Identifying and Addressing Challenges for Aging and Disabled Homeless Populations

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Profile of Homeless Older Adults and People who have Disabilities
- No history of homelessness
- Priced out of safe, affordable housing
- Rent burdened / financial hardship
- Age range of 50-90+
- Low income, many $771/month SSI, Social Security, or SSDI only
- COAAA receiving on average 10-15 inquiries per week that fit this profile.

Reasons for Housing Loss
Various scenarios:
- Loss of other income in the household
- Property sold, lease not renewed
- Significant rent increases
- Financial exploitation
- Cognitive impairment
- Foreclosure
- Vacated by code enforcement
- Temporary or extended nursing home admission
Low Income Housing Shortage

- 2-4 year waiting lists for senior subsidized housing (rent: 30% of income)
- New senior properties = Tax Credit, not subsidized (rents slightly less than market)
- Severe shortage of subsidized units for individuals under age 62 who have a disability
- Waiting lists for Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8)
- Declining inventory of properties that accept vouchers
- Limited time to use the voucher, search tools not current
- Loss of public housing

Unique Vulnerabilities

- No “survival skills” for living homeless
- Cognitive impairment not always identified on assessment
  - Inability to follow through on steps to secure housing
  - Need a supported living arrangement i.e. assisted living or nursing facility
- Need access to medical monitoring/treatment of chronic conditions
- Assistance needed with ADLs and or IADLs, services not provided in a shelter setting or other temporary living arrangements
- Loss of case management / care coordination and services upon becoming homeless
- Kinship caregivers with custody of minor children not eligible for senior housing

COAAA Interventions:

Homelessness Prevention
Referral to the following organizations/services:
- Tenant advocacy – Legal Aid, COHHIO
- Rent assistance
- Community Mediation Services for landlord/tenant mediation
- Adult Protective Services (prior to homeless status)
- Daily money management/payee services
- Supportive Services (programs that provide case management)
- Home repair programs
- Foreclosure Prevention Counseling
- Diversion to care facilities
COAAA Interventions:
Homeless Individuals
• Establish connections with property management
• Assist with nursing home / Assisted Living Waiver placement process
• Ohio Area Agencies on Aging facilitate Level of Care assessments required by the State for Assisted Living Waiver and Nursing Home Placements

COAAA Interventions:
Education and Outreach
• AAA staff conducted workshops in a local shelter covering housing-related terminology, and how to navigate housing programs
• Presentations to local shelter staff and housing navigators covering aging services and long-term care options
• Development of a comprehensive Housing and Home Repair Guide – distributed at community events, mailed upon request, on website, www.coaaa.org

COAAA Interventions:
Advocacy / Collaboration
Housing Specialist and Information & Referral Staff work with:
• Landlords / property management
• Community agencies
• Local governments
• Legislative advocacy
  Outreach to print and broadcast media.

The general public has no idea of the magnitude of the housing crisis and who is impacted. This limits everyone’s ability to make informed, strategic choices critical to maintaining housing.