

NEW HAVEN REGISTER

New Haven building, special needs tenants to get new life



Patti Walker, far left, president and CEO of Continuum of Care, shows off a model apartment Wednesday in the newly developed supportive housing units at 24 Sheldon Terrace in New Haven. Peter Hvizdak /Register photos

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NEW HAVEN -- Continuum of Care, Inc. Wednesday unveiled newly renovated, supportive housing units at Sheldon Terrace Apartments.

The development has 2-bedroom, affordable units that will house a total of 20 tenants with mental and developmental disabilities on Sheldon Terrace. Continuum of Care has staff on site to offer individualized case management plans, employment assistance and medical services that allow tenants to live independently in the community.

President and Chief Executive Officer Patti Walker said one unit is handicapped-accessible.

"Each tenant will have a bedroom and they'll share common space," Walker said.

The units have a living room, kitchen, bathroom and a washer and dryer, as well as hardwood and ceramic tile flooring.

Walker said research has shown that individuals served by Continuum are more likely to die 25 years earlier than the general population if their psychiatric or developmental needs are not met. Supportive housing is a model of successful intervention.

"It's obvious they don't thrive without these programs," she said. "They do experience chronic homelessness. They do experience relapses. They need a sense of community, like we do."

Newhallville Alderwoman Alfreda Edwards, D-19, attended Continuum's open house Wednesday and said the agency runs a good program. "I think it's beautiful. It's an enhancement to the community," she said.

The more than \$3 million project was funded by a combination sources, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, tax credits, Greater New Haven Community Loan Fund, New Haven's Livable City Initiative, the United Illuminating Co., Connecticut Light & Power and other donors, Walker said.

The builder for the project, Robert LaRosa, said the units were previously "badly in need of repair" and were renovated to be energy-efficient. "It's nice to recycle a building," he said, adding that work by his Meriden-based company, LaRosa Building Group, took a little less than a year.