

Community Housing First:

**Adopting a System-Wide
Person-Centered Approach
to Ending Homelessness**

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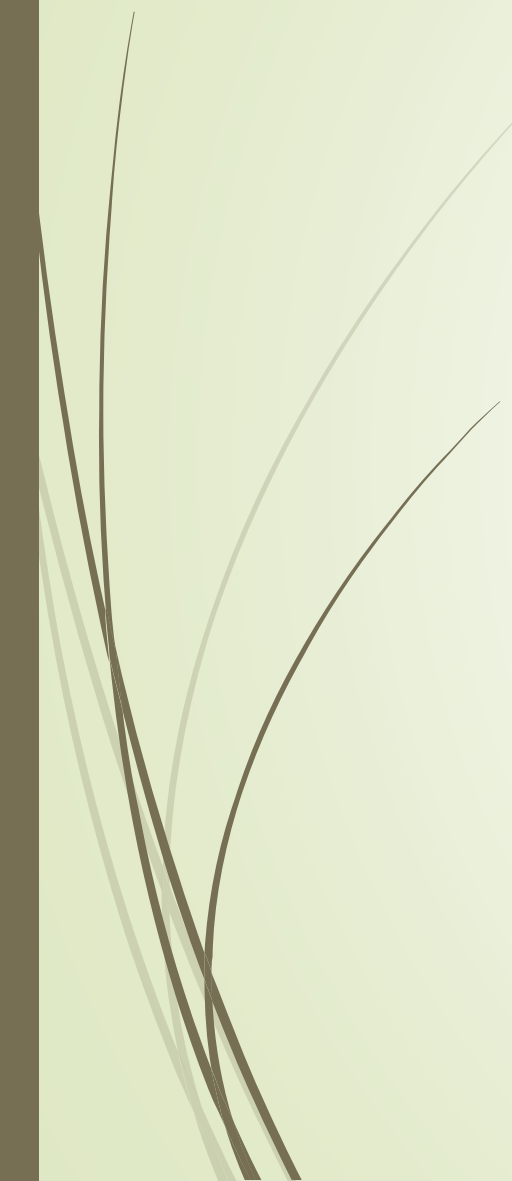


COMMUNITY HOUSING FIRST

- What is system wide housing first?
- Structural elements of a community wide program
- Prioritizing and allocation of resources
- Program operation
- Program principles and values
- Discussion/Q&A



Assessing System Capacity

- 
- 1. Housing First knowledge
 - 2. Identify priority populations
 - 3. Local service providers
 - 4. Local service coordination
 - 5. Financial, service and housing resources
 - 6. Presence of local champion(s)
 - 7. Understanding fidelity to housing first model
 - 8. Local agencies (MH, HA, other gov't or non-profit advocating for HF)

STREETS TO HOMES

COORDINATE

- **Outreach**
- **Community wide listings**
- **Client Point of Contact**
- **Housing resources**
- **With city service providers**



Providence River and Historic Basin

Bergen County: NO Chronic Homelessness

- 1) Provided **One-stop center**
- 2) Adopted the **Housing First Model**
- 3) Created a **Community wide vision**
- 4) Utilized **same Philosophy and goal**
- 5) Provided **Low—to no—barrier housing focused sheltering**
- 6) Adopted a **County Homeless Trust Fund**

Milwaukee County: No Chronic Homelessness

Milwaukee County main ingredients in County's strategy for ending homelessness:

1) Housing First:

2) Remove obstacles

3) Prioritized individuals chronically homeless and frequent visitors to ED

4) Housing subsidies: Comm Dev Block Grant (CDBG), HOME and HOME repair, CoC rental assistance, Housing Vouchers, City and County tenant-based rental assistance through HOME program, Vouchers from City HA, County Vouchers (repurposed)

5) Case management: Targeted case management, community case management, tax-levy case management (allows for flexible activities not funded by Medicaid)

6) Developed supportive housing



Milwaukee County Strategies

Outreach collaborative and staffing

- 1) **Partnership with outreach** agencies, including Police Department and weekly meetings with District Attorney's office and downtown BID. Also coordinated with faith based providers, local meal sites and medical college.
- 2) **Housing navigators**: responsible for finding and securing housing units
- 3) to ED
- 4) **Housing subsidies**: Comm Dev Block Grant (CDBG), HOME and HOME repair, CoC rental assistance, Housing Vouchers, City and County tenant-based rental assistance through HOME program, Vouchers from City HA, County Vouchers (repurposed)
- 5) **Case management**: Targeted case management, community case management, tax-levy case management (allows for flexible activities not funded by Medicaid)
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Milwaukee County Innovations

