

# GRACE COTTAGE EMERGENCY DEPT EXPANSION

TOWNSHEND, VERMONT



Grace Cottage, in rural Windham County, Vermont (pop. 46,000), is a Critical Access Hospital serving 31,000 patients annually. Despite the staff's expert medical care, the mid-century building has a maze of dead-end hallways and has only three entrances/exits, creating operational and safety concerns.

In early 2022, Grace Cottage In early 2022, USDA Rural Development's Community Facilities program awarded a Training and Technical Assistance grant (TAT) to help cover the cost of architectural drawings for a crucial expansion of the emergency department. The Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) also provided technical assistance, helping determine costs and compose the plan, which the Hospital staff and board used as their reference and resource for fund-raising.

Just over a year later, CEO Douglas DiVello cut the ribbon on a spectacular new emergency department, featuring a triage room, an ambulance portico for weather protection, a waiting room and check-in space to preserve patient confidentiality, and a front room to accommodate a nighttime security guard.

Meanwhile, the persistent and well-organized staff and board at Grace Cottage continue to move the planning and design work forward to make the long-held dream of a new clinic into reality.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

Pre-planning advising

\$5,095 award for architectural drawings

## PROJECT

**BUDGET**

\$660,000

## POPULATION SERVED

- Average annual ED visits: 3,000
- Increase in ED visits year over year: 15%
- Highest median age bracket of all U.S. counties

In 2010, 14.6% of Vermont's population was age 65+, and Windham County's was 22%. As Vermont's population ages, the demands on its health care system also increase.

## TOP HEALTH NEEDS IN THE SERVICE AREA

- Mental Health (anxiety, depression, social isolation, stress)
- Substance Abuse
- Nutritional Fitness/Diabetes



**BDCC COMMUNITY FACILITIES  
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RECIPIENT**