Housing Focused Case Management

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COHHIO Annual Conference
Presenters

• Tom Albanese, LSW, Tom Albanese Consulting LLC
• Sherri Downing, Advocates for Human Potential
Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- HFCM Overview
- Crisis Stabilization & Housing Search
- LUNCH
- Housing Stabilization & Retention
- Taking Care of Ourselves
Welcome & Introductions

• Name, title, program/agency
• What role do you primarily play?
• How long have you been in your position and/or providing housing-related assistance?

SMALL GROUP ICE-BREAKER! (5 minutes)

• What is a good thing happening in your life right now? What makes it good?
Learning Objectives

Training is intended to help participants increase knowledge and skills related to:

- Housing Focused Case Management (HFCM) key features and practices in RRH
- Housing-focused assessment, case planning, and supports
- Using trauma-informed practices to effectively engage and assist people facing homelessness
Housing-Focused Case Management Overview
What is Case Management?

In the field of social work, case management is defined as:
“A process to plan for, seek, advocate for, and monitor services from
different social services or health care organizations and staff on behalf of
a participant.”

The primary goal of case management is to enhance and improve participant
functioning and well-being by:
■ Providing and coordinating high-quality services,
■ In an effective and efficient manner,
■ For participants with multiple and complex needs.
Case Manager Skill Set

- Patience
- Empathy
- Honesty
- Active Listening
- Flexibility
- Ability to Manage Expectations
What is *Housing-Focused Case Management* (HFCM)?

Individualized support to help participants quickly resolve their housing crisis (whether imminently at-risk of literal homelessness or already literally homeless) by assisting them to obtain and/or remain in safe, stable housing and get connected to services and supports they need and desire to remain stably housed.
Where do we provide Housing-Focused Case Management?

- **Coordinated Entry**
  - Divert: Does not need shelter tonight

- **Emergency Shelter**
  - Targeted Diversion & Homelessness Prevention
  - Able to retain housing or gain new housing, bypassing shelter
  - Unable to find housing on own within short period (e.g., 7-10 days)

- **Transitional Housing**
  - Targeted to specific populations
  - Highest needs, unable to maintain housing without ongoing services, subsidy

- **Rapid Re-housing**
  - Able to exit shelter on own

- **Permanently Supportive Housing**
  - Community-Based Permanent Housing (includes market rate and subsidized)

**System Goals**
- Prevent
- Rare
- Brief
- 1 Time

*May serve as “bridge” to PSH, when appropriate/needed*
INDIVIDUALIZED HOUSING STABILIZATION PLANS: when to create & update…

FIRST: Initial plan following intake…

THEN: Updated plan upon securing current or new housing…

FINALLY: Updated plan at program completion/exit.

Stages of HFCM & PARTICIPANT HOUSING PLANS

1. Crisis Stabilization & Housing Search
   - Goals/actions focus on emergency health and safety needs that must be immediately met AND, steps for housing search if relocating or literally homeless.

2. Housing Stabilization
   - Goals/actions focus on stabilizing in housing, addressing income, tenancy, childcare, service connections, etc. Updated regularly as goals are achieved or plans and circumstances change.

3. Housing Retention
   - Goals/actions focus on continuation toward longer-term goals; contingency plan for future housing emergencies.
### Housing-Focused Case Management: Core Functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intake</th>
<th>Provide additional information about program services, gather participant demographics and other required data, identify immediate needs, obtain consent, and establish rapport and trust</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Screening &amp; Assessment</td>
<td>Screen for and further assess other critical/urgent needs, while focusing on further assessing housing-related history, needs, barriers, available resources, and housing preferences to inform Housing Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Plans</td>
<td>Help participant identify housing-related goals, steps and needed supports to address housing barriers, stabilize in housing, and have access to supports for any other critical/urgent/ongoing needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Assistance, Service Linkages &amp; Coordination</td>
<td>Support participants in their efforts to find, pay for, and stabilize in housing, as well as address other critical/urgent/ongoing needs, including helping participant access community and mainstream services and resources to support short- and long-term housing goals and other needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Closure &amp; Transitional Supports</td>
<td>Regular review of progress toward housing stability and other critical needs to inform when to transition participants from housing crisis intervention services and any needed/desired transitional or ongoing supports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HFCM Key Performance Measures

Prevent OR shorten length of time experiencing homelessness

Safe, stable housing

No return to crisis or homelessness
Successful Housing Outcomes for RRH include…

- Shared housing with friends or family
- Return to or secure their own housing
- Relocate permanently to safe place out of town

Some may stay temporarily with family or friends while working to secure longer-term housing (i.e., in “Shared Housing”).
Why Housing-Focused Case Management?

