



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Cari Palmer
Director of Development & Advancement
Phone: 339-883-2157
Email: cpalmer@bridgewell.org

BRIDGEWELL AWARDED THREE NEW COMMUNITY RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS
Housing to move 15 adults with developmental disabilities out of institutional nursing facilities

July 25, 2011 — Fifteen adults with developmental disabilities will move from nursing home institutionalization to community-based homes in the North Shore, Metro North and Merrimack Valley regions thanks to three new residential projects awarded by the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Disabilities to Bridgewell. The movement of residents out of nursing facilities to residential providers like Bridgewell was the goal of the 1999 federal “Rolland” lawsuit directing residents be placed in community-based settings. Bridgewell is a leading provider of such services to adults with developmental disabilities in eastern Massachusetts.

Each of the three homes will support five people with developmental disabilities and a range of complex medical needs. Specially equipped vans will accommodate the needs of individuals to ensure extensive community access including the many medical appointments that are required to maintain optimum health. The homes will be fully accessible and adaptive equipment will be used to meet individualized needs.

“We are very pleased with the confidence that DDS has shown in Bridgewell,” said President and CEO Bob Stearns. “Residents in these new homes are expected to have a wide range of physical abilities and limitations, health and mental statuses, communications needs, and social interests. We look forward to working with the residents, their families and DDS to customize services to each and will involve their primary care physician, specialists, home health agency personnel, mental health clinician, restorative therapists, and other providers as needed.”

“The housing and accessibility needs for individuals may change as they age or experience changes in mobility,” said Bridgewell Chief Operations Officer Kelly Johnson. “It is our intention to design these new homes to meet future as well as current needs of the residents so that the home is truly their own now and for as long as they choose.”

Over the past six years, Bridgewell has opened 15 newly constructed houses that were specifically designed to better meet accessibility needs for individuals presently in and newly referred to our services. The five-bedroom ranch style barrier free dwellings include oversized bedrooms and oversized living areas for easy access, hallways designed with handrails and reinforced walls, two full shower rooms one with an accessible bathtub, oversized garage to accept a specially equipped van, large exterior deck and level back yard for easy access to outdoor space, and are equipped with generators in case of a power failure. Each home will be designed to blend into the surrounding neighborhoods.



Bridgewell, a private, non-profit organization based in Lynnfield, has provided innovative supports and quality services to persons with disabilities for over 50 years. Each year, it serves over 3,000 individuals with developmental disabilities and mental illness, with over eighty programs and services in eighteen communities throughout the Northeast Region. Its continuum of programs includes residential, planned and emergency respite, vocational training, day habilitation, nursing, transportation, behavioral healthcare and recreation. With its full range of services, the agency is able to support individuals to make meaningful decisions in their lives and to realize their potential at home, at work, and in the community.

Bridgewell programs are in Beverly, Billerica, Chelmsford, Danvers, Dracut, Haverhill, Lowell, Lynn, Lynnfield, Medford, Melrose, Merrimac, Peabody, Salem, Saugus, Swampscott, Tewksbury and Wakefield.

To learn more about Bridgewell, please visit www.bridgewell.org.

- ### -

