice

HealthONE Hospice

Lutheran Hospice

Namaste Hospice

TRU Community Care Hospice