Criminal Justice Partners

- 1) Police Department and Sheriff's Office notifies Outreach Team before individual is arrested/removed from parks, transit, or other locations
- 2) PD attends weekly meeting with outreach, district attorney, and downtown BID

Homeless Court PILOT

- 1) Municipal Judge works directly with HF outreach team
- 2) Staff contact judge directly to lift warrants for HF participants
- 3) Outreach staff follow up with judge to give update
- 4) Warrant Withdrawal Wednesday –one day in the year when warrants can be lifted and outreach staff have a booth where services and housing is offered
- 5) HF began 2015 N=210; by 2016 N=39



National Trends Addressing Chronic Homelessness

Hotel/Motel Conversions

America Rescue funds other emergency federal funding, state funds
Relatively easy rehabilitation of units into studios and one-bedrooms
Project based vouchers

Collaboration with Managed Care Companies

Highest HMO utilizers, homeless
Housing First program
Managed Care entity pays for all housing costs and support services

Partnerships with Corrections

Frequent users of jails
DOC contract to pay for housing and support services



Housing First: Systems Change



Housing First & Recovery

VALUES BASED HOMELESS SERVICES

- Equipping clients with skills
- Modifying the environment
- Emphasis on here and now
- Emphasis on client's strengths
- Opportunities for client self-determination

Harm Reduction

A set of **practical** strategies to **reduce the negative consequences** of drug use that incorporates a spectrum of strategies from safer use to abstinence.

-The Harm Reduction Coalition

Meet people where they are...

but don't leave them there!



Responsible Risk Taking

- Harm Reduction Practice
- Practical strategies to reduce risk associated with use or other self destructive behaviors (food, relationships, finances)
 - Meet the person when they are but do not leave them there
 - Observe small gains along the way
 - Use restrictive measures only with imminent risk





WE WELCOME
ALL RACES
ALL RELIGIONS
ALL COUNTRIES
OF ORIGIN
ALL SEXUAL
ORIENTATIONS
ALL GENDERS
WE STAND WITH YOU
YOU ARE SAFE HERE



Housing First Program Culture

- Welcoming
- Complex capable
- Trauma informed
- Responsible for engagement
- Responsible for continuity of care
- Deliver on promises made



