

Community Information Meeting on the Proposed River Street Residences Project

The Housing First Model: An
Effective Way to End
Homelessness

What is Homelessness?

- The federal government defines *Homeless* as a person sleeping in a public place such as on the street, or in a place not ordinarily used as a regular sleeping place for human beings¹
- As many as 3.5 million people experience homelessness each year²
 - Approximately 150,000 to 200,000 chronic homeless individuals nationwide (2005)²
- In Honolulu there were (in 2007)³
 - 3,750 homeless
 - 225 chronically homeless

1. 42 U.S. Code 119

2. Chronic Homeless Brief (March 2007) National Alliance to End Homelessness, <http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/1060/>

National Alliance to End Homelessness Fact Checker, 3/2007, <http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/1623/>

3. Supplemental Appendix C <http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/2158>

An Effective Method to End Homelessness

“The evidence continues to indicate that the Housing First model is better for the homeless person, better for the community, and better for the taxpayer.”

Source: Philip Mangano, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Executive Director, Retrieved from http://www.usich.gov/readmore/eastlake_apr09.html

What is the *Housing First* Model?

- Focus is on helping individuals and families access and sustain permanent rental housing
- Once residents are settled into permanent apartments, supportive services are available but not mandatory
- Unlike traditional approaches, *Housing First* does not require treatment as a condition for shelter

Critical Elements of *Housing First*

- Individuals and families receive in-depth, upfront assessment before entering Housing First
- Help individuals and families access and obtain permanent rental housing
- Provide residents with a variety of voluntary in-house services to promote stability and individual well-being
- Housing is not contingent on compliance with services – instead, participants must comply with a standard lease agreement

Source: What is Housing First? (Feb 17, 2006), The National Alliance to End Homelessness, Retrieved from <http://www.otsego.org/homelessness/WhatIsHousingFirst.pdf>

Relevant Benefits of *Housing First*

- Reduction in street homelessness
 - Over 50 percent in Philadelphia, PA
 - By 40 percent in San Francisco, CA
 - From 1,000 to 600 (1/2005 – 3/2007) in Denver, CO
- Reduction in arrests of homeless for status crimes (loitering, public urination, or public intoxication)

Other Benefits of *Housing First*

- Program outcomes in Rhode Island

Rhode Island (1) <i>Activity</i>	<i>Days for year before program</i>	<i>Days for year after entering program</i>	<i>Cost for year before entering program</i>	<i>Cost for year after entering program</i>
Hospital overnights	534	149	\$917,946	\$256,131
Emergency room visits	177	75	96,640	48,000
Jail/prison overnights	919	149	84,780	16,092
Alcohol/drug overnights	538	43	118,360	9,460
<p>(1) Involved extrapolation of 6 months of data to 12 months and extrapolated 18 to 48 clients. Source: Hirsch, Glasser, & Williams, (2007), <i>Rhode Island's Housing First Program Year Evaluation</i>, Retrieved from http://www.uwri.org/work/documents/Housing_First_RI_Report_Full.pdf</p>				

Other Benefits of *Housing First*

- Cost benefit analysis and program outcomes in Denver, CO

Denver, CO (1)	Cost benefit analysis and program outcomes
<i>Activity</i>	
Detox services costs	Reduced by 84 percent
Incarceration days and costs	Reduced by 76 percent
Decrease in substance abuse	15 percent have decreased substance use
Clients' health status	50 percent have reported improved health status
Average monthly income of participants	Increase in public benefits or through employment from \$185 per month at entry into Housing First to \$431 per month at end of study

(1) Sample of 19 patients for the 24 month period prior to entering Housing First to 24 months after entering Housing First (avg. 7.6 years of homelessness)

Source: Periman, & Parvensky, (2006), Denver Housing First Collaborative Cost Benefit Analysis and Program Outcomes Report, Retrieved from <http://www.shnny.org/documents/FinalDHFCCostStudy.pdf>

Recognitions of Housing First Initiative

- Non-Profit Sector Award, National Alliance to End Homelessness, 1996.
- One of “25 US Best Practices,” representing the United States at the United Nations Conference, Habitat II, held in Istanbul, Turkey in 1996.
- One of “100 International Best practices,” chosen by The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Nairobi, Kenya) in 1996 for dissemination worldwide.