

HELPING HEROES HEAL



Friends of the Pittsburgh Fisher House
HELPING HEROES HEAL
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN



When it comes to healing...

**FAMILY IS
EVERYTHING**

Friends of the
Pittsburgh



HELPING HEROES HEAL CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

THE BIG NEWS... A NEW PITTSBURGH FISHER HOUSE IS COMING TO TOWN!

A family's love and support during medical treatment is proven to quicken recovery. That is the philosophy behind the Fisher House. When family members travel to be with a veteran being treated at the VA Pittsburgh Healthcare System (hereafter VAPHS), they will have a new place to stay. This new Fisher House will be located on the VAPHS's H. John Heinz III Campus in O'Hara Township (near Aspinwall). This second Pittsburgh area Fisher House will have 16 suites and beautiful communal areas. It will complement the existing 10-suite Fisher House in Oakland. The new Pittsburgh area house will be a welcome addition for veterans and their families or loved ones, providing a comfortable and free stay.

"There are no words to explain how wonderful this service and facility are for veterans' families."

— A PITTSBURGH (OAKLAND) FISHER HOUSE GUEST

HOW WE GOT HERE

The Fisher House Network

SINCE 1991, the Fisher House network has provided a “home away from home” for immediate families of patients receiving medical care at a military medical or VA medical facility. The worldwide network of MORE THAN 90 FISHER HOUSES continues to expand each year, adding between 3 TO 5 ADDITIONAL HOUSES to meet the growing needs. Fisher Houses collectively SERVE OVER 9,000 FAMILIES PER YEAR. Founded by the Fisher family in 1991, the Fisher Houses provide cost-free lodging for veterans’ families enabling them to be near their loved one during medical care. Each house has the construction process managed by the Fisher House Foundation. Once a Fisher House opens for guests at a VA medical facility, the day-to-day staff and house/ground maintenance is funded by the Veterans Health Administration.

Veterans often need treatment, medical tests and surgeries for a variety of injuries and conditions, some of which are trauma-related. Their families are a source of support and love during long rehabs, transplants and medical procedures that are overwhelming and stressful. The Fisher Houses are a respite for the entire family—and this could include any supportive friend, or partner of the veteran. Once guests walk into the house, the caring staff and engaged volunteers welcome the family and help them to settle in. From there, the veterans’ families have consistent support and truly feel as if they are not in a hotel but a relaxing haven.

A home away from home.

Every detail in the house is designed with the comfort of the guests in mind.

The houses offer creature comforts, with communal areas where families in similar situations can talk, a kitchen with multiple food options, a laundry and a charming outdoor space. The Fisher Houses offer privacy in individual rooms, which includes a private bathroom and TV, as well as common areas that are beautifully designed.



What makes the Fisher House truly special is the camaraderie and sense of friendship that guests find with one another. As families of veterans, they have a starting point of commonality. From there, they share stories about their lives, their loved ones and so much more. Their evening meals provide a time where families may unwind, as they both deliver and receive support.

THE PITTSBURGH FISHER HOUSE

Number 1



The first Pittsburgh Fisher House, built in 2012, is managed by VAPHS employees. The staff is supplemented with an active volunteer corps who provide all the “extras” such as food, parties and other hospitality-related activities.

Located on the Oakland campus of the VAPHS, the 10-bedroom house was a welcome addition to the local landscape, offering friendship and dignity that includes emotional support systems when families of veterans need it most. The staff takes special care with many added touches, including the provision of boxed meals from local eateries so that families can pick a “grab and go” as they come and go from the house at all hours.

The Pittsburgh Fisher House offers convenient accommodations for an extended stay for family members, life partners and friends traveling up to 50 miles or more, from cities like Altoona to small towns like Clarksburg, West Virginia.



Our guests know us best!

Each of us can relate to the stress and worry of an illness when a loved one needs treatment. We try to be strong, supportive and upbeat. Now imagine travelling to an unfamiliar city for the treatment or surgery. Then add the stress of arranging logistics, planning for meals, budgeting for expenses and managing transportation to and from the facility for the duration of the medical treatment. A stay at a Fisher House eliminates many of these difficulties and is a blessing to families in stressful times. The house and its many comforts and services lessens the burden and offers welcome respite.



THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY AT THE PITTSBURGH FISHER HOUSE IS SIX DAYS. IF NOT FOR THE HOUSE, EACH FAMILY WOULD INCUR COSTS OF APPROXIMATELY \$1,900 TO PAY FOR LODGING AND FOOD. SOME GUESTS, HOWEVER, STAY FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. LONG STAYS ARE COMMON FOR TRANSPLANT PATIENTS AND FOR SERIOUS INJURIES THAT REQUIRE EXTENSIVE REHABILITATION. IT IS EASY TO SEE HOW THE COSTS FOR THE VETERANS' SUPPORT NETWORK WOULD QUICKLY ADD UP AND CONTRIBUTE TO EMOTIONAL AND FINANCIAL STRESS.