- Homelessness is the lack of a stable place to live due to...
  - Lack of affordable housing
  - Unemployment or underemployment
  - Insufficient safety net or social supports
  - Health conditions
  - Interpersonal violence
  - Racism and inequity

- Digging deeper into racism and inequities...when you think of the connection between racism and lack of housing access, what comes to mind?
How did we get here?

**Structural racism:** Compounding effects of multiple factors. Historically how laws and policies have routinely advantaged white people and disadvantaged people of color. Intentional policies that are exclusionary by design. May be less obvious today, but they still exist.

**Institutional racism:** The inequities in our organizations, places of employment, social services, government agencies ... unfair practices, discriminatory treatment, unequal opportunities. For folks trying to navigate everyday systems. How we run our organizations and systems continues to advantage some over others.

**Interpersonal racism:** When one person targets another, based on prejudice or negative bias, and actively infringes on their rights.

HFCM: Working with Participants

**Principles**
- Equity (in design/oversight, access, quality, outcomes)
- Strengths-based
- Person-centered

**Practices**
- Housing First (pro tip: not housing only!)
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Harm Reduction
- Progressive/Dynamic Assistance
Disproportionate Impact & Equity

**PROBLEM**

• Disproportionate impact of poverty and homelessness on Black and Brown people, LGBTQI+ people, and other vulnerable sub-populations

**SOLUTIONS**

• Flexible practices
• Understand additional barriers faced by different groups
• Outcomes tracking to review for equitable impact
Impact of Homelessness

- Trauma
- Stress
- Disempowerment
- Loss of control
- Fear
- Focus on survival
Stress & Trauma’s Impact on Your Brain

Your Brain, Feeling Good

Alert, Safe, Interested
Moderate levels of catecholamine release strengthen dPFC, weaken amygdala, and reduce tonic LC firing (NE: α2A)

Prefrontal Cortex
Top-down regulation of behavior, thought and emotion

α2A strengthens

Your Brain on Stress

Stress
High levels of catecholamine release weaken dPFC, strengthen amygdala and striatum, and increase the tonic firing of the LC (NE: α1, β1)

α1, β1 weakens

Group Activity

Stand up or raise your hand if you or a friend or family member ever...
Crisis intervention refers to urgent, emergency care that is aimed at assisting persons facing a crisis situation. Crisis intervention assistance seeks to end the crisis situation and restore balance to biological, psychological, and social functioning, while also minimizing the potential for additional psychological trauma to the person in crisis.

People in crisis experience high levels of stress and specific physiological responses to stress that negatively affect their ability to reason and solve problems. While these reactions can be reversed, prolonged crisis and stress may have long term effects.

People in or facing the risk of homelessness are in crisis, and staff assisting them should be ready and able to respond accordingly.
Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) is an organizational structure and treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. It emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both participants and providers, and helps survivors rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.
Harm Reduction

A “set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use.”

• Core social work ethic – beyond supporting those actively using drugs
• Harm reduction employs a variety of strategies including safer use, managed use, abstinence, and meeting people who use drugs “where they’re at.”
• Harm reduction principles and approaches are central to an effective HFCM

Safe, stable, low-barrier housing is a form of harm reduction

✓ Minimizing unplanned housing loss and return to homelessness
✓ Stable living situation to begin to engage and move forward (“Stages of Change”)

See Additional Training Resources at the end of this training to learn more about this topic.
Housing First is a proven approach in which all people experiencing homelessness are believed to be housing ready and are provided with permanent housing immediately and with few to no preconditions, behavioral contingencies, or barriers.

- **Low-barrier:** households aren’t screened out due to low or no income, lack of sobriety, or other issues.
- **Voluntary services:** service and other compliance issues are not a condition of tenancy in housing.
Housing First approaches seek to engage people in resolving their housing crisis as quickly as possible, even when they...

