



**TRANSFORMING LIVES, TRANSFORMING CLUBHOUSES:
The Power of Accreditation!**

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Good morning. My name is Lee Kellogg and I am very proud to say that I work for Clubhouse International. I am absolutely thrilled to be working for an organization that has had such a profound impact: on me personally; on Genesis House, the Clubhouse that I worked in for 17 years; on Clubhouse Michigan, my former Clubhouse Coalition; and on Clubhouses all over the world.

The title of this plenary is Transforming Lives, Transforming Clubhouses: The Power of Accreditation! As tricky as it can be to say the word Accreditation, it can be even trickier to explain the concept. Fortunately we have a very talented panel who will share a variety of perspectives to help connect the dots.

The end goal is transforming Lives. This means improving lives, extending lives and saving lives. Clubhouses create hope and opportunity for members to reach their full potential and the evidence clearly shows that Accredited Clubhouses are extremely effective at this.

I became the director of Genesis House, in MI in 1998. I was new to the Clubhouse world and I knew nothing of what was, at the time, called certification. I began to learn about the standards from members and staff of Genesis House and the other Clubhouses I visited around Michigan. Although Michigan had nearly 50 Clubhouses at the time, only one, Petoskey Club, was Accredited. Accreditation wasn't part of the fabric of our Clubhouse Culture in Michigan. Looking back, I can only lament the missed opportunity.

Things are very different in Michigan today.

As a result of connecting with Clubhouse International for help with putting together a Michigan Conference and attending the International Seminar in Milwaukee back in 2007, our leading Michigan Clubhouses could see what Petoskey Club had been saying all along about the value of Accreditation. We were moved to tears by the powerful success stories of members and we were blown away by what the presenting Clubhouses were doing in the areas of employment, education, wellness and outreach. As a result we made a pact to expand the number of accredited Clubhouses in Michigan and we went from just 1 to 7 accredited Clubhouses in less than 4 years.

Every Clubhouse that went through the process got better and could articulate specific areas of improvement. Most powerful however, were members who spoke of the transformation that took place in their Clubhouses in "before and after" terms. When describing what changed in their Clubhouses as a result of Accreditation, they used the words: hope, purpose, jobs, relationships, meaning, goals and leadership. This not only resonated with the other Michigan Clubhouses, it resonated with our State decision makers as well.

We knew that to fully change our Clubhouse landscape in Michigan, we would also need more than the inspiring stories. We needed data too. We worked very closely with researchers at Michigan State University and our Department of Health and Human Services in developing a Michigan Clubhouse Survey.

The results clearly showed that Accredited Clubhouses had significantly more employment opportunities in every category of employment. More members were working for more hours and making more money. Further, the cost per member served was \$800 less per year than at non-accredited Clubhouses.

With this mounting evidence our Michigan Clubhouses no longer talk about if they will become accredited, instead they talk about when. In the past year Michigan had 3 more Clubhouses become accredited and we have two more whose site visits takes place next month. We have had 15 Michigan Clubhouses attend comprehensive training this year in preparation for Accreditation.

A group of Clubhouse stakeholders (including several representatives from non accredited Clubhouses) looked at the evidence and wrote a proposal making Accreditation a funding requirement. The State endorsed the proposal and included it in a Medicaid waiver that by all indications should go into effect within this calendar year.

We are seeing dramatic improvements which can be directly tied to Accreditation efforts, the clear path to fidelity to the 36 Standards. According to our last published Michigan Clubhouse Survey Report, in one year:

Earnings by members in Transitional Employment (TE) increased by 48%

Members employed in TE increased by 31%

AND Members independently employed increased by 20%

The next report on Michigan Clubhouses will be published soon. I spoke to the author last week and it sounds like it was another year of tremendous improvement for our Michigan Clubhouses.

There are probably a few colleagues with us today who are thinking, "Accreditation sounds like a great way to get a struggling Clubhouses on the right track, but we already have a very strong Clubhouse."

We had similar thoughts at Genesis House many years ago, but the moment we committed and started working together on our self-study we knew we would be better for the experience. We spent six months taking care of details that we knew needed attention. We made sure we were open on EVERY holiday, we worked hard getting more employment, and we extended our work ordered day. Every one of these changes created more opportunities.

Then we started the self-study. We put together a very thoughtful process for providing all of the information needed. Our energy, our focus and relationships all improved because of the process and we needed everyone's help to fix all of the things that the self study process illuminated for us including getting training on decision making by consensus. Our weekly house meetings changed from primarily reporting to one that was inclusive, engaging and informed. This created more opportunities for growth, belonging, and the important feeling of mattering.

This took us another 6 months. By the time we greeted the faculty doing our site visit, we were a better Clubhouse in very tangible and recognizable ways. We were still very nervous but we thought our work was done and we were confident that we would “pass the test.”

Within the first day of the site review, we realized that we weren’t taking a test at all. We were getting support and expert advice from two very passionate and knowledgeable colleagues. Their goal wasn’t to see us pass or fail, they simply wanted our members to have the full range of opportunities that fidelity to the standards provides. This was good news.

The advice that we got on-site and through our final report ensured even more opportunities for our members. We took the advice and improved our Advisory Board, our educational program and we problem solved around some transportation issues to lengthen our Work Ordered Day. Once again leading to more member opportunities.

Genesis House has been through the process three times and each of those times we became a better Clubhouse because of our preparation, because of the excellent and encouraging feedback and because of our follow up after the process was completed. I am supremely confident that the question “should we keep our accreditation?” will never come up at Genesis House.

We have 48 colleagues from 13 Michigan Clubhouses with us here today. Included in this group are all 10 of our accredited Clubhouses and Lakeshore Clubhouse who has their first visit next month.

It is exciting to see our accredited Clubhouses grow in Michigan and beyond. When a Clubhouse signs up for Accreditation I know that they will improve. I know an improving Clubhouse provides more opportunities for belonging, for thriving, for staying alive.

I don't need to know what their training action plan is....or which faculty will be doing the site visit....or who is involved in drafting the self study....all of these things are important...and all of these things are encompassed in the process of Accreditation. And with that, I'll turn it over to the panel.