

# Housing as a Health Intervention

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Flora Arabo

National Governors Association

# Agenda

- Opioids, Re-entry & Homeless Populations
- Housing First
- What is Supportive Housing
- Best practices
- Opportunities
- Resources

# Opioids and Homelessness

- A survey by the United States Conference of Mayors found that **68 percent of cities reported that substance abuse was the largest cause of homelessness for single adults**. Substance abuse was also reported as one of the top three causes of family homelessness by 12 percent of cities.
- A recent study in Boston showed that overdose has surpassed HIV as the leading cause of death among homeless adults, and found that **opioids are responsible for more than 80 percent of these deaths**. Homeless adults, 25-44, were **nine times more likely to die from an overdose than their counterparts who were stably housed**.

--National Alliance to End Homelessness

# Re-entry and Homelessness

- Nationally, almost 50% of individuals released from correctional facilities go **directly into homeless shelters**.
- On average, the annual cost of imprisonment is just over \$31,000 per person. **Compare that with supportive housing, which costs roughly \$13,000-\$17,000 per person**, depending on the intervention.
- Numerous studies demonstrate that supportive housing is an evidence-based intervention that improves health outcomes and significantly **reduces recidivism**. They also show that the savings from supportive housing **more than offset** its costs.

--United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Vera Institute for Justice, National Alliance to end Homelessness

# Population Overlap

	Opioid Use Disorder	Re-entry
Commonalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Co-occurring conditions, including substance use, serious mental illness, and chronic physical health issues</li><li>• Previously incarcerated</li><li>• Often high utilizers of emergency departments and other costly sites of care</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Co-occurring conditions, including substance use, serious mental illness, and chronic physical health issues</li><li>• Previously incarcerated</li><li>• Often high utilizers of emergency departments and other costly sites of care</li></ul>
Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Best practices in Medication Assisted Treatment can conflict with requirements in some supportive housing settings</li><li>• May face barriers to housing in “dry” settings that require sobriety</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Many barriers to housing due to criminal records</li><li>• Housing First principles may conflict with rules of parole or probations</li></ul>
Best Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Permanent Supportive Housing</li><li>• Care Coordination</li><li>• Access to Evidence-Based interventions for Behavioral Health</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Permanent Supportive Housing</li><li>• Care Coordination</li><li>• Access to Evidence-Based interventions for Behavioral Health</li></ul>

# Housing First

## What is it?

Housing First is an evidence-based model for ending chronic homelessness by providing individuals with access to stable, permanent housing first, with no stipulations, and then offering services that are optional and voluntary.

## Why does it matter?

Numerous studies demonstrate that Housing First is associated with superior housing retention, **decreased substance use, longer engagement in treatment**, improved quality of life, lower health system costs, and **decreased involvement in the justice system** compared with treatment as usual.

## Why Housing *First*?

Homeless individuals spend much of their time securing the basic needs of food, shelter, and safety. It is much more challenging to engage an individual in addressing often multiple co-occurring disorders such as serious mental illness and substance use disorder when their basic human needs have not been met.

## What next?

Individuals in safe, decent, secure housing can more effectively self-manage the conditions that may have contributed to their homelessness. Studies show that individuals are more likely to take up services and remain in treatment when they are housed.

# What is Supportive Housing

## Housing + Services

### Housing Principles

- Considered “permanent”
- Integrated into the community
- Tenant is offered choices
- Heavily subsidized
- Targets chronically homeless adults
- Tenants are likely to have behavioral health (BH) needs and co-occurring chronic health conditions

### Services Principles

- Voluntary participation (Housing First approach)
- Comprehensive: includes medical and BH, tenancy supports, and social services
- Community-based or provided on site
- Tailored to each tenants needs so that he or she can live independently in the community
- Multi-disciplinary care teams including case workers, housing specialist, and clinicians

# Best Practices in Behavioral Health For Housing Interventions

- Medication Assisted Treatment (Opioids)
- Intensive Case Management or Assertive Community Treatment (depending upon severity of illness/complexity of need)
- Mobile Crisis Services
- Supported Employment
- Individual and Group Therapies
  - Cognitive Behavioral interventions
  - Family Psychoeducation
- Peer Support Services
- Medication management and reconciliation



