



# PORTLAND STREET MEDICINE

## Progress Report:

# *Lessons Learned from 4 Months on the Streets*

By Bill and Drew

Portland Street Medicine is four months into pilot phase and what have we seen? 136 people, 8 dogs, countless community workers and volunteers, an angry citizen, a tense Trimet situation and one delightful woman with a thought disorder who both questions everything we do and allows us into her "home" without question. We've seen cellulitis, abscesses, elevated blood pressure, a gangrenous toe, unattended pregnancies and a lot of people with barriers to healthcare. We sent one gentleman to the hospital, arranged to get a handful of people walk-in appointments and helped several people access immediate emergency housing (thank you Cascadia Street Outreach team!). Our greatest achievement has been the relationships we've developed. While sweeps make ongoing presence difficult, we are optimistic a solution exists. Our Friday Cascadia rounds consist of 4-5 site visits to medically vulnerable people or to sites

that are about to be swept. We get calls from Union Gospel Mission, Sunnyside Community House and citizens that are worried about their neighbors. In general, and with time, people are grateful and gracious.

We are also learning about social structure and codes of conduct in the camps. It is important to be welcomed. There is no shortage of feedback from those who have either been doing this work or living this life. Expecting 4000 unhoused (Joint Office 2017) people to have the same needs is naive. There are 4000 stories, 4000 personalities and 4000 sets of family dynamics. The "learns" are constant.

We have applied for federal free clinic status and are hoping to begin our post-pilot program by August 1. We anticipate two days of rounds and a weekend program by the end of the year. Clinicians will need to be credentialed, i.e., active license, Oregon Practitioner Credentialing Application, background check, immunity to common contagious diseases and

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other steps required of any healthcare organization. Our orientation session will cover medical practice on the streets, safety, privacy, trauma informed care and mental health first aid. "Do no harm" is less intuitive on the streets. Clinicians will be expected to round regularly and maintain clinical acumen. We are in the process of defining these expectations.

Our non-clinician volunteer policy will consist of a thorough orientation session and a street requirement. We feel all those doing work with Portland Street Medicine should know what life is like on the streets and be able to represent our work to our fellow citizens of Portland.

We are grateful for your interest and are doing our best to finish our pilot phase and dig in.

But it's important to be mindful, organized and steady. This only works if we are around for a while. One can't throw a match onto a pile of wood and expect it to catch fire. We are in the "dried leaves, scraps of paper and maybe a couple of pieces of kindling" phase of this project. A robust fire is the goal.

If you know of a medically vulnerable person on the streets, feel free to shoot us an email or give us a call at our new number, (503)501-1231. We'll do everything we can to find them. Our website is up, **[www.portlandstreetmedicine.org](http://www.portlandstreetmedicine.org)**. We plan to resume community meetings at the end of our pilot phase. And look for an invite to our first gala fundraiser, tentatively scheduled for September 15. You won't want to miss it! +

## Care Coordination Corner:

# *Oregon Harbor of Hope, Daimler and Splendid Cycles*

By Bill

Much of the early success of Portland Street Medicine can be attributed to Homer Williams, Don Mazziotti and Oregon Harbor of Hope (OHOH). OHOH has been involved from the start, providing guidance, experience and confidence to our team. Founded by Homer Williams, a Portland real estate developer and

businessman, Williams was inspired after a trip to San Antonio where he toured Haven for Hope, a homeless campus that delivers a centralized, compassionate and multi-service approach to the

many difficulties facing San Antonio's homeless population. Williams and business activist Don Mazziotti quickly assembled a team to create OHOH, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit focused on developing special facilities featuring systems of care that meet the broad needs of the chronically homeless and unsheltered. These facilities or "safe harbors" will be operated in partnership with the city, county, state agencies, and many nonprofit and faith-based groups. From the OHOH website:

*"The city and county are working hard to address our crisis, but they cannot solve this problem alone. The private sector must get involved to help turn this problem around. This is our city. This is our home. These are our homeless. We can make a huge impact and give people hope. They need our help."*

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Thanks Daimler  
North America



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To date, OHOH has raised over \$1.5M and assembled an experienced, skilled, and passionate leadership team to bring this vision to reality. OHOH can truly and positively impact not only those suffering from homelessness, but also the entire city. Additionally, OHOH was instrumental in helping us secure our first vehicle, a beautiful new Sprinter Van, courtesy of Daimler North America. The van will transport the team, provide a clean and private mobile "examining room", and eventually provide a secure environment for pharmacy, lab and document storage. This gift helps us get off the ground but also allows us to expand and dream. Learn more about OHOH and how you can help at [www.oregonharborofhope.org](http://www.oregonharborofhope.org).

Finally, in the category of "good things happen to good people", we must mention Splendid Cycles. On rounds at the base of the Springwater Trail, several of our folks mentioned their gratitude for access to clean water out of a spigot in front of Splendid Cycles. Indeed, Splendid installed the spigot for all Springwater commuters but did not discriminate. As businesses try to figure out ways to deter the homeless from their property, Splendid recognizes the need for basic survival. On rounds that day, we stopped in and before we knew it, we were being offered a cargo bike for summer rounds. We love our van but sometimes street medicine requires some ingenuity. The International Street Medicine Institute's motto, "Go to the People", is now a little closer to fruition in Portland, thanks to Splendid Cycles. +

## Keep an eye out for...

### People/services

- newsletter editor
- data/IT leader
- secretary
- credentials committee
- same/next day clinic access
- cargo bike geek

- feminine hygiene products
- hand warmers
- sharps containers
- hot beverage container

### Office

- printer

### Stuff

- naloxone
- bag-valve-mask
- bottled water
- parking spot
- first aid supplies
- ankle, wrist and finger splints
- Kerlex, impregnated gauze
- dry food donations
- bus tickets, cab vouchers
- parking permit
- topical OTCs
- individually packaged OTCs
- condoms
- dog treats

### Paypal (via website)

- dollars
- quarters
- euros
- bitcoins



Our first procedure: Boss, 5 minutes after suture removal

**Important links:**

- a) Domicile Unknown: Multnomah County's annual review of homelessness associated deaths:  
[www.multco.us/joint-office-homeless-services/domicile-unknown](http://www.multco.us/joint-office-homeless-services/domicile-unknown)
- b) Interested in joining a street team now? The Union Gospel Mission's volunteer van delivers food, blankets and kindness most evenings:  
[www.ugmportland.org](http://www.ugmportland.org)
- c) Oregon Harbor of Hope:  
[www.oregonharborofhope.org](http://www.oregonharborofhope.org)
- d) Splendid Cycles:  
[www.splendidcycles.com](http://www.splendidcycles.com)
- e) International Street Medicine Symposium, Oct 3-6, Rotterdam:  
[www.streetmedicine.org](http://www.streetmedicine.org)

**"Our mission:** Portland Street Medicine's mission is to bring quality medical care directly to Portlanders who are facing unstable housing or are sleeping on the streets. By serving patients in the streets we not only meet immediate medical needs but also collaborate with community efforts to get patients integrated into regular healthcare. As experts in both street medicine and community resources, we are central in building interdisciplinary relationships and bridging gaps between this vulnerable population and the community resources available to them. Through community engagement, our citizens will be reminded of the greatness of our city and our ability to solve problems honestly and directly."