



Carroll Respite Program

Homelessness, addiction and untreated medical conditions are growing concerns in Carroll County. The proposed Carroll Respite program offers a real, structured solution to help people recover and get back on their feet, which will help keep our community safer.

We are aware that some recent concerns about the program may come from a lack of knowledge or understanding, including from some who admittedly say that they have not heard the details of the plan.

We would like to clear up some misconceptions and assumptions about Carroll Respite, as well as explain how it will directly benefit the people of Carroll County.

The main point to know is that Carroll Respite is designed to address the very issues being raised, not add to them. Through a structured, effective and secure system to care for medically vulnerable individuals, Carroll Respite looks to lessen the burden on law enforcement and our hospitals and keep people off the streets.

Helping Those Who Need It Most

The Carroll Respite program through Access Carroll is an initiative aimed at providing critical care management and structured support for medically vulnerable individuals, including Carroll County residents.

Developed in partnership with LifeBridge Health and community stakeholders, the program delivers medical respite, sober respite and a food pharmacy, ensuring that individuals experiencing homelessness, substance use disorders or medical fragility receive the care they need in a controlled and secure environment with a plan on where they will go when they are medically ready to move on.

What is Medical Respite? What is Sober Respite?

Medical respite offers care for individuals who are being discharged from the hospital but who are too sick or too frail to be on the streets but have nowhere else to go. They may be elderly or be on oxygen. For example, a man who had his foot amputated and needs wound care before he can return to a shelter. The medical respite program provides a safe place for individuals to recover under medical supervision, while case managers help them secure stable housing and resources in their home communities. ›

Through a five-million-dollar grant from Sinai Hospital, the program will create a 16-bed facility with the potential expansion to 20 beds. Patients receiving care through Carroll Respite will come both from Sinai Hospital and Carroll County. Without this partnership, these vital programs would not be available to local residents.

The Carroll Respite program will also have a sober respite program, exclusively for Carroll County residents. Instead of jailing or hospitalizing intoxicated individuals or having them wander the streets, sober respite offers a safe place for them to recover and connect with resources. This reduces unnecessary police involvement, keeps hospital ERs open for true emergencies and provides a better pathway for those struggling with addiction or mental health crises.

Additionally, a food pharmacy will provide healthy food choices from local producers. The program will connect to dietitians and other healthy food resources to teach people how to create healthy meals using what is available to them, as well as understand the healing potential of eating well.

Who is eligible for the program and what happens when they are ready to leave?

One of the biggest misconceptions is this program is only for Sinai Hospital patients. That is absolutely not true. Carroll County residents will have access to the Carroll Respite program.

Another misunderstanding is that the patients who come from Sinai could end up on the streets in Westminster. This is also untrue. As stated earlier, case managers work with patients on their discharge plans to their home communities. The current pilot program has already helped five Sinai patients recover and return home, with four more actively working with case managers on their discharge plans to return to their home communities.

The program will have a security guard onsite 24/7 to ensure safety and prevent anyone from simply walking away. Access Carroll and LifeBridge Health have committed that patients will not be “dumped” in the community.

Carroll County – a Community Built on Compassion

Carroll County was selected for this program because of the success and expertise of Access Carroll, which recently celebrated its 20th anniversary of serving vulnerable populations in our community with dignity and respect.

Access Carroll had the knowledge and the structure to create and support a program such as this. The initiative will not only help vulnerable patients convalesce and return to their home communities but also brings benefits to Carroll County - providing much-needed respite services for Carroll County residents in crisis.

Additionally, Carroll County has always been a warm and welcoming community, known for caring for others rather than pushing them away. This program reflects those values - offering a

responsible, organized approach to helping the most vulnerable as part of our shared efforts to keep our community safe.

We are so appreciative for all the support we've received from our community, and we appreciate everyone's efforts in sharing accurate information and clearing up any confusion among your neighbors, colleagues and friends. Respite care is a very intentional, organized and effective initiative to reduce the very concerns our community is experiencing.

We all want a safer, healthier community, and Carroll Respite offers an opportunity to ensure people get the care they need – while keeping our streets, law enforcement and emergency services from being overwhelmed.

We remain committed to working alongside our community partners to address homelessness responsibly, offering respite care as an organized and effective approach to reducing the challenges facing our communities.

###