

HOUSING

Stable Housing Improves Health Care

Study gives weight to 'housing first' model

A recent study of residents at The Apartments at Bud Clark Commons indicates a direct relationship between stable housing and both the reduction in health care costs and in improved health care outcomes for Medicaid members.

The study, conducted by the Center for Outcomes Research and Education at Providence Portland Medical Center on behalf of Health Share of Oregon and Home Forward, found that health care costs, including emergency room visits and hospitalizations, fell by over 50 percent in the first six months after a resident moved into stable housing, and continued to dip in the second and third years after moving in. Concurrently, residents reported significant reductions in unmet needs for physical and mental health care and better health overall.

The study, which was based on resident surveys and health care utilization data, included 99 of the 130 residents at The Apartments at Bud Clark Commons, a permanent supportive housing building in downtown Portland which serves residents who have been experiencing homelessness and complex health issues.

Results showed that in the year before they moved into BCC, residents on Medicaid averaged total health care costs of \$2,006 per month, or 4.4 times higher than the average adult Medicaid member. In the year after moving in, average costs were \$899 per month, a 55 percent decline.

"The results of this study reinforce what we already know about what impacts an individual's health outcomes," noted Janet Meyer, chief executive officer of Health Share

of Oregon. "You can't begin to help someone get their chronic health conditions under control when they're living in a doorway or under a bridge. Stable housing, along with other social determinants such as adequate food and transportation, is critical in improving outcomes by helping to manage chronic health conditions."

The study indicates the average resident saw a reduction of over \$13,000 in annual claims, which is an amount greater than the estimated \$11,600 to house a resident at Bud Clark. Additionally, the reduction in claims was maintained into and beyond the second year of their residency, suggesting that supportive housing has an ongoing impact on health care costs.

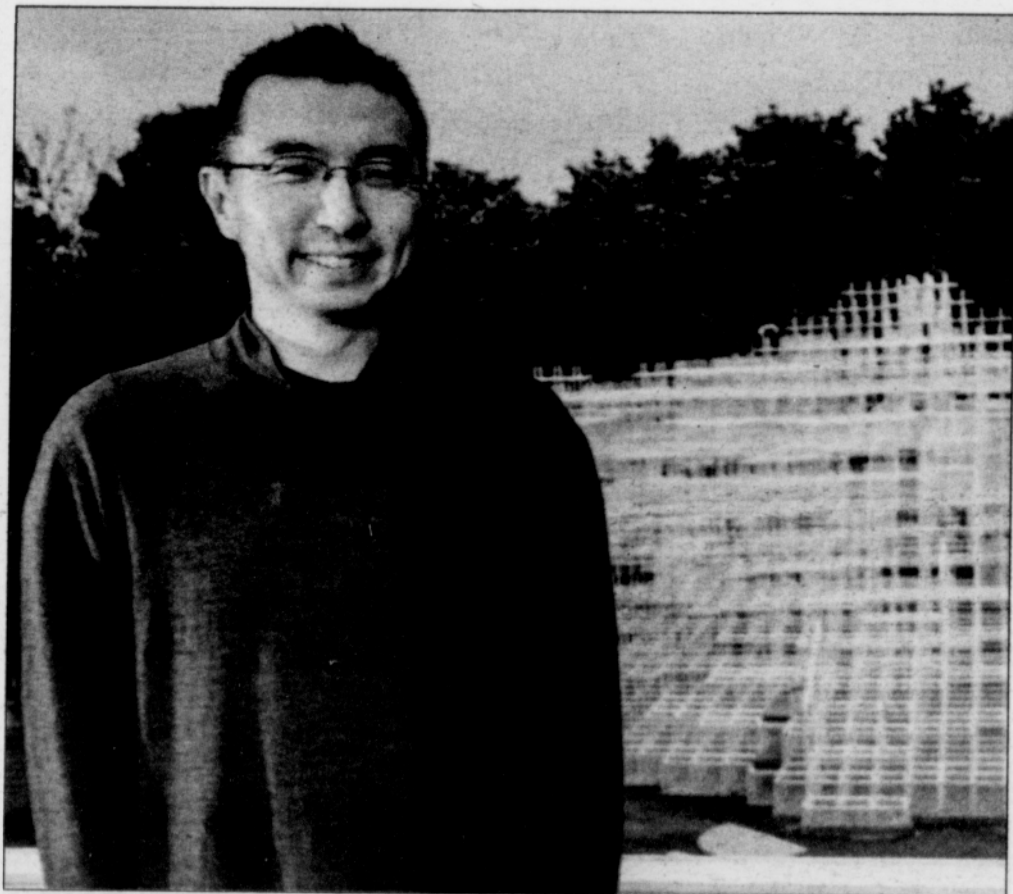
Residents also reported significant declines in unmet health care needs, as well as improvements in their own physical and mental health after moving to the housing complex.