- Have little or zero income at entry
- Have low “employability”
- Seem to lack a “desire” to change
- Seem to lack a “good” attitude
- May be acting “uncooperative”
- Weren’t successful in Rapid Rehousing before

All people are ready for housing, with the right support. *Housing First programs must be ready for people.*
Six Core Principles

1. Believing in and supporting people to recover, reclaim, and transform their lives.
2. Focus on individual’s strengths rather than weaknesses.
3. Viewing community as an oasis of resources.
4. Participants are the directors of the helping process.
5. The relationship is primary and essential.
6. The primary setting for our work is in the community.

Progressive engagement and assistance is an approach to helping households end their homelessness as rapidly as possible, despite barriers, with minimal financial and support resources. More supports are offered to those households who struggle to stabilize and cannot maintain their housing without assistance.

• Avoids false assumptions
• Individualized
• Efficient – conserves limited resources to assist more people
• Effective – reduces how many experience homelessness, how quickly people end their homelessness, and how many avoid homelessness again
Supporting Participants through Crisis Stabilization & Housing Search
Stages of HFCM & PARTICIPANT HOUSING PLANS

1. Crisis Stabilization & Housing Search
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INDIVIDUALIZED HOUSING STABILIZATION PLANS: when to create & update…

FIRST: Initial plan following intake…
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FINALLY: Updated plan at program completion/exit.
When engaging a person facing a housing crisis, our focus is first on critical immediate needs:
- Are immediate shelter and safety needs met and stable?
- What are the initial needs to support securing a unit and moving to permanent housing?
- How can we engage participants in a strengths-based, individualized rehousing plan?
- How can we support participants to address other critical immediate needs while addressing their rehousing needs?
Screening & Assessment Goals

1. Understand a person’s housing-related history, needs, barriers, resources, and preferences to inform a plan that resolves the housing crisis successfully and quickly.

2. Identify (screen for) and further assess other critical needs requiring urgent attention as needed.
Screening & Assessment
Focus Areas when working with Participants

✔ Critical and/or urgent needs requiring attention
✔ Income, resources and expenses, especially those key to finding/securing housing (childcare, transportation)
✔ Housing requirements and preferences (bedrooms, accessibility, amenities, location)
✔ Housing barriers related to both tenant screening and housing retention
Assessing Critical/Urgent Needs

Unmet critical needs requiring immediate attention, such as:

- Housing
- Food
- Physical/mental/emotional health and safety
- Transportation
- Childcare/school

Considerations:

- High level screening
- Use open-ended questions to elicit information from participants
## Assessing Income, Resources, and Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment Income</td>
<td>employment, “under-the-table” income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Benefits</td>
<td>TANF cash assistance, disability benefits, child support, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Cash Benefits</td>
<td>housing subsidy (e.g., “Section 8”), health insurance, childcare, SNAP/food stamps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Resources</td>
<td>car or other transportation, family/friends able to support (e.g., provide childcare)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>necessary vs discretionary, honest – <em>current and once stably housed</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessing Housing Requirements & Preferences

Focus: Needs and preferences that participants have- related to the housing size, location, and amenities.
• Accessibility and safety
• Size and features
• Location and nearby amenities (e.g., laundromat)
• Services/assistance
• Utilities
• Furnishing/household items

Considerations:
• Use closed- and open-ended questions
• “Must-haves” vs “wants”
Assessing Housing Barriers

What are you trying to find out?
• Participant history and characteristics that may pose a barrier to housing stability
  • Income and employment history
  • Credit history, unpaid bills/late payments, court judgments, rental arrears
  • Criminal history
  • Past housing experiences, issues or challenges
  • Landlord references
• Additional supports needed
• Landlords who might be a good match
• If there are errors in public records
• Patterns that suggest potential housing retention barriers later
Assessing Housing Barriers: Two Types…

Housing barriers prevent someone from obtaining or keeping housing.

