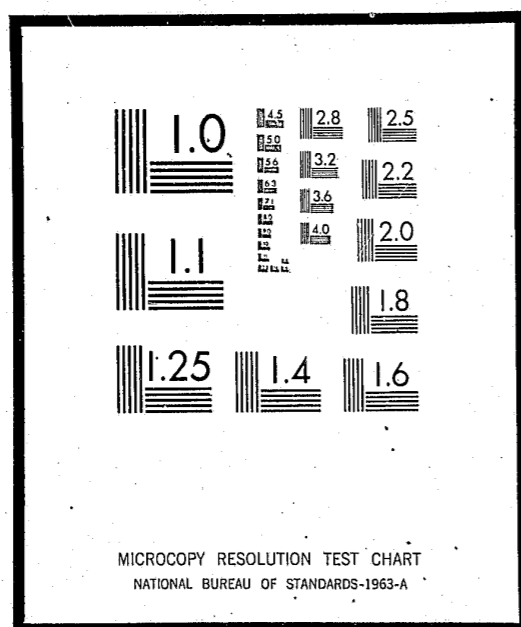


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2/25/76

PI HOUSE, INC.

COMMUNITY CORRECTION CENTER FOR WOMEN

A Preliminary Evaluation Report

prepared by

Project Evaluation Unit

Governor's Commission on Crime Prevention and Control

March, 1974

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I. DESCRIPTION

A. THE PROJECT

1. Background Information

Pi House is a halfway house which provides residency and supportive services to women eighteen years of age and older. The project is located at 581 Portland Avenue in St. Paul, at the junction of the Selby-Dale and Summit Hill areas. This location provides ready access to most of the outside activities in which the residents will generally be engaged. In addition to the nearby recreational and public facilities, the downtown area of St. Paul is within walking distance. Pi House residents also have access to bus and taxi service.

When the project was first established in 1973, opposition from some of the Summit Hill residents was encountered. Presently, however, there is an apparent high acceptance of the project in the neighborhood, as demonstrated by friendly visits and volunteer work by neighborhood people, and monetary donations from several organizations.

The Governor's Commission on Crime Prevention and Control has awarded two grants of LEAA monies to Pi House. From February 28, 1972 to February 27, 1973 the Commission awarded \$160,000.00 to support the project. Because a building had not been acquired until after the grant was awarded, and because of additional problems with the staff, the project was slow in getting started and is still operating from these first year funds. However, a second grant of \$29,318.00 has been awarded for the period from August 1, 1973 to July 31, 1974. Table 1 provides details of these grants.

TABLE 1				
LEAA GRANT AWARDS TO PI HOUSE				
GRANT NUMBER	DATE OF AWARD	LEAA SHARE	OTHER MONIES	PROJECT TOTAL
13-09-60-00-058(71)	2/28/72	\$160,000	\$54,975	\$214,975
4318005873	8/01/73	\$ 29,318	\$ 3,909	\$ 33,227

The implementing agency, Pi House, Inc., is headed by an Advisory Board and an Executive Board of Directors. Since the sixty-member Advisory Board has only recently been established, its responsibilities are still largely undefined. One major responsibility, however, is to select from its own ranks the seventeen-member Executive Board of Directors.

The Executive Board of Directors is comprised of a chairman, vice chairman, secretary and treasurer, along with the president and vice president of each of the four Advisory Board task forces (Finances, Volunteers, Community Resources, Professional), two inmates from the Minnesota Correctional Institution for Women and three Pi House residents. The Executive Board is responsible for all business and property of Pi House, and for all acts performed by the staff or Board members on behalf of the project.

2. Project Goals

The goals of Pi House, which were recently revised to replace those in the original grant application, are as follows.

1. To reduce the rate of recidivism; amongst women parolees and women on work release from MCIW - (with recidivism

herein defined as any return to the women's correctional institution -- returnees to include new sentencing, parole revocation or work release violation) -- for those clients who successfully complete the Pi House residency program during the twelve-month follow-up period.

2. To prevent incarceration for those clients who successfully complete the Pi House residency program during the twelve-month follow-up period. Either to prevent further incarceration for the women parole violators diverted to Pi House by Parole Officers as well as future or initial incarceration for those diverted by the Ramsey and Hennepin County Courts, where Pi House serves as an alternative to incarceration.
3. To reduce the rate of unemployment within our target population and by so doing to reduce the extent of dependence on welfare assistance, for those clients who successfully complete the Pi House residency program during the twelve-month follow-up period.