**PROGRAM
PRINCIPLES**

1. Consumer Choice

2. Separation of housing and services

3. Services array must match needs

4. Recovery focused practice

5. Community Integration/Social Inclusion

HOUSING FIRST & HUD-VASH PARTNERSHIP THAT WORKS

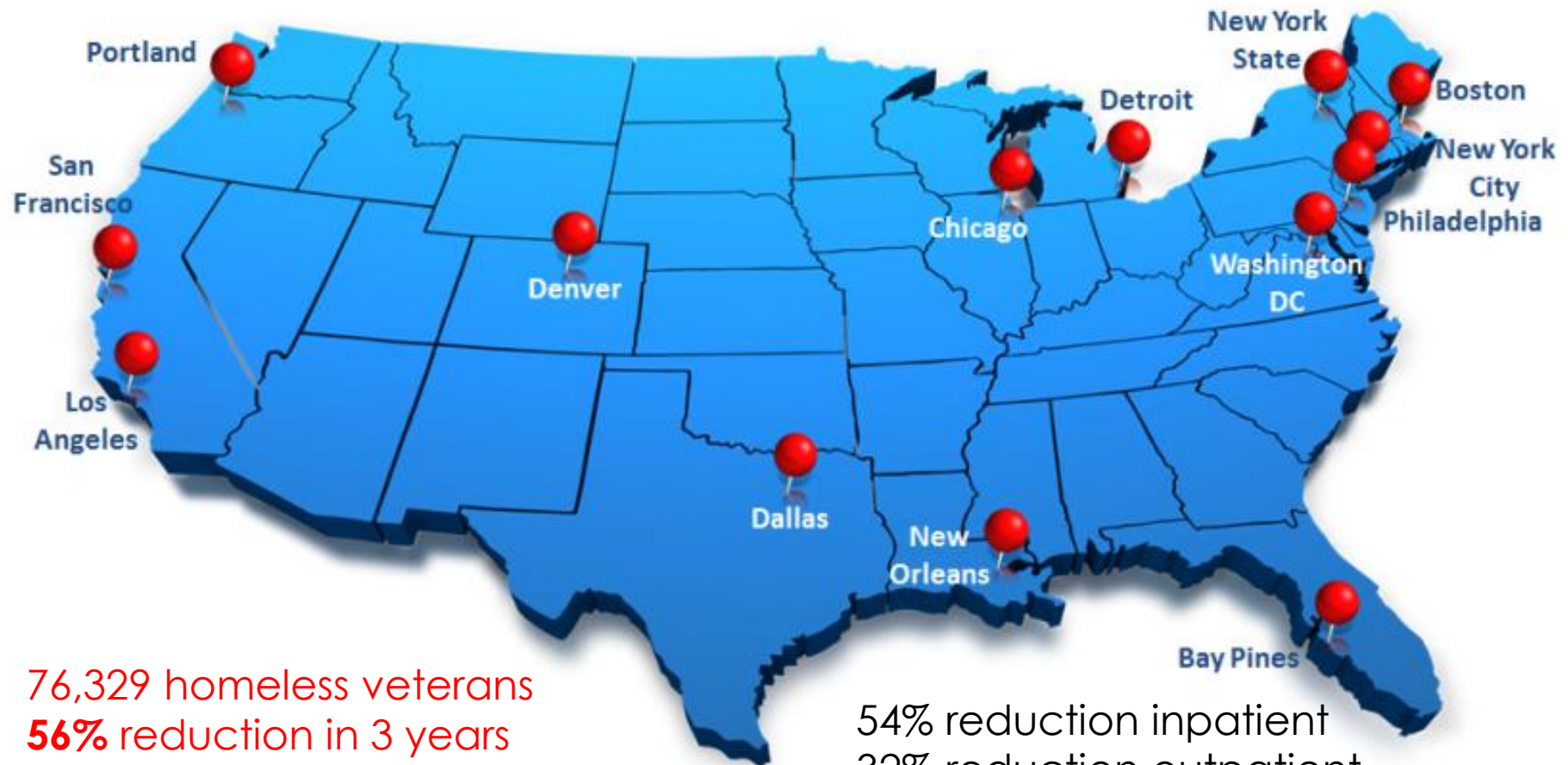


Lessons Learned As Ending Veteran Homelessness

Housing First

Leading the Way to Ending Veteran Homelessness