- **TENANT SCREENING Barriers**: Reduce a person’s ability to *obtain* housing
- **HOUSING RETENTION Barriers**: Reduce a person’s ability to *retain* housing
## Why Do Landlords Screen?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Landlords Worry About: Can the Tenant….?</th>
<th>What Landlords Use to Reduce Those Risks:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay the rent on time?</td>
<td>Credit History, Income, Employment, Landlord References</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treat the building with respect?</td>
<td>Criminal History, Landlord References</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treat other people with respect?</td>
<td>Criminal History, Landlord References</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid trouble with the police?</td>
<td>Criminal History, Landlord References</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Housing Barrier Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TENANT SCREENING</th>
<th>HOUSING RETENTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Barriers to GETTING HOUSING</strong></td>
<td><strong>Barriers to KEEPING HOUSING</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Criminal History</td>
<td>• Financial Barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Credit History</td>
<td>• Income &amp; budgeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Housing History</td>
<td>• Physical/Behavioral Barriers <em>directly impacting housing</em>, for example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Financial Resources</td>
<td>• Behavior that causes lease violations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Housing discrimination</td>
<td>• Domestic violence, interpersonal conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lack of tenancy skills, unit upkeep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Issues with activities of daily living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Housing discrimination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Barriers that <em>directly impact</em> GETTING and/or KEEPING HOUSING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Chronic stress, trauma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reliable, affordable, flexible childcare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reliable, affordable, flexible transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Family conflict, functioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shelter rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School issues, parenting demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Health and physical limitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• $ for application fees, gas, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessing Tenant Screening & Housing Retention Barriers

How do you identify barriers?

✔ Participant interview/conversation about housing history with open-ended questions
✔ Public databases (e.g., court records)
✔ Other sources, with consent:
  • Credit or tenant screening report online; be sure to budget for this!
  • Previous landlords
Possible Challenges to Past Housing Stability

**Paying rent/utilities on time**
- Job loss
- Low-paying, inconsistent work
- Access to affordable childcare and transportation
- Benefit losses
- Unexpected emergencies
- Generational, network poverty
- Different priorities (aka “bad choices”)

**Treating building with respect**
- Damages or lack of upkeep beyond “normal wear and tear”
- Abandoned vehicles
- Overflowing trash
- Lack of awareness, knowledge, and/or skills to care for unit

**Health and safety**
- Interpersonal style, conflicts, violence
- Severe symptoms from mental illness, substance use disorders, and co-occurring disorders
- Trauma triggers
- Noise, smell, and/or behavior that disturbs neighbors
- Bug infestations
- Police and/or ambulance calls

**Following the lease**
- Unauthorized pets or guests
- Noise, smell, and/or behavior that disturbs neighbors
- Lack of information about lease requirements
- Lack of awareness, knowledge, and/or skills to proactively mitigate and resolve issues
Small Group Activities 1 & 2

Identifying & Assessing Housing Barriers
Individualized Housing Stabilization Plan Goal

Establish and periodically update a participant’s individualized plan- that seeks to resolve the housing crisis successfully and as quickly as possible, including steps/supports related to immediate critical needs AND housing search/placement and/or immediate housing stabilization, and retention.
Co-Creating a Crisis Stabilization and Housing Search Plan with a Participant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Don’t assume</th>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>Support</th>
<th>Consider</th>
<th>Match</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t assume someone will substantially increase their incomes (unless they have zero income!).</td>
<td>Help people think through what housing situation can stabilize now. Consider living with family, friends, or roommate. (HPS)</td>
<td>Help people consider the smallest unit they can tolerate in the least expensive area they can find safe housing.</td>
<td>Consider shared housing/roommates as an option</td>
<td>Match people with housing options from partner landlords--unless they want to do their own housing search or are being helped by someone else (and then monitor to see how it’s going)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look for housing based on a realistic projection of income and expenses.</td>
<td>Realistic income expectations or reductions in spending.</td>
<td>Assist to apply for any type of subsidy for which they qualify, even if long waiting list</td>
<td>Rent will still exceed 30% income in most cases.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Co-Creating a Crisis Stabilization and Housing Search Plan with a Participant
## Get SMART!

### Vague Goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>ACTION STEPS</th>
<th>BY WHEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Find an apartment that meets my needs.</td>
<td>Check newspapers and listings</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apply for rent assistance</td>
<td>Prior to move-in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SMART Goal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>ACTION STEPS</th>
<th>WHO IS RESPONSIBLE</th>
<th>BY WHEN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify a landlord willing to rent to me who has a vacant unit that meets the needs of me and my children by end of December or sooner.</td>
<td>Review apt.com, newspaper, and XYZ Program landlord list at least weekly to ID vacant units</td>
<td>Jane [participant]</td>
<td>Weekly until unit identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start application process for CalWORKS (TANF) emergency rental assistance online at <a href="http://www.welfareoffice.gov">www.welfareoffice.gov</a></td>
<td>Jane with help from Angie [case mgr] as needed</td>
<td>By 11/24/2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meet with Dave, XYZ Program Housing Specialist, for further screening and possible additional help</td>
<td>Jane with help from Angie</td>
<td>By 12/2/2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants are both *priced out* and *screened out* of safe, decent housing.