3. Project Staff

The project employs nine full-time and two part-time staff members. Both the assistant director and the counseling supervisor are immediately responsible to the project director. In turn, all members of the counseling staff, professional and para-professional, are accountable to the counseling supervisor. The staff and their responsibilities are as follows.

PROJECT DIRECTOR (one, full-time)

- the operation of Pi House and its program
- the development and administration of the operating budget
- the selection and development of the staff
- development and administration of the program for the assistance and training of the residents
- management of the day-to-day operation of the facility
- maintain governmental relations with the appropriate state, federal and local governmental units such as: Governor's Crime Commission,

Minnesota Department of Corrections, MCIW, Ramsey County, the City of St. Paul

- develop and maintain good community relations
- develop and maintain a long-range plan for Pi House
- serve on the Classification Board at MCIW
- maintenance of public relations with social service agencies
- development of alumni program
- staff evaluations
- director of staff training programs

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (one, full-time)

- assists the director in the operation of Pi House
- serves as director in her absence
- assumes decision-making functions as delegated by the director
- assists in the supervision of the team counselors and other staff
- maintenance of public relations
- assists in the development of the alumni program

COUNSELING SUPERVISOR (one, full-time)

- responsibility for the status of resident files
- a weekly written report to the director regarding the status of each resident and resident's file
- a weekly written counselor evaluation
- providing resident data to the research assistant
- responsible for all specific counselor duties: i.e., inventory
- responsible for the implementation and evaluation of counseling techniques
- responsible for all counselor decisions

- responsible for recommendations to the director regarding counselor cooperation and competency
- responsible for the implementation of all administrative directives
- responsible for weekly counseling staff meetings, including a written report to the director

PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS (two, full-time)

- individualized counseling sessions to client caseload
- implementation of the three-phased residential program
- client data collection
- implementation of child visitation program
- conducting mothers' discussion group
- utilization of social service agencies through the referral program
- continue and broaden the former client follow-up program
- assist clients in testing, training and securing employment - participate in employer/counselor conferences
- orientation of new Pi House residents
- compile and maintain files on residents
- record activities of residents and compile statistics and evaluation reports
- assistance to residents when they are moving out

PARA-PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS (three, full-time)

- provide assistance to the professional counselors and counseling supervisor

SECRETARY (one, full-time)

- provides secretarial assistance to the director and assistant director
- serves as receptionist

- assumes general clerical duties
- responsible for knowing where staff and residents are during duty hours

BOOKKEEPER (one, part-time)

- assists director in all financial and budget matters
- responsible for all financial records and reports
- responsible for preparation of bills and payments
- general clerical duties

COOK-NUTRITIONIST (one, part-time)

- responsible for all menu planning
- responsible for ordering food and cooking evening meal
- administration of the food management program

In addition to the responsibilities noted above, one of the professional counselors is also a certified drug and alcohol counselor. Her functions in this capacity are in problem determination and counseling, as well as referral to other service agencies.

4. Program Structure

A basic premise of the program is that clients must be allowed as much freedom as they can handle in order to experiment with new behavior and learn to make decisions. It is felt that while some of the clients' plans and approaches will undoubtedly fail, these failures can be turned into positive learning experiences with the assistance of the project staff. The program is comprised of five stages: a pre-release component, three residential phases, and a twelve-month follow-up program. Throughout the program, clients

are encouraged to set their own goals and develop their own program for reaching those goals.

The pre-release component usually consists of one or two counseling sessions at MCIW, during which one counselor and the director of Pi House, in consultation with the client and the MCIW casework staff, assess the needs of the potential client. From these sessions a pre-release agreement is drawn up between the client and Pi House which allows for as much continuity of the MCIW treatment plan as possible.

The first residential phase of the program (Phase I) is a structured orientation period usually consisting of one week's minimum duration. During this time, the new client joins the other residents in house meetings, social events, and other Pi House activities. One counseling session per day with an assigned counselor is required. During these early sessions, the counselor will hopefully establish a level of trust with the new client and discover any needs that were not apparent from the pre-release interview.