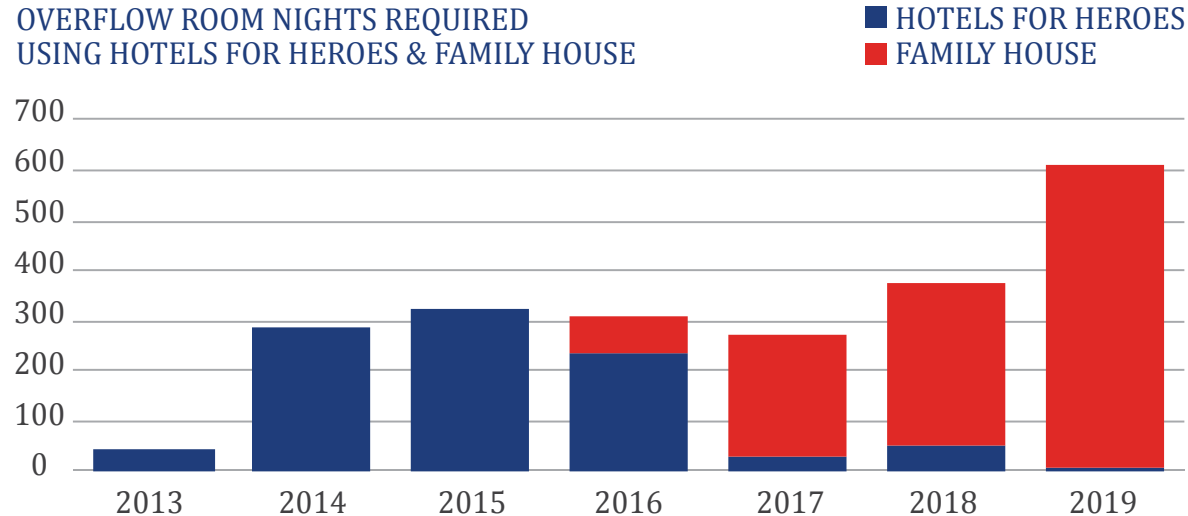
Family members understandably wish to be close to each other and want to expend their physical and emotional energy on healing, rather than on navigating to and from treatment centers to hotels in an unfamiliar city.

ONE PITTSBURGH FISHER HOUSE ISN'T ENOUGH

Since thousands travel to the Pittsburgh region from near and far for medical care at the VAPHS, the demand for lodging quickly exceeded capacity of the Oakland house. Ten rooms could not meet the demand for lodging and support for veteran's families.

These charts depict the surge in demand in recent years:

OVERFLOW ROOM NIGHTS REQUIRED USING HOTELS FOR HEROES & FAMILY HOUSE



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
HOTELS FOR HEROES	45	284	325	234	28	47	4
FAMILY HOUSE	0	0	0	76	244	327	610

The Friends of the Pittsburgh Fisher House (hereinafter The Friends) is a tax-exempt charitable organization, established to supplement the bricks and mortar, and to furnish day-to-day items that directly benefit families. These items are essential to a comfortable stay at Fisher House, and they include food, and many added touches such as holiday celebrations, and a fully appointed outdoor area. The Friends have raised funds that are used, among other things, to pay for 1,460 nights of alternative housing for families when a Fisher House room was not available. Even though the financial burden of lodging was alleviated for these families, they were unable to reap the other benefits of staying at the House.

A second Fisher House located on the H. John Heinz III Campus of the VAPHS will fill this critical gap and give families all the benefits of lodging with families who are in similar situations. The medical facility on this campus is a Geriatric Center of Excellence, and offers transitional care, rehabilitation, dementia and hospice care beds, an ambulatory care center, and many outpatient services.

OUR LEADERSHIP

The Friends are dedicated to sustaining the house's ability to support the guests and minimize their financial and emotional burdens. Led by local professionals, most with direct military experience, the collective body has expertise in law, finance, marketing, business, health care and aviation. (See Attached.) In addition, there is a Capital Campaign Committee charged with leading the regional fundraising effort for the second Pittsburgh area Fisher House. The Friends reach out to the veteran and civilian community with social media, a website and speaking engagements. Increased awareness has helped to raise the funds that are necessary each year to meet the needs of the families. The gifts from the community directly benefit the guests. In short, The Friends are essential to a functioning and comfortable Fisher House.

BIG PLANS ARE UNDERWAY!

In 2018, the VAPHS submitted a formal application to the Fisher House Foundation (located in Maryland) for approval to add a second Fisher House in our region. The plans were approved, and the green light was given to build a second Fisher House in the greater Pittsburgh region. Studies are underway to determine the exact site on the campus. The current goal is for the new Fisher House to have a groundbreaking in 2024.

The second Pittsburgh Fisher House will represent a unique public private partnership between the Fisher House Foundation, the VAPHS and The Friends. The house will be built on federal land on the H. John Heinz III Campus of the VAPHS in O'Hara Township. The new 16-room Fisher House will increase free lodging capacity for veteran families in Pittsburgh by 160%.

The new Pittsburgh regional Fisher House will make logistics more convenient for guests who now will be lodged near their loved ones. The convenience of a second Fisher House will be so appreciated by the guests, who previously may have had to travel from Oakland to O'Hara Township.



Notional rendering of a 16-suite Fisher House

It will also help to alleviate the need and cost for overflow housing. The national Fisher House Foundation will supervise and manage the construction of the house and will hire private general contractors to oversee the construction from start to finish.

Donations from the community including individuals, foundations and businesses are needed to build the new Pittsburgh Fisher House. When the second Pittsburgh Fisher House is completed, the house will be staffed and managed by the VAPHS. The role of The Friends is to raise funds for the new construction and then to continue to assist both houses with financial support that is essential for amenities, services and hospitality needed for the guests.

Leave a legacy by INVESTING NOW

It is estimated that \$9 million will be needed to construct the second Pittsburgh Fisher House. Please see attached for a breakdown of major gifts. As of fall 2022, \$906,000 in cash has been raised towards the goal, including both gifts in hand and signed pledges.

You can be a part of this dream for veterans and their families! Go to www.pittsburghfisherhouse.org to learn more about how to support the

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Learn more and watch our video. We would love to talk with you about the role you can play in keeping families together when they need each other to heal. Campaign leaders and donors like you will make it all happen.



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