**How can we change that?**

- Landlord incentives (use as a negotiating tool to reduce screening requirements)
- Support rent and utility costs while enrolled
- Provide tenancy supports and landlord point of contact
- Offer aftercare or a point of contact for troubleshooting

What can you do about Tenant Screening Barriers?
Knowledge Is Power

In order to support a wide variety of participant housing needs...

• Do your research – Identify all potential housing options for a wide-variety of participants

• Different types of housing and housing subsidies

• Eligibility requirements and application processes

• Vacancies and waitlist openings

• Understand Fair Housing, landlord/tenant law

• Attend landlord events and forums to network and stay informed on current market trends and housing issues

• Connect with other housing locators and case workers to share information and resources
Types of Rental Housing

- Private Market Rate
- Mainstream subsidized units/voucher
- Homeless-dedicated units/voucher
- Special population dedicated units

https://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/ssvf/docs/SSVF_Housing_Navigator_Tool.pdf
What Assistance will Participants need for Move-in Costs and/or Short-Term Rent Subsidy?

Given expected income and necessary (real) expenses, what can the participant reasonably be expected to contribute for application costs, move-in expenses, and rent/utilities in the first few months?

• People experiencing homelessness rarely have any cash reserves to obtain housing, which may be significant
• Not all households need deep subsidies; your goal is not to eliminate rent burden
• Provide just enough financial assistance, just in time, and for only as long as necessary to get/keep housing. This avoids the “cliff effect” and allows you to assist more people in crisis
Improving access to and/or housing stabilization by supporting participants in increasing income in the near-term

**Employment**
- Workforce Innovation & Investment Act (WIOA) resources
- Supportive Employment
- Vocational Rehabilitation

**Disability**
- SOAR - SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery
- Social Security Administration: Ticket-to-Work Program for SSI/SSDI beneficiaries

**Other resources to stretch household income/resources**
- Childcare assistance programs
- CalFresh (food stamps)
- Food pantries
Employment as a short-term goal: Considerations

• Job history? Are there realistic, immediate options to increase pay?
• Can efforts to increase income wait, like additional job training, education, other steps?
• Are there significant employment barriers like a physical disability, that limit employment options and/or require other supports?
• Is person experiencing severe stress symptoms?
What else may need to be considered for the Participant’s Crisis Stabilization & Housing Search Plan?

- Furnishings, beds, towels, linens, crib, household supplies
- Getting items out of storage/storage payments
- Housing inspection
- Utility connection (including arrears)

If staying in place (own place or doubled-up/shared situation) or moving to doubled-up/shared situation:
- Putting a roommate/housemate/guest agreement in place
- Addressing utilities, other contributions to shared household costs, upkeep
Small Group Activity 3

Creating an Initial Housing Search Plan
Supporting Participants with Housing Stabilization and Retention
INDIVIDUALIZED HOUSING STABILIZATION PLANS: when to create & update…

FIRST: *Initial plan* following intake…

THEN: *Updated plan* upon securing current or new housing…

FINALLY: *Updated plan* at program completion/exit.

---

**Stages of HFCM & PARTICIPANT HOUSING PLANS**

1. **Crisis Stabilization & Housing Search**
   - **Goals/actions** focus on emergency health and safety needs that must be immediately met AND, steps for housing search if relocating or literally homeless.

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3. **Housing Retention**
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Housing Stabilization & Retention

Individuals moving from shelter to permanent housing presents a natural transition from crisis management to a stabilization-focused intervention:

• What needs does the individual have and how do we support the individual to be stabilized in their new home, with neighbors, with a new housemate?
• How can we support participants to maintain housing and increase stability?
• What can we offer to ensure participants are set up for success?
Initial Housing Stabilization

*Remember chronic stress?*
Expect (and encourage) a period for participants to settle in and decompress after the housing crisis is over and housing is secure.

