

Summer 2026

Wellspring



wellspring
for mental health recovery

Rising to Greater Success with KY iRISE Initiative

RECOVERY. INDEPENDENCE. SUPPORT. ENGAGEMENT. = RISE

Kentucky's Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (KY-DBHDID) has launched the iRISE Initiative to help adults with serious mental illness (SMI) live safely, independently, and with dignity in their communities. The Medicaid-funded program supports a range of recovery-focused services, including conflict-free case management, supported housing and tenancy supports, supported employment, supported education, in-home supports, and more. Wellspring has provided many of these types of services since our founding; iRISE recognizes their value, strengthens the model, and creates a reliable funding stream.



- In-Home Independent Living Supports helping with daily living and skill building related to independent living, medication management, symptom management, physical health management, and increasing community integration in the client's own apartment.
- Supported Employment (IPS) Supported Education will continue the evidence-based program of Wellspring Works.

- Tenancy Supports that will assist clients with accessing housing resources and other services needed to maintain healthy and integrated living.

"While this new initiative will lead to a few changes within our existing programs, it also opens opportunities," says Clinical Director Christen Gibbs, LCSW. "It operates similarly to existing Medicaid waivers except it does not have the limits on the number of people who can be served so it will not have the waitlists the other waivers have."

The eligibility criteria include: a primary diagnosis of SMI, a history of hospitalizations, a history of significant symptoms, and a demonstrated need for the kinds of services offered through the program.

Clients (participants) must complete an intake screening process before receiving iRISE services even if they have previously been a Wellspring client.

To refer a possible participant or to self-refer, you can email 1915iRISEInitiative@ky.gov or call 502-564-9189.

"After more than 40 years of experience, we know that people with SMI can succeed in their communities of choice when they have access to supportive services tailored to their individual needs," says Wellspring CEO Kathy Dobbins. "We have advocated for decades for a program designed specifically for adults with serious mental illness. At a time when some leaders are calling for a return to institutional care, it is incredibly exciting to have services that help clients not only succeed in their home communities but thrive."

As of this printing, Wellspring is waiting approval of our application to be a provider in the iRISE areas of:

- Supervised Residential Care with a focus on independent living skill building, medication management, symptom management, physical health management, and increasing community integration in a staffed 3-person house setting.

Distinguished Spot in Affordable Housing Celebration



Wellspring was proud to have a place at the podium with distinguished leaders during a recent Affordable Housing Trust Fund celebration recognizing the completion of seven new housing developments, including four properties Wellspring developed. Wellspring was the first of the seven organizations to open 51 new units of affordable housing for previously homeless adults with serious mental illness using trust fund ARPA grant money. In June, Wellspring CEO Kathy Dobbins joined Mayor Craig Greenberg, Congressman Morgan McGarvey, former Congressman John Yarmuth, and other community leaders highlighting the impact of \$40 million in American Rescue Plan funding awarded in 2022 to

expand affordable housing across the city. Wellspring received an \$8.2 million grant from the Trust Fund and secured another nearly \$5 million in grants to purchase and rehabilitate 4 existing multifamily properties, creating new units of affordable housing paired with supportive services for individuals with serious mental illness. During the event, Kathy described the transformational impact that safe, stable housing has on recovery. These new homes provide more than just a place to live—they offer individuals the foundation they need to pursue recovery, improve their well-being, and build brighter futures.

Personal Growth Through Gardening

For April Jeffreys, a Wellspring Peer Specialist, gardening didn't come naturally. But for two years, with the help of Wellspring clients, she has cultivated more than just a thriving garden - she has helped grow confidence, purpose, and community. Using gardening books, online resources, and plenty of teamwork, there is now a greenhouse flourishing with eggplant, broccoli, cantaloupe, squash, zucchini, cucumbers, tomatoes, and herbs. Six clients in Wellspring's Concord apartments participate in caring for the garden, each taking responsibility for watering it on assigned days.



*The Concord greenhouse
early June*

"The plants started as seeds—you know, tiny. You couldn't even see them," said Karen, a Wellspring client. "And they're going to grow into vegetables, fruits, and herbs. My favorite part has been watching them grow."

Jeffreys says the garden represents much more than fresh produce. "It's a sense of pride and motivation for them," she said. "They have something to work on where they can actually see the results. I've always believed purpose is powerful. When you have something meaningful to do, you're more likely to get up and do it instead of sleeping all day."

Beyond providing produce and purpose, the garden has become a hands-on classroom where clients build practical life skills while enjoying healthier food. "I teach them how to cook with what we grow," Jeffreys explained. "If they see something ready to harvest, they're welcome to pick it. If they want a tomato, they can go get a tomato. We've talked about making breads, casseroles, and other meals. It's really about helping them eat healthier while learning skills they can use every day."

