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Cummings Properties signs 1,500 s/f lease to SMD-HELP Foundation

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SMD-HELP Foundation, Inc. recently moved its hospital equipment loan program to 500 West Cummings Park, suite 1150. After more than 40 years in the basement of the Malden Masonic Temple, the nonprofit worked from storage containers in a Wakefield parking lot for almost two years before securing its new facility.

SMD-HELP lends durable medical equipment, such as walkers and wheelchairs, at no charge to help people transition from a healthcare facility to home, or simply to make their lives easier. The all-volunteer organization serves as many as 2,500 families annually from Essex, Middlesex, and Suffolk counties, and has loaned more than 16,000 pieces of equipment to local residents in need.

Robb LaBossiere, a Cummings Properties leasing officer, said SMD-HELP's unpredictable delivery times, nontraditional hours, and need to receive equipment of various sizes required a particular type of space. The new 1,500 s/f location includes storage as well as a workshop area for cleaning and repairing equipment. Cummings Properties also added a loading dock to accommodate larger items.

SMD-HELP board president Bob Crockett said, "The space at Cummings Park is a huge improvement. We take great pride in having our equipment as safe and clean as possible. Our new space helps us to do that."

According to Crockett, demand for the most-needed items, such as wheelchairs, electric hospital beds, and transport chairs, far exceeds the inventory. Monetary donations go to purchasing new equipment because items are loaned many times and eventually become unusable.

Run by volunteers from 30 local Masonic lodges, SMD-HELP is open every Saturday between 9 a.m. and noon for pick-ups and drop-offs.

The organization was recently designated an "early decision" recipient of a 2014 Cummings Foundation "\$100K for 100" grant.

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