Phase II of the residential program begins with a renegotiation of the client's initial agreement and the setting of longer range goals. The need for the renegotiation often arises from the discovery of additional problems during Phase I. A new program plan is usually devised, the content and phasing of which is based on each client's needs. Frequent evaluation and revision is inherent in the format of the agreement. For most clients the plan originates in close consultation with the parole or probation officer. For crisis clients, the plan results from the joint efforts of the counselor and client only, if no parole or probation officer is involved.

During Phase II the client meets a minimum of once a week with her assigned counselor and the strengths and weaknesses and concerns of the client are explored. This is a weekly client evaluation aside from any single "problem" session held during the week. The usual concerns are employment, education, housing after release, child care needs, health and dental needs, family relations and mental health or emotional readjustment. No exact time estimate can be given for Phase II since the attainment of the goals specified in the agreement will vary with each client.

The last phase (Phase III) is entered into only by those who are meeting the expectations of their agreement and are functioning responsibly. Clients in this phase are usually waiting to move out of the residence after arrangements for lodging or jobs are made. Phase III usually lasts about two weeks. Upon successful termination of residency, each client will have made provisions for her immediate livelihood or education and housing. She also will have established a relationship with her family appropriate to her case.

Despite the emphasis placed on allowing the residents as much freedom as possible, there are a few specific rules governing each of the three residential phases. During Phase I, in addition to the daily counseling sessions, the residents are required to meet a 10:00 P.M. curfew on weekdays and a 1:30 A.M. curfew on weekends. Overnight or weekend passes are not allowed. During Phase II the rules become more lenient. The curfew every day is 1:30 A.M. with a one-half hour grace period, and weekend passes are given provided the client has an acceptable place to stay (the acceptability is investigated by a counselor or possibly pre-approved by the parole agent before the pass is granted). A minimum of one counseling session per week

is scheduled during Phase II. In Phase III there is no formal curfew: residents set their own curfew time but are expected to be in by that time. The resident occasionally may stay overnight at her own home with the counselor's and director's approval. Weekend furlough privileges are also granted to residents in Phase III.

The follow-up program consists of monthly counselor-initiated contacts with assigned former residents in those cases where the client fails to contact the house herself. The financial, employment and personal status of the client is discussed and assistance offered if needed. The women are considered clients of Pi House up to twelve months following successful completion of the program, with all counseling and referral services available to them on a non-residency basis. Furthermore, monthly meetings and social activities are in the beginning stages and will become a regular part of the programming. In addition, a Pi House Alumni Association is presently in the beginning stages.

Another important aspect of the program, in addition to the residential program and counseling sessions, is the referral service. Referrals are made to those agencies which, in the opinion of the Pi House staff, have programs which deal with the problem (s) of a given resident. There is also a Food Management Program at Pi House which allows interested clients to learn various aspects of food management. The University of Minnesota Extension Division has started college-level courses at the facility on a trial basis. If successful, other courses will be offered. Other programs for communications skills and budgeting are being planned. A dis-

cussion group for mothers has been discontinued, but will be resumed in the near future. There are also plans for developing the basement into a facility for ceramics, art programs or child care training.

B. CLIENTELE

1. Admission to the Project

The only formal age criterion for admission requires that applicants be women eighteen years of age or older. First consideration is given to women who have been or are incarcerated. When applying for admission to Pi House each applicant must fill out a standard application indicating why she wants to stay at the house, what help she expects, etc. The application is submitted to both Pi House and the Minnesota Adult Parole Commission or other appropriate authority. Applicants from MCIW are interviewed by one Pi House staff member, one resident from Pi House and one resident from Shakopee (a member of the Executive Board of Directors). Information obtained from this interview is discussed by all Pi House staff and residents to decide if the client could be helped by the program. If the staff and residents feel the applicant would benefit from the program, the next step is a pre-release visit to the project. This visit gives the applicant the opportunity to become acquainted with the house in order to have as much information as possible on which to make her final decision. If, after the pre-release visit, the client still wants to be admitted, the pre-release agreement is drawn up and submitted to the Parole Board, which makes the final decision.

