



In recent years, Room In The Inn has worked to grow & evolve our response to the needs of aging adults who are experiencing homelessness. As the Baby Boom generation ages and as Nashville's housing market becomes more and more limited for those with lower incomes, we have seen an increase in the number of older adults who are without housing. A lack of basic resources, especially stable housing, results in a dramatic decrease in life expectancy.

The average life expectancy for someone experiencing homelessness is 47-52 years. This is 25-30 years less than the average American. Of the roughly 6,300 individuals served by Room In The Inn over the past year, about 45% were over the age of 50, 14% were over 60, and about 7% were over the age of 65. It is vital that systems of support be available that provide safe shelter, health, and long-term stability for our unsupported aging population.



Since 1985, Room In The Inn has provided year-round, comprehensive services for anyone who is experiencing homelessness.

Many of the people we serve are classified as chronically homeless. These individuals typically face a complicated web of issues that often includes addiction, mental illness, generational poverty, a lack of education, chronic health issues, disabilities, and difficulty with navigating systems of care. The older adults we serve represent some of our community's most vulnerable neighbors. It is our intention to expand our programs to help offer them a higher quality of life, respecting their basic right to age in dignity. This includes expanding OT services to individuals and groups bringing additional opportunities to those who are not in our residential programs and creating new spaces where aging adults can gain valuable education to help them improve their quality of life.



Through the generosity of the West End Home Foundation, Room In The Inn is able to provide a residential option and services for those older adults who face significant barriers to successful, independent living. Our staff has developed expertise in working toward long-term solutions for these individuals. Additionally, funding supports Lunch and Learn events for our older adults. These regular events provide a nutritious meal, a chance to build community, recreational opportunities, and an educational component. Topics include healthcare, income, financial empowerment, legal assistance, skills for success in housing, and community resources. One of the invaluable resources being used for this program is the Aging Matters Series from Nashville Public Television. We also provide material assistance such as birth certificates, IDs, bus passes, transportation to the Social Security office, and bus tickets to reconnect with family. The Lunch and Learn sessions provide an entry point for deeper engagement with our aging population, allowing us to serve a broader range of individuals.

An example of someone we have served effectively is 62-year-old Bonnie, who became homeless 30 years ago after an eviction. She has struggled with addiction and has been turned down for housing because of her legal record. She lived outdoors and was the victim of violence. After a hospitalization, Bonnie was referred to our Recuperative Care program while she waited for the results of a biopsy. The results indicated that she was facing cancer. Bonnie entered the Supportive Living Program, with fees being waived while staff worked with her to obtain disability income. This stability allowed her to work with occupational therapists, connect with a PCP, and reconnect with family. Once disability benefits were approved, Bonnie moved in with family, which was supportive during her time with us. As she faces cancer treatments, we are grateful that she had the opportunity to connect with these systems of support.

Room In The Inn, along with the support of the West End Home Foundation, is able to assist other aging adults like Bonnie to connect to much needed services and help them to improve their quality of life. We are so grateful for their ongoing support!

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