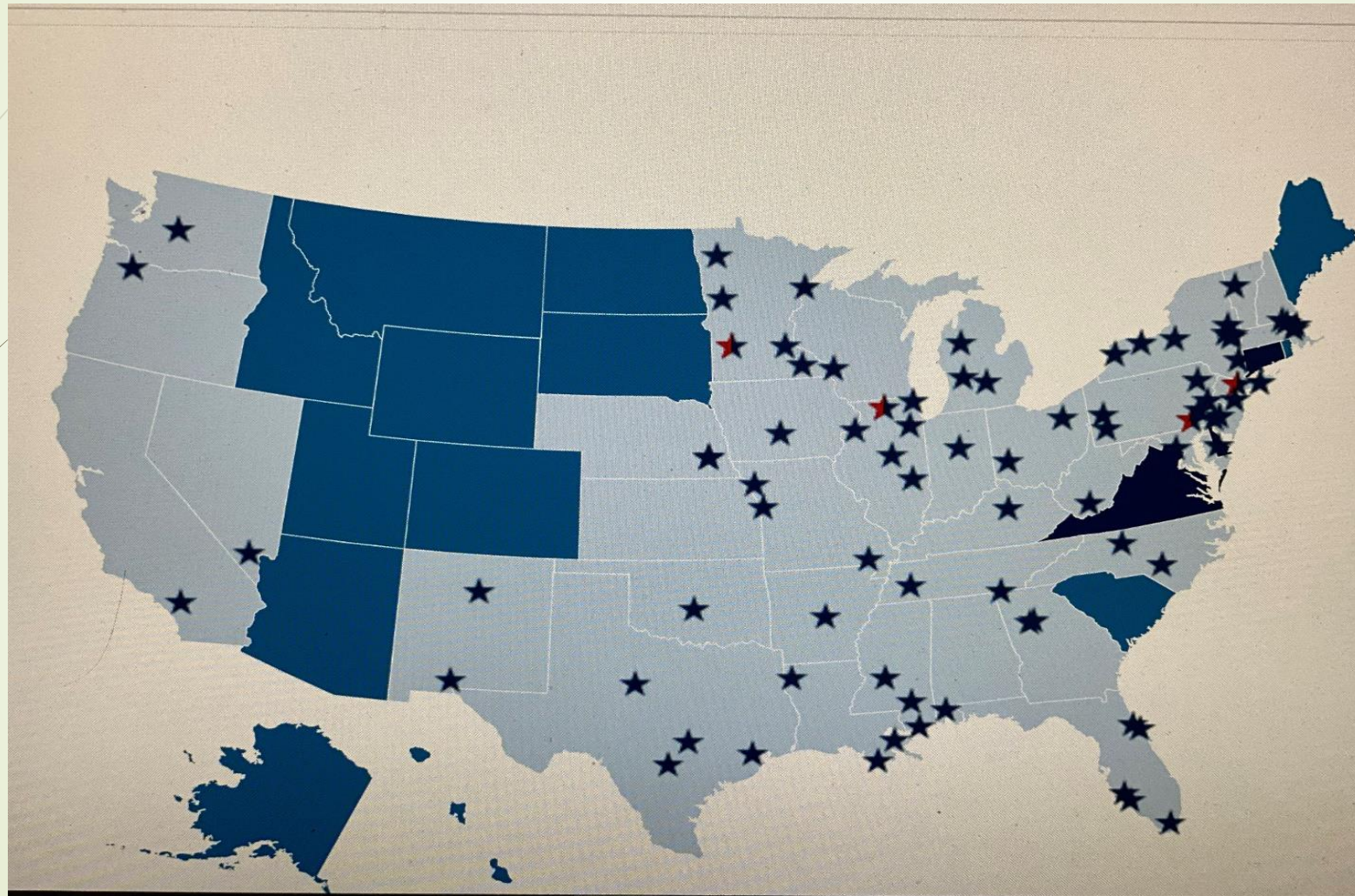
HUD-VASH 14 CITY PILOT



76,329 homeless veterans
56% reduction in 3 years

54% reduction inpatient
32% reduction outpatient

HUD-VASH TODAY: 82 CITIES HAVE ENDED HOMELESSNESS FOR VETERANS



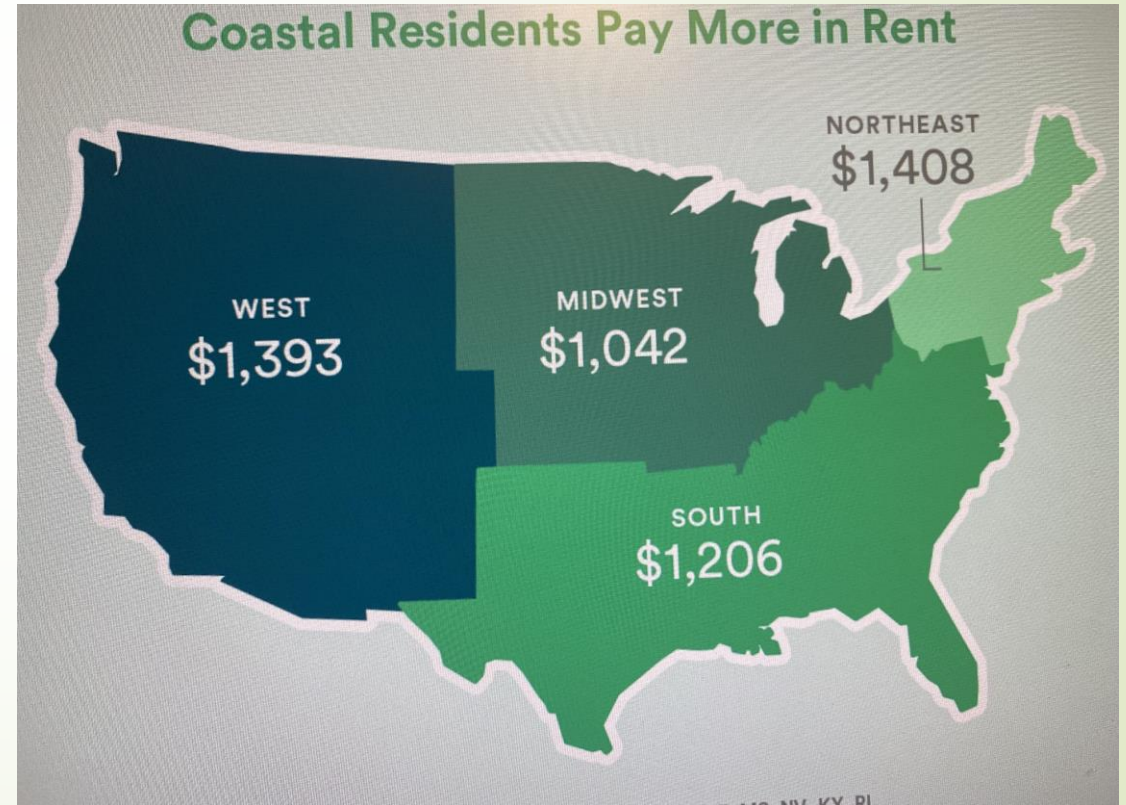
Source:
www.usich.gov

Homeless Veterans 76, 543 (17%) in 2010 37,085 (7%) in 2020 (49% REDUCTION)