The admission procedure for clients probationed to Pi House as an alternative to incarceration varies from that of the re-entry clients. First, the potential applicant visits the project and decides whether or not she

would like to enter. The current residents and staff again discuss the woman's acceptability. If there is agreement, an agreement between the applicant and Pi House is drawn up and presented to the judge, who makes the final decision. For crisis clients desiring entry into the residential program, the admission process involves only the client and the staff.

2. Client Characteristics

The target population of Pi House is described as those women over eighteen years of age who are having problems with the law or who are in need of crisis intervention. Women who are incarcerated receive the first consideration for admission. Originally, only women making the transition from the Minnesota Correctional Institution for Women back into the open society were served by the project. Currently, Pi House also serves as an alternative to incarceration and as an intervening agency for "crisis" clients.

Demographic Characteristics. Of the thirty-six regular clients who have been or are presently in the residential program, nineteen are white, twelve are black, four are Indian and one is Spanish-American. The average age of the clients was twenty-four years with a range from eighteen to forty-seven. Of the thirty-two residents for whom marital data is available, only one was married while in the project, eleven were either divorced or separated and twenty had never been married. Approximately two-thirds of the residents are citizens of either Hennepin or Ramsey counties, four are from other Minnesota counties, and the others are from out of state or have no permanent address.

Socio-Economic Characteristics. The educational attainment of the res-

idents at intake ranges from an eighth grade education to two years of college. Twenty (56%) of the residents are either high school graduates or hold a G.E.D. certificate, while eleven (37%) have had less than twelve years of schooling. Of these eleven, five were enrolled in G.E.D. courses at intake. Four of the residents have had either one or two years of college education; nine have earned a vocational training certificate.

At intake, five residents were employed full-time, two were employed part-time, two worked on an irregular basis and twenty-six were unemployed. Twenty-two residents had at least one dependent (ten residents had one dependent, the others had up to five); fourteen had none.

Correctional History. At the time of intake, seventeen residents were on parole, six on probation, two on work release, two were awaiting adjudication, and two had been adjudicated and were awaiting sentencing. Thirty-one clients had either been released from or were about to enter MCIW. One client had been released from an out-of-state institution, and four had never been involved with any institution.

The average number of adult arrests was about three. Six clients had never been arrested, twenty-two had been arrested one to six times, and one had been arrested forty times. Eleven residents had one gross misdemeanor or felony conviction, ten had two to five convictions and eight had none. The number of months clients of Pi House served in a correctional institution for their present offense is shown in Table 2. (Table 2 on following page.)

TABLE 2		
<u>MONTHS IN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION</u>		
<u>FOR PRESENT CONVICTION</u>		
MONTHS	NUMBER OF CLIENTS	PERCENT OF CLIENTS
0	5	13.9%
1 - 6	7	19.4
7 - 12	10	27.8
13 - 18	4	11.1
19 - 24	3	8.3
15 - 30	1	2.8
Over 30	3	8.3

The time spent in an institution by the three clients in the "over 30" category was forty-nine, sixty, and eighty-nine months. The average time for all clients was fourteen months.

Table 3 (located on the following page) shows the offenses committed for the present conviction. In addition to the offenses in Table 3, three residents also committed second offenses for the present conviction. These were forgery (two residents) and escape (one resident).

TABLE 3 OFFENSES FOR PRESENT CONVICTION		
OFFENSE	NUMBER OF CLIENTS	PERCENT OF CLIENTS
Homicide	2	5.6
Negligent Manslaughter	2	5.6
Forgery, Theft by Check	15	41.7
Sodomy	1	2.8
Attempted Robbery	1	2.8
Larceny	4	11.1
Theft from Person	1	2.8
Arson	2	5.6
Aggravated Assault	1	2.8
Dangerous Drugs	2	5.6
Other	1	2.8
No Offense (Crisis Clients)	4	11.1

3. Client Activities

The activities at Pi House vary from time to time depending on the needs and interests of the clients. One constant feature, however, is the Monday and Tuesday house meetings. The Tuesday meetings are devoted to educational or recreational programs. The Monday meetings are designated as resident and house meeting nights in which operational procedures and house affairs are covered. Some of the clients have also initiated a group session on Monday nights during which personal problems are discussed. Another

constant feature is the housekeeping activity resulting from the clients' responsibility for maintaining the facility.

