HUD and USICH: Core Principles of Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing Webinar
July 22, 2014

Goals for Today's Discussion

✓ To provide an overview of the Housing First approach and its effectiveness in ending homelessness

✓ To provide an overview of a Rapid Re-housing model

Presenters

- **Ann Oliva**
  - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Planning and Development Office of Special Needs Assistance Program (HUD CPD/SNAPS)

- **Richard Cho**
  - U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

- **Lindsay Knotts**
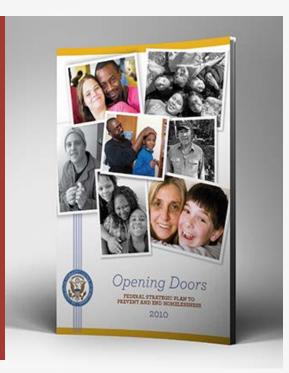 - U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

Today's Webinar

- Webinar will last 90 minutes

- Approximately 30 minutes have been reserved at the end of the webinar for Q&A

- Audience members who would like to pose a question can do so at any time through the "Question" function found in the "GoToWebinar" toolbar.

- Call audience members are muted due to the high number of participants

- Call will be recorded and posted to the USICH website

Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

No one should experience homelessness and no one should be without a safe, stable place to call home.

1. Finish the job of ending chronic homelessness by 2015.

2. Prevent and end homelessness among Veterans by 2015.

3. Prevent and end homelessness for families, youth and children by 2020.

4. Set a path to ending all types of homelessness.

The Plan set forth four bold and ambitious goals.

Opening Doors: Five Themes

Increase leadership, collaboration and civic engagement	**Increase access to stable and affordable housing**	**Increase economic security**	**Improve health and stability**	**Retool the homeless crisis response system**

HUD's Policy Priorities

I.   Strategic Resource Allocation

II.   Ending chronic homelessness

III. Ending family homelessness

IV.   Removing barriers to CoC resources

V.   Maximizing the use of mainstream resources

VI.   Building partnerships

VII. Other priority populations

HUD's Policy Priorities: Scoring Criteria

- **Housing First approach**

- **Rapid Re-housing**

Housing First: Definition

- Housing First is an approach to **quickly and successfully connect** individuals and families experiencing homelessness **to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry**, such as sobriety, treatment or service participation requirements.

- Supportive services are **offered** to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing predetermined treatment goals prior to permanent housing entry.

Housing First: Background

THE PAST

- Began as reaction against view that people experiencing homelessness must "earn" their way to permanent affordable and supportive housing:

  - Provide people experiencing homelessness with housing without treatment pre-requisite
  - Focus on reducing barriers to entry

THE PRESENT

- Evolved into a distinct approach for delivering permanent supportive housing

  - Services informed by harm reduction and motivational interviewing
  - Project-level policies and procedures that prevent lease violations and evictions

Housing First: Importance

Housing First yields:

- Higher housing retention rates
- Lower returns to homelessness
- Significantly reduces the use of crisis services and institutions

Housing First: Key Principles

- Safe and affordable housing
- All people can achieve housing stability in permanent housing; supports may look different
- Everyone is "housing ready"
- Improved quality of life, health, mental health, and employment can be achieved through housing
- Right to determination, dignity and respect
- Configuration of housing and services based on participants needs and preferences

12

Housing First: Permanent Supportive Housing

- Proven to be most effective for people experiencing chronic homelessness
- Housing First permanent supportive housing models result in:
  - ✓ Long-term housing stability
  - ✓ Improved physical and behavioral health outcomes
  - ✓ Reduced use of crisis services
- Current PSH providers can move to Housing First model by:
  - ✓ Reviewing current policies and procedures
  - ✓ Learn and adopt Housing First services approaches and practices

13

Housing First: Core Components

- Few to no programmatic prerequisites to permanent housing entry
- Low barrier admission policies
- Rapid and streamlined entry into housing
- Supportive services are voluntary
- Tenants have full rights, responsibilities, and legal protections
- Practices and policies to prevent lease violations and evictions
- Applicable in a variety of housing models

Housing First Checklist

❑ USICH developed a tool to help policymakers, administrators, and communities assess if a permanent housing program is using Housing First

❑ Includes both "core" and "additional advanced" elements

❑ Examines Housing First at community-level as well

15

Housing First Checklist: Project-Level Elements

Core Elements:

- Tenant selection promotes acceptance regardless of sobriety, use of substances, treatment completion, and participation in services.
- Applicants not rejected based on credit history, rental history, minor criminal convictions, or other so-called indicators of "housing readiness."
- Accepts referrals directly from shelters, street outreach, drop-in centers, and other parts of crisis response system.
- Services emphasize engagement over therapeutic goals. Services plans highly tenant-driven without preset goals. Participation in services not a condition of tenancy.
- Use of alcohol or drugs in and of itself not considered a reason for eviction.

Housing First Checklist: Project-Level Elements

Additional Elements Found in Advanced Models:

- Applicants prioritized based on duration/chronicity of homelessness, vulnerability, or high utilization of crisis services.

- Tenants given flexibility in rent payments; given special arrangements for arrears such as payment plans or financial management (e.g. rep payee).

- Case managers trained in motivational interviewing and client-centered counseling.

- Harm reduction-informed services engages tenants in non-judgmental communication regarding drug/alcohol use and offers education on avoidance of risky behaviors.

