

# **Permanent Supportive Housing in Fairfax County**

Community Forum  
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# What is PSH?

- Unit available for household whose head is homeless, has multiple barriers, including disabling or chronic health conditions
- The unit's operations are managed through an effective partnership between services and housing providers
- Household members have access to a flexible and comprehensive array of services

# Why Permanent Supportive Housing?

- Model has been shown to be effective in providing stability, and improving outcomes for singles
- Now research indicates that an integrated housing and services approach can produce similar results for chronically homeless families

# New Hope Housing Permanent Supportive Housing Program

- Milestones began in 1996 with 4 families.
- Today there are 6 permanent housing units, serving 7 families and funds to purchase 1 additional unit.
- It currently serves 8 adults (age 21-48yrs) and 25 children (ages 3 weeks-17 yrs).

# Permanent Supportive Housing

- New Hope Housing's Milestones Program serves homeless families where a parent has a mental health or cognitive disability and there is a risk or history of CPS involvement in the household.
- It provides long-term housing with supportive services.



# Foundations of Success

- Goals are the well being of the children and maintaining stable housing.
- Building a relationship with the family
- Use motivational interviewing
- Traditional service plans are not likely to be effective initially.
- In time, goals can be developed.
- Services are available, not required.

# Recent Successes

- Pre-school age children received assessments and early intervention for speech delays.
- 70% of HOHs engaged in mental health services.
- 60% of families engaged in parenting classes.

# Recent Successes

- 100% of children moved onto the next grade
- Two HOH obtained employment
- Two families moved-one PPH and one voucher

# Lessons Learned

- Separate case management from rental and housing responsibilities.
- Use small units so space does not overwhelm.
- Expectations differ from expectations of a traditional transitional housing program.

# Lessons Learned

- If the family can maintain housing and avoid CPS, this is success.
- Some families are resistant, but with the right approach and time they can be engaged

# Fairfax 10 Year Plan Goals

- Add 75 units of permanent supportive housing for families over next five years
- Add 38 units of additional permanent supportive housing for singles over same period

# Assessment and Conversion Task Force

- Surveyed all family transitional providers and identified 2 who were interested in proceeding with conversion
- Rise Program -20 units of family transitional housing coordinated by DFS/RI/SH/NH
- Homestretch-10 units identified within current program inventory of transitional units

# Permanent Supportive Housing Activities and Accomplishments

- Worked with HOST Intake and Assessment team to refine assessment and targeting tool for PSH target population
- Met with community partners and HUD officials to discuss process of Transitional Grant/Program conversion
- Formed subgroup to develop cost estimates for services and identify and recruit potential service partners

# Permanent Supportive Housing Activities and Accomplishments

- Conducted discussions with potential partners
- Attempted to develop workgroup to propose housing options but this was not successful
- Developed position description for PSH case manager
- Researched models and best practices

# Seven Dimensions of Quality for Supportive Housing

- Corporation for Supportive Housing has developed a framework for assessing quality in supported housing programs
- Usage of The Seven Dimensions tool can help
  - Build capacity of industry
  - Encourage investment and ensure effective use of resources
  - Ensure better outcomes

# Dimension #1: Administration, Management, Coordination

- Key indicators of quality
  - The operation is an effective partnership with roles and responsibilities spelled out in MOU`s
  - All partners comply with applicable state and federal laws and update policies and procedures regularly
  - A collaborative relationship exists between supportive services and property management

## Dimension #2: Physical Environment

- Key indicators of Quality
  - Home like appearance and consistent with neighborhood standards
  - Adequate space/no sharing of bedrooms(adults)
  - Appropriate security features
  - Housing complies with ADA, Section 504, and incorporates Universal Design features

## Dimension #3: Access to Housing and Services

- Initial and continued access to housing opportunities and supportive services is not restricted by unnecessary criteria, rules, services requirements, or other barriers
  - Eligibility screening process does not include housing readiness criteria, and reflects a commitment to housing those with high barriers

## Dimension #4: Supportive Services Design and Delivery

- Key Indicators of Quality
  - Housing stability focus
  - Effective engagement strategies
  - Cultural competency
  - Services are comprehensive and easy to access

# Dimension #5: Property Management and Asset Management

- Key Indicators of Quality
  - Cross training of services and property management staff
  - Manuals up to date, clear, and include thorough emergency procedures
  - Clear and timely communications with tenants on lease and property responsibilities, tenant rights and staff roles

## Dimension #6: Tenant Rights, Input, and Leadership

- Key Indicators of Quality
  - Tenants have same right as others in community in deciding to participate in supportive services
  - Confidentiality and respectful communication
  - Participants have clear written and verbal explanations of rights, responsibilities, and grievance procedures
  - Tenants have meaningful opportunities for input into program rules and operations

# Dimension #7: Data, Documentation, and Evaluation

- Key Indicators of Quality
  - Organizations track data related to effectiveness of program
  - Plans for outcome measurements include: service outcomes, housing outcomes, tenant satisfaction, etc.
  - There is a Quality Improvement Plan
  - There is a regularly scheduled audit/monitoring process

# Next Steps-RISE Program

- DFS plans to complete process required to submit Grant Amendment for RISE program within next few weeks
- Will request that grant be converted from transitional to permanent supportive housing effective beginning of next grant year(August 1, 2010)
- Transition may begin earlier with turnover if services are in place

# Next Steps-Homestretch/Others?

- Homestretch will look to convert 10 of its existing transitional units to PSH over next 2 years
- We have also identified need to convert an additional 21 family transitional units to PSH over next 2-3 years and would like to work with other providers