

Meridian in Michigan and the Centene Foundation Announce \$1.1 million Grant to Neighborhood Service Organization - May 7, 2024

*Grant funds medical respite program to improve healthcare and housing stability for Detroit's homeless population.*

DETROIT, May 7, 2024 /PRNewswire/ -- [Meridian in Michigan](#), a leading managed care organization in the state of Michigan and a wholly-owned subsidiary of [Centene Corporation](#) (NYSE: CNC) and the [Centene Foundation](#), the philanthropic arm of Centene Corporation, announced today a \$1.1 million grant to the [Neighborhood Service Organization](#) (NSO), an integrated health and human service agency based in Detroit. The grant will support NSO's [Medical Respite program](#), serving to increase access to health and recuperative care for individuals experiencing homelessness.

"Meridian and the Centene Foundation are proud to partner with NSO to improve health disparities for individuals experiencing homelessness," said Kelly McDonald, Meridian's senior director of population health and clinical operations. "The grants will provide individuals with a safe, stable and supportive environment to recover from illness and injury. By focusing on proactive coordinated care, this partnership will provide a tangible solution that can be expanded to address health disparities in a range of health conditions and outcomes."

The NSO program operates from the Detroit Healthy Housing Center, and offers comprehensive healthcare, social support and job training to those experiencing homelessness who are too frail or ill to recuperate from a physical illness or injury in an unsheltered environment but do not require hospitalization. The program expects to serve 165 individuals annually, with an anticipated average length of stay of 30 days, to provide services and support to clients on their path to stable housing. This high-impact approach to engaging people experiencing homelessness can produce healthcare savings through stable housing and by reducing avoidable hospital visits.

"NSO believes that healthcare is a fundamental human right, and our partnership with Meridian and the Centene Foundation is a testament to our commitment to ensuring that every individual, regardless of their housing situation, has access to the care they need to lead healthier and more dignified lives," said President and CEO of NSO, Linda Little.

Although medical respite programs are expanding nationwide, with more than 75 programs in 30 states, the demand for beds in Detroit for those facing housing instability meaningfully exceeds the 45 beds available. With an estimated 1,280 homeless on any given night in the city, according to [point-in-time data](#) collected by the Home Action Network of Detroit, the shortage of beds highlights a significant gap in meeting the needs of those without shelter.

Since opening in 2023, NSO's Medical Respite program is showing promising results in decreasing inpatient admissions, reducing emergency department utilization and decreasing healthcare spending. Further, the program is improving access to preventive healthcare to help tackle some of the root causes of homelessness, such as mental illness and substance abuse. This initiative also aims to connect individuals to permanent housing, social services, job training and other community resources.

"The COVID-19 pandemic brought to light the unmet needs of homeless individuals who require recuperative care. They deserve a safe place to recover and NSO's Medical Respite program offers just that. NSO is providing a lifesaving service for our most vulnerable Detroiters," said Homelessness Solutions Director, City of Detroit's Housing & Revitalization Department, Terra Linzer.

By investing in the Medical Respite program, Meridian and the Centene Foundation further their commitment to improving healthcare access for people experiencing homelessness, ensuring a healthier and more secure future for the Detroit community.

### **About Meridian**

Meridian in Michigan provides government-sponsored managed care services to families, children, seniors, and individuals with complex medical needs primarily through Medicaid (Meridian), Medicare Advantage and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (Wellcare), Medicare-Medicaid Plans (MeridianComplete), and the Health Insurance Marketplace (Ambetter from Meridian). Meridian is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Centene Corporation, a leading healthcare enterprise committed to helping people live healthier lives. For more information about Meridian, please visit [mimeridian.com](https://mimeridian.com).

### **About the Centene Foundation**

The Centene Foundation (the "Foundation"), a private nonprofit focused on investing in economically challenged communities, is the philanthropic arm of Centene Corporation ("Centene"). The Foundation supports projects and initiatives strategically aligned with Centene's purpose-driven culture and enhances the work Centene is doing to remove the barriers to wellness underserved and low-income populations face. The Foundation is committed to addressing social determinants of health and improving health equity in three distinct areas of focus: healthcare access, social services, and education. To learn more, visit the Centene Foundation's [website](#).

### **About Neighborhood Service Organization**

Neighborhood Service Organization (NSO), a Detroit-based integrated health and human service agency, delivers community-based services and holistic programs for vulnerable populations. The agency provides behavioral health and primary care services, in addition to wraparound services that address barriers to housing, health and well-being. NSO serves 12,000 people annually in Wayne and Oakland counties. Learn more by visiting [www.NSO-MI.org](http://www.NSO-MI.org). For more information and to discuss partnership opportunities with NSO Contact [Corporateaffairs@nso-mi.org](mailto:Corporateaffairs@nso-mi.org).

SOURCE Meridian of Michigan

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