- Consider next steps and “to-do’s” relative to what people can realistically accomplish just after a crisis
- Help obtain furnishing, bedding, household items, retrieve/move personal belongings
- Orient to transportation options, amenities, nearby services & resources
When is housing “stable”?

Start this discussion early and review often to guide if more or less support is needed and desired or whether it’s time for a planful transition and exit.

- Housing is safe, habitable
- Financial means to pay for housing
- Lease compliance
- Service connected, as needed/desired
- Future-ready, shock-resilient
Updating Plan with Focus on Housing stabilization

01

Revisit any critical and other ongoing service and support needs
• Consider any barriers to accessing assistance relative to new housing along with supports necessary and desired from the program to address barriers

02

Revisit issues that affected housing in the past to explore whether these issues could occur again
• Consider what to do if and when an issue re-occurs

03
Remember challenges experienced in the past that affected housing stability…

Paying rent/utilities on time
• Job loss
• Low-paying, inconsistent work
• Access to affordable childcare and transportation
• Benefit losses
• Unexpected emergencies
• Generational, network poverty
• Different priorities (aka “bad choices”)

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• Overflowing trash
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## Updating Plan with Focus on Housing Stabilization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revisit any critical and other ongoing service and support needs</td>
<td>• Consider any barriers to accessing assistance relative to new housing along with supports necessary and desired from the program to address barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revisit issues that affected housing in the past to explore whether these issues could occur again</td>
<td>• Consider what to do if and when an issue re-occurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update household budget</td>
<td>✓ Consider resources and services in the neighborhood/area that could be helpful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>✓ Consider what amount of short/medium-term rent and/or utility assistance is needed (based on household budget gap)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be clear what you/your program agrees to do to support the participant’s goals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Remember what do landlords want?

1. Pay the rent on time
2. Treat the building with respect
3. Treat other people with respect
4. Follow the lease and avoid issues

What tenancy supports can we offer?

- ✓ Budgeting
- ✓ Rent and utility assistance, as needed
- ✓ Address issues that present during home visits
- ✓ Look for teachable moments
- ✓ Address landlord concerns
- ✓ Review and talk through ways to work through conflict
- ✓ Review the lease and ensure a clear understanding and discuss ‘what to-do if…’
What *else* do Landlords want?

**Your support!**

- Someone to call – you or another staff person – if/when there are concerns
- Follow-through, reliability
- Tenant applicants who meet their criteria or they’re otherwise willing to consider
- Back-up plans and support when there are persistent concerns, lease issues
- Not to be treated as the enemy, remember it's a partnership

**And your appreciation!**
If you’re the only lifeline/support, your participant isn’t stably housed….

Increased supports are helpful to the client and to you!
Small Group Activity 4

Creating a Housing Stabilization & Retention Plan
When Things Get Stuck…

Does the person need additional time to de-stress?

Does the plan still reflect the person’s current priorities?

Is the plan too ambitious? Unclear? Not culturally appropriate?

Are there problems with your working relationship?

Are you offering too much (or too little) help?

*When things get off track, ask what’s wrong with the PLAN not what’s wrong with the PERSON!*
Indicators for *Increased* Support

- Serious health conditions
- Lack of supports and/or coping strategies
- Barriers to education and employment, food, childcare, healthcare
- Issues that may increase stress and decrease resilience
- Interpersonal conflicts
- Immigration status, language barriers, underinsurance
I can’t find my participant!

01 Check with other providers that the participant is connected to
02 Outreach to friends and family
03 Contact the Landlord if participant is housed and has signed an ROI
04 Send client a letter, email, or text message
05 Stop by if needed
Are we there yet?

Is it time for a planful transition and exit?

- Housing is safe, habitable
- Financial means to pay for housing
- Lease compliance
- Service connected, as needed/desired
- Future-ready, shock-resilient
INDIVIDUALIZED HOUSING STABILIZATION PLANS: when to create & update…

FIRST: *Initial plan* following intake…

THEN: *Updated plan* upon securing current or new housing…

FINALLY: *Updated plan* at program completion/exit.

**Stages of HFCM & PARTICIPANT HOUSING PLANS**

1. **Crisis Stabilization & Housing Search**
   - **Goals/actions** focus on emergency health and safety needs that must be immediately met AND, steps for housing search if relocating or literally homeless.