The area around Pi House contains a variety of recreational facilities such as theaters, bowling alleys and roller skating as well as numerous stores, shops and restaurants. Within the facility itself, holiday dinners for families and parties for the residents' children and neighborhood children are often held. Some of the residents own their own cars, others are either transported by the staff when necessary or take the bus or taxi to travel about the metropolitan region.

Residents who show an interest are encouraged to volunteer their time to community agencies such as day care centers, tutorial programs, organizations for senior citizens, etc.

II. EVALUATION OF EFFORT

A. CLIENTS SERVED

A total of 36 clients have entered the residential program since its inception. Pi House has a maximum capacity of 14, and at the present time there are 12 regular clients. Over fifty clients in crisis situations have been served by the project although this is an estimate since no records have been kept on these clients. Two crisis clients per week is the usual rate. Referral services are provided most often, although some crisis clients eventually sign an agreement with Pi House and enter the residential program.

B. PROJECT SERVICES

The two most important services provided by the project, in addition to residency, are counseling and referral. The counseling staff provide information, clarify expectations, identify problems, and provide the personal support needed to encourage self-generated change within the clients. The positive behavior of the clients is reinforced and negative behavior is confronted. In all cases, however, the actual responsibility for change is placed on the client. The actual counseling sessions are focused on the problems and goals of each client. The earliest sessions are for the purpose of assessing the needs of the client; later sessions center on helping the client reach her goals. Some may involve only a rundown of the client's progress, others may last an entire day and involve going out to various agencies.

Another major aspect of the program is the referral service provided for both regular clients and women in crisis situations. Existing programs in community agencies that are applicable to the clients' needs are used whenever

possible. It is felt that this service not only secures for the client the services she needs at the moment, but also teaches her about the resources that are available in the event of future problems.

Since it is felt that a major reason for recidivism is a lack of the skills and work habits needed for securing and holding a job, close communication is maintained with service agencies such as H.I.R.E. or DVR, which provide job training or secure jobs. Interview arrangements with private employers are also made. Agencies with programs designed to develop healthy family relations are also considered very important to the Pi House staff since the family is often an important force impinging on the client's life. Other resources of importance to Pi House are drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs and mental health programs.

Since the director of Pi House does not consider the facility to be a training center, few training programs are offered. Referral to existing training programs is felt sufficient. Nonetheless, one training program in food management is offered. Because most Pi House residents are mothers who will, upon release, be reestablishing their family ties, this program is considered important. The food management program arranges for each woman to work with the Pi House nutritionist for a two-week period of time during which the client participates in various aspects of food management.

Pi House serves as a drop-off spot for the boutique at MCIW which provides the women leaving with good clothing to wear in place of state-issued clothing. The boutique originated and is operated by persons who are also connected with Pi House so there is close cooperation between the two.

III. COST ANALYSIS

The services provided by Pi House basically correspond to the needs of the clients as perceived by the staff. For example, the most often mentioned need was job training, referral or placement (a need for twenty-two of the thirty-six clients). Referrals are made to several training or job securing agencies. Two other needs mentioned almost as frequently were personal support (for twenty clients) and basic survival needs (for seventeen clients.) These needs are dealt with through the referral and counseling services.

G. UTILIZATION OF COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The agencies to which Pi House residents are referred include the following.

1. Educational and Vocational Training: T.C.I.O.C., University of Minnesota, HELP Center, Augsburg College, Metropolitan State Junior College, D.V.R., Midway Beauty College, Oliver Thwin Beauty College, M.H.R., Manpower Training, N.A.B., and Martin Luther King Center.
2. Employment Securement and Training: H.I.R.E., N.A.B., D.V.R., Minnesota State Employment Agency, and M.H.R.
3. Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation: Meadowbrook, Shoreview and St. Paul Ramsey Hospital detoxification centers, St. Mary's Hospital, A.A. Wilder, Northwestern Hospital, University of Minnesota Hospital, Hennepin County General, St. Paul Ramsey Mental Health Clinic, Wayside and Wanaiki House, Eden House, St. Stevens Guild Hall, Granville House and Indian A.A.
4. Mental Health: St. Paul Ramsey Mental Health Clinic, Martin Luther King Center, Hennepin County General Mental Health Clinic and St. Mary's Hospital.
5. Child Guidance and Family Relations: Wilder Child Guidance Clinic and Family Social Service.