# Areas of Opportunity

- For states with **Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion programs:**
  - Do law enforcement officers assess housing status?
  - Do law enforcement officers know who to contact if they are working with a homeless individual?
- For states deploying **peer specialists in the Emergency Room setting:**
  - Are nurses assessing housing status? Do they relay housing status to the peer recovery specialist?
  - If patients decline recovery services, are peers offering housing to homeless individuals? Do peers know who to contact if someone needs housing?
- For states with **“Moving to Work” (MTW) public housing authorities (PHA):**
  - Do any of your PHAs have MTW status? If so, would they be willing to set aside some housing vouchers for this population?
- For states looking to **leverage Medicaid**
  - Does Medicaid cover tenancy supports? So far, only LA, MA, CA, and WA have this benefit. IL, MD, RI, and a few others have pending waivers
  - Tenancy supports are critical services that help people find, secure, and maintain their housing. Reimbursement under Medicaid for these services makes supportive housing financially sustainable.

# Areas of Opportunity

- For states with **barriers in getting returning citizens into public housing:**
  - HUD has issued guidance on screening activities, [encouraging](#) PHAs to provide housing opportunities to returning citizens
  - HUD has also issued guidance on [Fair Housing](#), indicating that turning a potential tenant away due to their criminal record may violate Fair Housing laws
- For states with **re-entry populations that return to living with family or friends:**
  - A significant portion of returning citizens live with friends or family members, at least to start. Mediation programs have been successful in mediating prior disputes or other issues that allow a smooth transition for family reunification and therefore reduces the likelihood of couch-surfing or homelessness. Are there any **mediation programs** in the state that could assist with re-entry efforts?
- For states facing **severe budget shortfalls:**
  - States using **data** to track outcomes for target populations – whether they be returning citizens, individuals with substance use disorder, or high utilizers of costly health care services – can find rapid return-on-investment by measuring pre- and post-intervention incarceration rates. Supportive housing is an evidence-based intervention that improves health, reduces recidivism and reduces Medicaid costs, resulting in significant savings to the state.

# Resources

- [www.nga.org/housingashealth](http://www.nga.org/housingashealth)
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment>
- <https://www.usich.gov/solutions/criminal-justice>
- [https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset\\_library/Strategies\\_to\\_Adress\\_Opioid\\_Crisis.pdf](https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Strategies_to_Adress_Opioid_Crisis.pdf)
- <https://csgjusticecenter.org/>
- <http://www.csh.org/populations/re-entry/>
- [http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/re\\_entry](http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/re_entry)
- <http://www.endhomelessness.org/page/-/files/Opioids%20and%20Homelessness%20-%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

# Contact

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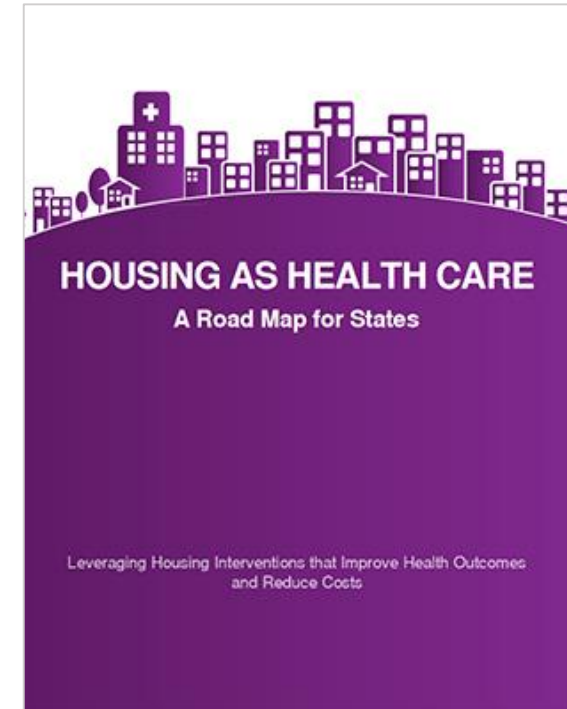
Flora Arabo

Senior Policy Analyst

Health Division

202-624-5354

[farabo@nga.org](mailto:farabo@nga.org)



Access the Housing Roadmap online at  
<http://www.nga.org/housingashealth>