But the Concord clients aren't alone - Mark Wilson, a Wellspring Life Skills Specialist, began cultivating gardens at multiple Wellspring properties after a client suggested the idea.

"I think it's healthy, positive, and something a lot of them really enjoy," Wilson said. "Many of them had gardens growing up, and it brings back those memories. They start talking about them, opening up, and connecting with each other. Working with the plants can be very therapeutic."

Watching a tiny seed become a thriving plant offers clients something equally meaningful: a visible reminder of their own growth. "It's fun," Wilson added. "When you see a plant grow that you started, that's an accomplishment they can feel proud of."

At Wellspring, recovery is about more than receiving services—it's about discovering purpose, building confidence, and creating opportunities to grow. Sometimes, those opportunities begin with a single seed.

Teeing it Up for the 1st Annual Tyler J. Brenzel Memorial Golf Event



Wellspring has only hosted a few golf scrambles during its 44 years of serving our community and this year we are beginning a new golf event that honors the memory of Tyler Brenzel, the beloved son of Wellspring Board Member Jill Brenzel, whose life was impacted by mental illness.

More than just a round of golf, the Tyler J. Brenzel Memorial Golf Scramble at **Harmony Landing on Tuesday, September 22nd** is an opportunity to raise awareness of the housing and help Wellspring offers for adults with serious mental illness in the Louisville region. Event proceeds will support Wellspring's mission.

Sponsorship opportunities and player foursomes are still available.

Scan the QR code on the back page to register, or contact Kim Spaw Johnson at 502-753-1453 to learn more.

Corrections:

With apologies, we recognize these errors from Wellspring's 2025 Annual Report publication....

Robert Brodbeck's name was misspelled from a gift given in his memory from Lanier Siewertsen.

We are grateful for gift from *both* Kathleen and Kenneth Loomis, especially in memory of Jackie Swigart.

DERBY PREVIEW PARTY

Thank you to everyone who made the 28th annual Derby Preview Party our most FUN and beneficial fundraiser! Donors generously helped raise more than \$175,000 for mental health recovery - the largest amount in at least a decade.



See all event photos on: <https://WellspringKY.org/derby-preview-party-photos-2026/>

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Volunteers Honor a Legacy of Compassion

In June, Wellspring welcomed a team of volunteers from Weichert Realtors in honor of the Muhammad Ali Day of Compassion, a community-wide day of service celebrating a legacy of compassion, service, and giving back.

The volunteers dedicated their time and energy to enhancing Wellspring's largest supportive housing property. They refreshed the landscaping and cleaned the building's interior halls. Their efforts helped create a more welcoming and supportive environment.

We are grateful to Weichert Realtors for their generosity and commitment to our mission. Thank you for making a lasting impact on our community!



Grateful for Grants

Wellspring is grateful for many community partners whose generosity makes mental health recovery possible!

Funding from **the Dona O'Sullivan Fund** will provide Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI) training for Wellspring staff, helping them continue to deliver safe, compassionate care.

Thanks to a grant from **the Honorable Order of the Kentucky Colonels**, Wellspring will purchase new bike racks and a vehicle to better serve clients.

The **CommonSpirit - Legacy Foundation of Kentuckiana** has granted funds to help Wellspring provide housing and behavioral health support for extremely low-income adults with mental illness this year.

Wellspring is also honored to receive a gift from the **Women Igniting Change in Kentuckiana (WICK)** Giving Circle. Their grant supports Wellspring move adults with mental illness from homelessness to housing.

The **Kentucky State Fair** generously donated tickets so Wellspring clients can enjoy a day at the fair in August!



Let's do something good together

Save the date! 9.10.26



Scan the QR code to donate

Join us for Donuts with Donors the morning of Give for Good!

Wellspring's Ambassador Board invites you to start your day with Wellspring on Thursday, September 10th. Drop in to enjoy donuts and coffee alongside Wellspring staff members who can tell you how your donations make a difference!

RSVP by September 7th to marybeth.mullican@wellspringky.org



September 10, 2026
8:30-10:30 AM at
225 W Breckinridge St.
Louisville, KY 40203

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*Join us for the first-ever Tyler Brenzel Memorial
Golf Scramble taking place at
Harmony Landing Golf Club
Tuesday, September 22, 2026*

Play in the inaugural TYLER J. BRENZEL MEMORIAL GOLF SCRAMBLE

to benefit Wellspring for mental health recovery

Tuesday, September 22, 2026

at Harmony
Landing Golf Club
Goshen, KY

Presented by:



Player Registration and Remaining Sponsorship Opportunities:

