

Impact *thank you!*

A will to change

How YOU helped Tina recover from crippling depression

Bullying. It happens all the time. But, what about when you're the punch line of the joke, the one everyone picks on and laughs at?

All too familiar with these feelings, Providence Center client, Tina Velazquez, opens up about her past, and how she has since been able to heal.

"Some of it is hard for me to think about. But it's important that you read it – to know the good you're doing," she says.

Born with a heart condition and having undergone major surgery at just a year old, Tina was put on bedrest, causing a delay in physical developments. While other kids were up and running about, Tina was still learning to walk. This also caused her to gain weight, which she never lost.

"As a toddler, I bumped a table and knocked over a cup of hot tea. It spilled on me, burning me badly. I still have the scars."

For years, Tina was teased for her scars, her weight, and her inability to run or play like the other children at school.

"I wished I could have run away, turned invisible – anything to make it stop."



Tina, a grateful patient.

continued from page one... **Tina**

“I was bullied cruelly and often. I still have the scars from that too. I wished I could have run away, turned invisible – anything to make it stop,” said Tina.

Tina didn’t know how to help her mother understand. Her dad left when she was born. She had problems at school and at home. The constant bullying destroyed her self-esteem. “When everyone around you tells you you’re nothing – eventually you start to believe them.”

At 13 years old, Tina’s mother kicked her out. She slept where she could – on couches, or on the floor. She spent her next years in group homes and programs trying to piece her life together. Though she later got married and had children of her own, she still felt the same hurt and loneliness she felt as a little girl.

At one point, Tina earned her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) license. With a good job and career goals to look forward to, she finally felt optimistic for her future, but not for long. Soon after she dislocated three discs in her back, forcing her to leave her job.

“It felt like every time I’d try to get up, something would come along and knock me back down,” said Tina. I just wanted to give up!” Depression consumed her. She would sit on the couch day in and day out. She ate all the time to escape.

“ I can’t even put it into words. It wouldn’t have happened without the many different services The Providence Center provided me. They gave me a sense of purpose, goals to strive for and the tools I needed to succeed. ”

But, with your help, Tina got the support she needed with The Providence Center’s (TPC) outpatient program. Through therapy and medication management, she was finally able to open up about the trauma she experienced as a child.

“As part of my treatment, my therapist felt I needed a ‘win’ of sorts. She believed in me and encouraged me to try TPC’s InShape Program. That’s when things took a turn for the better and I emotionally came back,” she said. To date, Tina has lost over 100 pounds.

With newfound confidence and the help of TPC staff, Tina created a resume, applied for a job, and prepared for her interview. She landed the position.

Because of your kindness and generosity, Tina received the compassionate care she needed to regain her life.

“My little girl told me the other day that she is proud of me. That feels so good. I can’t even put it into words. It wouldn’t have happened without the many different services The Providence Center provided me. They gave me a sense of purpose, goals to strive for, and the tools I needed to succeed. They helped change my life.”

Evaluation by Dartmouth College Reveals Dramatic Results

Your generosity and commitment to innovation helps The Providence Center advance healthcare and improve patient outcomes.

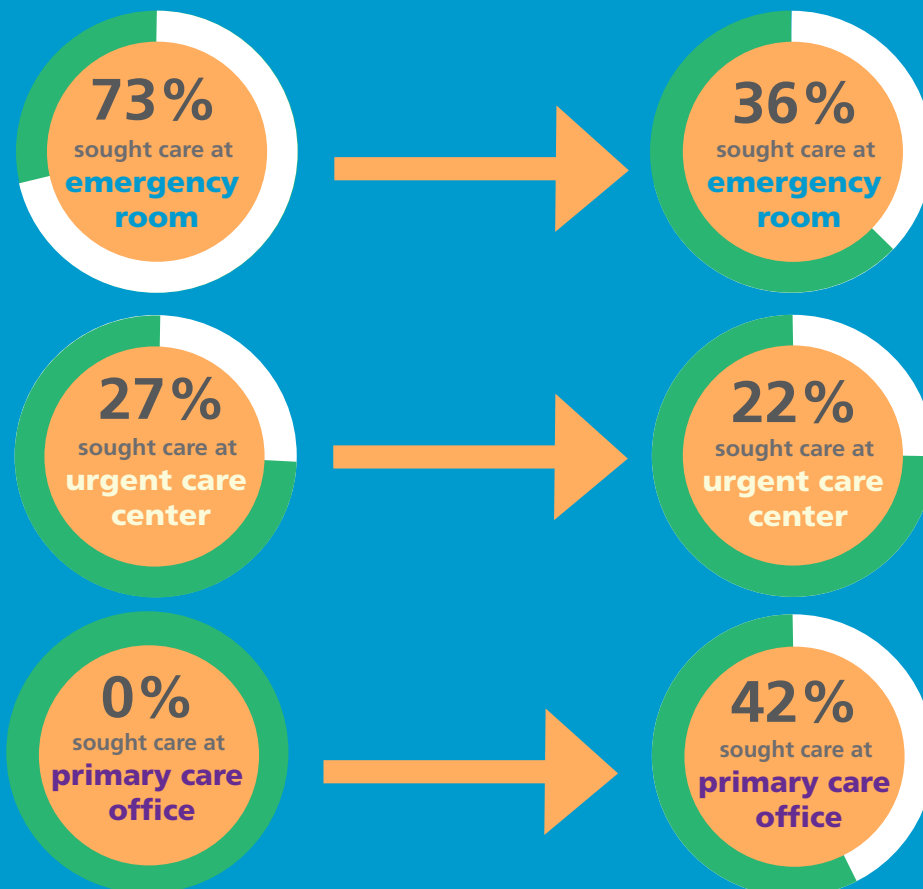
Many people with serious mental illness do not have a primary care physician. So, when they are sick they tend to seek care at a hospital emergency room. These vulnerable patients often have complex medical issues and require specialized medical attention coordinated through a primary care physician.

The Providence Center recently completed an innovative four-year program funded by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration. The program, known as “Health Connections,” worked to connect patients who have a high number of hospitalizations and a mental illness diagnosis to a comprehensive array of services.

Decreasing ER and Urgent Care Visits

At the start of the program

After 18 months



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The goals of this program were to improve patient health outcomes, to reduce ER visits and hospitalizations as well as to decrease overall healthcare costs.

Staff at The Providence Center worked to improve patients' quality of life by connecting them with primary care, wellness activities including nutritional counseling, and personal training along with intensive case management.

Sarah Pratt, PhD, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at The Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College conducted an evaluation of the program, and found favorable results across the board.

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Providence Center staff works to improve patients' quality of life by connecting them with primary care.

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