- Building/apartment includes physical features that accommodate disabilities, reduce harm, and promote health.

Housing First Checklist: Community-Level Elements

- Crisis response system recognize roles in housing advocacy and rapid connection to permanent housing.

- Strong referral linkages between crisis response system and permanent housing.

- Unified, streamlined, and user-friendly process for applying for rapid re-housing, permanent supportive housing and/or other housing interventions.

- Coordinated assessment system for matching people to the most appropriate housing and services.

Housing First Checklist: Community-Level Elements

- Community-level data-driven approach to prioritize highest need cases for housing assistance (lengths of homelessness, vulnerability, or high utilization of crisis services).

- Policymakers, funders, and providers collaboratively plan and direct resources to increase affordable and supportive housing and ensure a range of options and models.

- Policies and regulations aligned with the Housing First approach.

- Every effort made to transfer a tenant from one housing situation to another, if a tenancy is in jeopardy. Whenever possible eviction back into homelessness is avoided.

Rapid Re-Housing: Definition

Housing First intervention which——

- Rapidly connects families and individuals experiencing homelessness to permanent housing
- Provides a tailored package of assistance
- Resolves immediate challenges and barriers to housing
- Links to community resources

- Rapid re-housing is an important component of a communities' response to homelessness.

- A fundamental goal of rapid re-housing is to reduce the amount of time a person is homeless.

Rapid Re-Housing: Background

- Rapid re-housing models were implemented across the country through the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP)

- Rapid re-housing programs were found to be a highly successful and cost-effective intervention for most homeless families

Rapid Re-Housing: What We Know

- Homelessness is often the direct result of a financial crisis or other crisis
- Most families experiencing homelessness are not significantly different from other poor families.
- Prolonged exposure to homelessness has a significant negative effect on adults and children
- Short-term assistance has shown tremendous promise in resolving the immediate crisis of homelessness
- An operating principle is that households should not receive assistance above the level of need
- Most households experiencing homelessness will be able to exit homelessness with shorter-term and less intensive assistance.

Rapid Re-Housing: Target Populations

- Rapid re-housing can be an appropriate intervention for many different households experiencing homelessness.

- Experience has shown that it is more cost-effective to target rapid re-housing assistance to families who are *currently* staying on the streets and in emergency shelter.

Rapid Re-housing in a Crisis Response System

Coordinated Assessment for Families with a Housing Crisis

Targeted Prevention & Diversion

Family retains housing or gains new housing, bypassing shelter.

Community-Based Permanent Housing

(includes market rate & subsidized)

Community-Based Services & Supports

Family exits shelter on own.

Temporary Shelter

Crisis Stabilization

&

Housing Search Support

Family does not find housing within short period (e.g., 7-10 days).

Rapid Re-Housing

&

Links to Services

Family for whom RRH and/or TH is unsuccessful and has high needs.

Transitional Housing with Services

Permanent Supportive Housing

Families with highest needs

Rapid Re-Housing: Effectiveness

- Research suggests that rapid re-housing is more cost-effective than transitional housing

- Initial research indicates that people assisted by rapid re-housing experience higher rates of permanent housing placement and lower rates of return to homelessness

- Rapid re-housing is not designed to comprehensively address a recipient's overall service needs or poverty

Rapid Re-Housing: Core Components

- A Tailored Package of Assistance:
  - Housing Identification
  - Rent and Move-In Assistance
  - Case Management and Services

- Case management:
  - Connects households to resources that help them improve their safety and well-being and achieve their long-term goals
  - Client-directed, voluntary services, respectful of individuals' right to self-determination
  - Unless basic, program-related case management is required, participation should not be required
  - Connection to community-based services that already exist

Rapid Re-Housing: Practice Considerations

- Primary focus on helping household obtain permanent housing as quickly as possible

- Accessible to households experiencing homelessness

- Assistance is guided by assessment of housing barriers, strengths, and preferences

- Flexibility and adaptability of assistance

Rapid Re-Housing: Questions to Consider

- What resources can we draw on to fund rapid re-housing interventions?

- What is the focus of the services/case management component and how might it be different than in other programs?

- How will we ensure that there is a clear and efficient process for ensuring access to rapid-re-housing for those households who need it?

- How can providers ensure adequate access to housing and community-based services for rapid re-housing participants?

Useful Resources

- **USICH Solutions Database** – This database contains short profiles of important practices and programs, including tips for replicating and information about results, as well as links to help you find more information or resources you can use.

- **Housing First Checklist** – A tool to help policymakers, administrators, and communities assess if a permanent housing program is using Housing First

- **Core Components of Rapid Re-housing** – A tool developed in partnership by NAEH, USICH, HUD, and VA

- **NAEH Rapid Re-Housing – Creating Programs that Work** – A guide to assist communities in rapid re-housing implementation.

- **NAEH Rapid Re-Housing Training** – Five short modules developed by the Center for Capacity Building that break down the basic elements of the intervention.

- **VA SSVF Program: Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Best Practice Standards** – Practice standards hat reflect a growing consensus about what works in homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing programs.

- **VA SSVF Rapid Re-Housing Webinar** – This power point provides an overview of SSVF, as well as components of high-performing rapid re-housing programs.

Q & A

For additional questions, visit HUD's OneCPD Ask a Question https://www.onecpd.info/get-assistance/my-question/.

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