The extent of the assistance these agencies provide to the client is determined by the specific needs of each particular client.

The issue of "cost per client" of community-based corrections projects has been raised in the past but as yet there is neither an agreed upon method for determining costs nor any set standards of what constitutes a reasonable cost. The Evaluation Unit is working toward an acceptable standard of measurement although our figures should be interpreted only as a rough estimate of cost.

The cost per client figure for Pi House was derived from the total funds spent from November 1, 1972 when the project received its first funds through January 31, 1974. During this period, the total project costs were \$163,925. In order to allow for the costs of starting up and equipping a new facility, we subtracted \$56,304 from the total project costs. This figure included \$19,279 for construction costs, \$19,270 for equipment, and \$17,755 in operating costs through January 1973, when the first clients entered the project. The revised total project cost is therefore \$107,621. The thirty-six clients who have been or are still in the project have spent a total of 436.4 client weeks in the project. By dividing 436.4 into the revised total project cost of \$107,621 we arrive at a weekly cost per client of approximately \$246 and a daily cost of \$35. This amounts to an annual cost of \$12,775 per client.

These costs may be questioned as Pi House opened before it was physically ready and because the project experienced personnel problems. These and other problems resulted in reduced numbers of clients for several months in the project's early stages. Thus, we calculated the cost per client for the last seven months (i.e., from July 1, 1973 through January 31, 1974). The total

project costs for this period were \$100,596. By eliminating the costs of equipment and construction during this seven-month period (\$28,827) we arrive at the revised total project cost of \$71,769. During this period of time, a total of 255 client weeks were spent by the clients in the project. Dividing this amount into \$71,769 we arrive at a weekly cost of \$281 and a daily cost of \$40. This would amount to an annual cost of \$14,600.

It should be noted that these figures do not include the more than fifty crisis clients helped by the project. Nor do these figures permit a comparison of the services rendered by Pi House or the effectiveness of Pi House compared to other halfway houses. These comparisons will be made at a later date when additional data is available. However, the cost per client of Pi House can be compared to the costs of MCIW at Shakopee. During the fiscal year 1971 - 1972 the weekly cost per client at MCIW was \$166.74; the daily cost was \$23.82. This amounts to \$8,694 per year. Even allowing for inflation, these costs are considerably lower than those of Pi House. This is especially true when we consider that the method used to calculate cost per client is probably biased toward a lower cost figure. The Pi House costs also seem high when we consider that most of its residents have been paroled from MCIW and thus Pi House costs are additional expenditures for these same women. However, in the future Pi House plans to serve an increasing number of clients on an alternative-to-incarceration basis. By taking women on probation, the project should be able to increase the total number of women to which it provides services.

III. SUMMARY

Pi House, a residential facility for women located in St. Paul serves as a re-entry halfway house, an alternative to incarceration and as an intervening agency for women in crisis situations. The project tries to minimize the difficulties of women who are being released from institutions and to reduce the rates of recidivism, unemployment, and welfare dependency for all of its clients. The maximum capacity of the house is fourteen, with a current population of twelve. Nine full-time and two part-time staff are employed. Clients entering the project negotiate a contract with Pi House delineating the client's goals and program plan. As much individualization as possible is provided for.

The residential program with counseling and referral are the main services provided by the project. Counseling is exclusively one-to-one and is designed to provide the information, assistance, and support needed by the clients. Referrals are made to those agencies which offer programs relevant to the needs of each client. The activities that actually take place at the house vary over time depending on the needs and interests of the clients. However, biweekly house meetings and housekeeping activities, in addition to the counseling sessions, are continually scheduled. The residents also have access to recreational and service agencies in the city.

Thirty-one of the thirty-six residents were involved with MCIW. The average number of adult arrests was three. The average time spent in adult institutions was thirteen months. Six clients had never spent time. For over 40% of the residents, the present conviction was for either forgery or theft by check.

The daily cost per client at Pi House from its beginning until January 31, 1974 is roughly \$35. For the last seven months this figure has increased to approximately \$40, or an annual cost per client of \$14,600. Comparisons to other halfway houses cannot be made at this time because of the unavailability of such data. However, these comparisons will be made at a future date. Compared to the daily cost per client at MGIW of \$23.82 and an annual per client cost of \$8,694, the Pi House costs appear quite high.

END