Hopeful Way Oxford House, a sober living transitional house located in Oyarifa, Ghana, was started in July, 2009. With the help of Byron Merriweather an Outreach Services Representative of Oxford House, Inc. in the US, the house opened with 6 members. Mr. Merriweather emphasizes that to ensure a safe, stable and sober environment in which to recover, the three cardinal rules for living in any Oxford House must be maintained.

1. **Zero tolerance for use of alcohol or drugs**. When a member returns to drinking or using drugs he or she must be expelled immediately by the group. They can be readmitted when there is a clear demonstration that he or she has returned to solid sobriety.
2. **No Disruptive behavior**. Fighting, stealing, threats of violence and breaking the law(s) of the land are behaviors resulting in immediate eviction. Other behavioral problems such as non-compliance with the house rules, negative attitudes, problems with personal hygiene and cleanliness and abusive language can be dealt with thru placing members on contracts to change the behavior.
3. **Non-payment of shared expenses (rent and fines) is unacceptable.** Members who don’t pay their equal share of household expenses results in a member being asked to leave. This rule is very important for an Oxford House to be fully financially self supporting and self run. This also teaches members how to be accountable and responsible for themselves financially. An Oxford House cannot function if some do not pay their fair share of the cost. This means every member in the house must either: maintain a paying job, be on disability (getting paid from government/endowment etc.) or is a full time student. In all cases, the **rent must be paid** and **all household expenses** are paid from **each members rent collectively**. This includes: rent to the landlord, all utilities (electricity, gas, water, waste management (i.e. Zoom Lion), house phone, cable TV, **internet service,** household cleaning supplies and any household needs.

This house is the first of its kind in Ghana that assists recovering alcoholics and drug addicts in maintaining a continuum of care program using the Oxford House Model for transitional housing. Twelve step recovery meetings are being held in the house as well as related recovery oriented management programs such as a two-week training program on addiction and recovery which was conducted for ten residents of the house and others from the recovery community in August of 2009. Back to Basics 12 Step Study Sessions are being held regularly and most recently, an AA Big Book Study workshop was held May 30 thru June 2, 2011.

Members of the house are actively assisting in the expansion of 12 step meetings in the Greater Accra, Koforidua, Kukurantumi, and Ashaiman areas of Ghana.

Efforts are being made to establish Skype recovery discussion “rap” sessions with various recovery based organizations such as The Healing Place in Raleigh, North Carolina. Currently, addiction learning Skype sessions with Dr. Al Mooney of the Willingway Foundation are held most Saturday afternoons.

Focus is being centered on further developing the fully self-supporting concept by offering various job training skills to residents and establishing job programs at the house.

Future goals for Hopeful Way Oxford House is to develop extension workers in Ghana to establish a chapter of Oxford Houses and open a women’s house soon.

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