2. **Housing Stabilization**
   - **Goals/actions** focus on stabilizing in housing, addressing income, tenancy, childcare, service connections, etc. Updated regularly as goals are achieved or plans and circumstances change.

3. **Housing Retention**
   - **Goals/actions** focus on continuation toward longer-term goals; contingency plan for future housing emergencies.
What can we do to support **housing retention**?

- **BEFORE EXIT**... check-in, how is the participant feeling about this transition? Update the plan with the participant, talking through steps to prevent problems and prepare for future crises.

- Consider near and long-term strategies to pay housing/utility costs on-time.

- Consider ongoing service needs, connections, social supports, other resources.

- Help identify, understand, and change behaviors or conditions that led to past housing crises.

- Discuss/role play difficult situations, like setting limits with guests, proactively communicating when income changes, etc.
Small Group Activity 5

Case Review & Closure
Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

- Are we are doing our work well?
- What needs to be improved?
- Where are we going for input/reflection? Are we getting sufficient and regular input from participants?
- Are the outcomes equitable?
Think Outside the Program Box...

- Give people space to build relationships that will give them long-term support
  - Ask: Who can you turn to for advice before a situation becomes a crisis?
  - Think about people who can be mentors
- Create opportunities for people to get additional support around financial literacy/budget, how to manage their home, how to dispute their previous rental/credit history, etc.
- Peer supports/opportunities to connect with others with lived experiences

Continued learning:
- Check-in with current/previous participants on what supports they think would help them stay housed.
- Periodic listening sessions to invite input/reflection (make it a part of your culture)
- After Care Dinner: Offer a monthly dinner with a speaker to all graduates of your program. This can create natural networking/mentorship opportunities.
Caring for Ourselves

It’s essential we care for ourselves in this field in order to maintain our health. Suggestions for ways to care for yourself as you engage in challenging work:

- Focus on the Four Core Components of Resilience: Adequate Sleep, Good Nutrition, Regular Physical Activity, and Active Relaxation
- Take time away from work when possible, avoid working on vacation
- Get enough sleep or rest
- Stay hydrated
- Practice good hygiene
- Take time to be alone so you can think, meditate, and rest

- Wash up after your work shift as a symbolic way of “washing away” the day (it could be just washing your hands and face)
- Communicate with positive relationships in your life (friends and family)
- Create your own rituals that allow you to focus your thoughts on letting go of stress/honoring a memory of something positive
- Engage teammates in celebrating successes and mourning sorrows as a group
What are we talking about?

- Vicarious trauma
- Secondary traumatic stress
- Compassion fatigue
- Burnout
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Grief
Secondary trauma is experienced indirectly when you hear the stories and/or see the aftermath of a trauma experienced by another person.

People who work in helping professions and the loved ones of trauma survivors are at a greater risk of experiencing secondary trauma or secondary trauma stress.

“The cost to caring” is an occupational hazard for mental health professionals due to repeated exposure to details of their clients’ traumas. It is a risk for everyone who is exposed to the graphic details of trauma experienced by others.
Additional Resources
Additional Trauma Informed Care Resources

- Vicarious Trauma Resources
- OVC TTAC Vicarious Trauma
- Self Care Wheel
- Professional Quality of Life Tools
- A Guide to Understanding and Coping with Compassion Fatigue
- The Venn Diagram Tool: Identifying Your Risk Factors for Work-Related Stress
- Vicarious Trauma Toolkit: A Blueprint for a vicarious trauma-informed organization
- Resources on Vicarious Trauma: Self Care and Strategies by Organizations to Support Wellness

Books:
- The Compassion Fatigue Workbook by Francois Mathieu
- Trauma Stewardship: An everyday guide to caring for self while caring for others by Laura Van Dernoot Lipsky and Connie Burk
Additional TIC Resources

- Trauma-Informed: The Trauma toolkit
- Facing the Facts: Trauma-Informed Practices in Homeless Intervention Services
- Trauma-Informed Care Implementation Resource Center
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- SAMHSA’s Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach
- Trauma-Informed Design: How the Physical Environment Supports Recovery from Homelessness
- The Increasing Need for Trauma-Informed Care Shelters
- Delivering Trauma-Informed Services
Additional TIC, Stress & Harm Reduction Resources


www.harmreduction.org