"The Apartments at Bud Clark Commons pair housing and health care to provide some of the most vulnerable residents in our community with a good place to call home. We're very pleased that the research results demonstrate the value of this innovative model," said Steve Rudman, executive director, Home Forward.

"This demonstrates that our investments in affordable housing and ending homelessness are key to reducing health care costs and improving health outcomes in our community. Housing is health care. We're proud to partner in this work," said Traci Manning, director, Portland Housing Bureau.

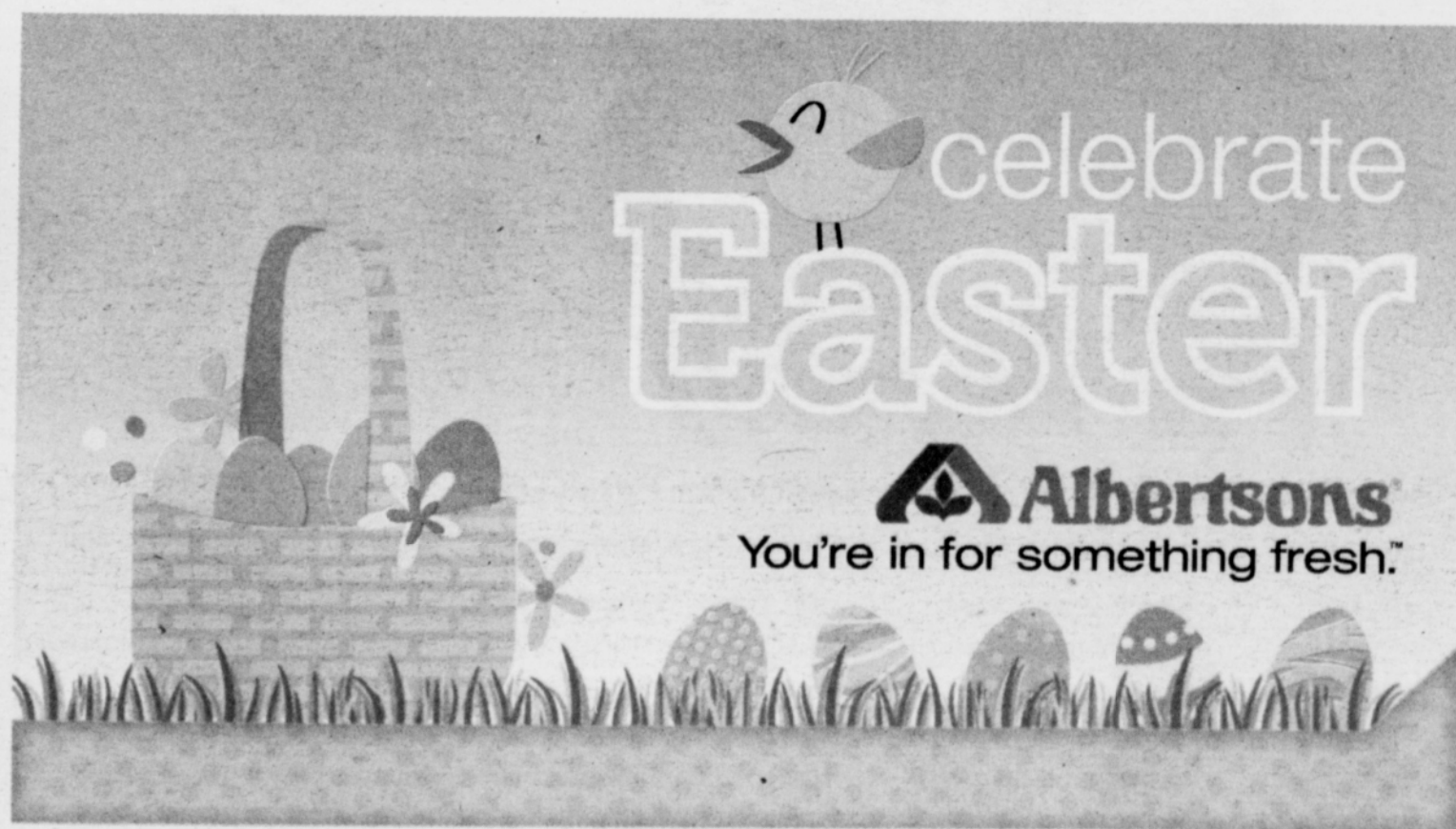


A survey of residents at the Apartments at Bud Clark Commons, a new permanent supportive housing building in downtown Portland, shows a 55 percent reduction in health care costs when individuals have stable housing and access to health care services.



PSU to Host Cultural Architect

Internationally acclaimed architect Sou Fujimoto, known for his residential and cultural projects and the youngest architect ever to be invited to design the Serpentine Gallery Summer Pavilion in London, will discuss his work and ideas at the Portland State University School of Architecture lecture series, "Unclad", Wednesday, May 7 at 6 p.m. in Lincoln Recital Hall. The lecture is free and open to the public.



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