HUD-VASH

Myths and Realities

- Location
- Rent prices
- Higher numbers



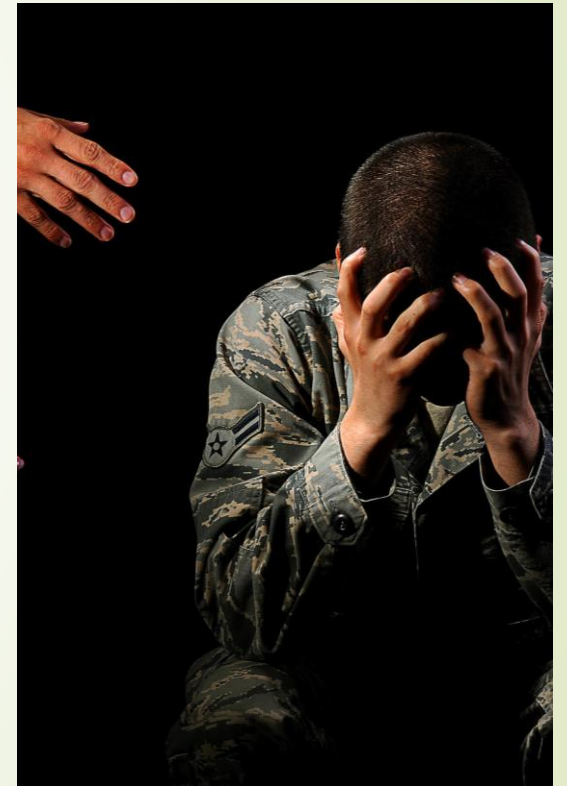


Program Fidelity - Key to Successful Housing First Programs

- Higher fidelity is correlated with greater housing stability and improved quality of life.

ENGAGEMENT AN ACTIVE PROCESS

- ▶ Engagement requires the **active participation** of program staff
- ▶ Refusing to see staff is not a choice
- ▶ “Do not work harder than your client” is a misunderstanding of the purpose of the program
- ▶ “Clients have to do their part” is assigning responsibility to the wrong party
- ▶ Fact: Intensity of approach depends on the client and their ability at the time. Initially, (engagement, housing search, goal setting) we often must work much harder until our clients develop the skills, desires, and ability to join us and eventually take the lead



CHOICE

- Consumer outcomes are the responsibility of the staff
- Continuity of care provided by system planners –
- “No wrong door” and “Single point of responsibility”





SEPARATION OF HOUSING & SUPPORT

Separation

NO pretreatment requirements

Continuity of support

Mobile

Community based

Not attached to housing

HF Programs include designated housing specialist/housing navigators to assist consumers procure and maintain housing

- Assist with housing search
- Transport consumers to see properties
- Represent program and consumer to property managers
- Liaison between property managers and HF support team and consumers
- Funds required for housing related expenses
- E.g., H4H and Brilliant corners



Working with Community Landlords

- Common Goal
- Benefits for landlords
- Community recognition



Match Services to Needs

- ▶ **Successful Teams Adjust Quickly and Flexibly**
- ▶ Frequency of visits and contacts
- ▶ Case load ratios
- ▶ Shared responsibility with other team members
- ▶ On-call services
- ▶ Must provide many needed services directly or indirectly (that are often not Medicaid billable)



Recovery Focused Services

- ▶ How you interact is as important as what you do
- ▶ Respect and hope
- ▶ Harm reduction, strengths based, and trauma informed
- ▶ Consumer determines pace of recovery
- ▶ Recovery: support system outside of services

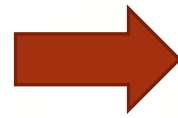
Problems in Coordinated Entry

- ← Multiple referrals and consumers are lost
- ← Faulty prioritization tool and methodology
- ← Long waiting lists eroded sense of urgency
- ← Lack of prioritization for exiting housing resources

Develop a system that meets the needs of your community

Improvements for Coordinated Entry

Improve Methodology
rely more on valid data less
on screening tools



Develop a community consensus
about housing one group



The Challenge Remains!

- If not now, when?
- If not us, who?

Thank you!

► For questions or comments please write to:
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