Local Response System to Prevent and Address Homelessness for Survivors of Domestic Violence

DV COUNCIL PRESENTATION
OCTOBER 12, 2017

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Learning Objectives

Desired Outcome: Understand the current trends and advancements in the local response to preventing and addressing homelessness for survivors of DV

Agenda:
- Role of housing and stabilization in establishing safety and accountability
- Past and new practices in the homeless system
- Parallels between homeless system and DV Shelter-based services
- Current spectrum of services available to survivors of DV
- Other potential models being explored: DV Housing First
- Understand each partner’s role in system response.
DV and Homelessness


Approximately 50% of all women who are homeless report that domestic violence was the immediate cause of their homelessness. “Pressing Issues Facing Families Who Are Homeless.” The National Center on Family Homelessness (2013).


According to the San Mateo County Homeless Survey (2015), 28% of respondents indicated they had been a victim of domestic violence – an increase from 16% in 2013.

Past Practices (pre-2017)
Homeless System Response
Past Practices (pre-2017)
Homeless System and DV System Response

New Homeless System Response

Old System
- Emergency Shelter
- Transitional Housing
- Housing Plan
- Permanent Housing

New System – Track 1
- Homelessness Prevention/Shelter Diversion
- Alternate Housing/Community Resources
- Permanent Housing

New System – Track 2
- Homelessness Prevention/Shelter Diversion
- Interim Housing/Emergency Shelter
- Permanent Housing
New Homeless System Response

- Housing Service Need
- Homelessness Prevention/Shelter Diversion
- Interim Housing/Emergency Shelters
- Permanent Housing
- Community Resources

- Identify options to prevent households from entering shelter/homeless system
- HUD alignment to Housing First and Permanent Housing
- Housing First approach to lower barriers to entry
- Provide short term shelter for those who do not have any other options
- Develop housing focused case plan while in interim housing

New Homeless System Response (with DV)

- Safety Assessment and Screening, Diversion to Safety
- Safe House/Shelters

- Housing Service Need
- Homelessness Prevention/Shelter Diversion
- Interim Housing/Emergency Shelters
- Permanent Housing
- Community Resources

- Coordinated Entry

- Prioritize
CORA’s Current Residential Options

In current model, survivors can access DV specific housing options at any point based on their need.

CORA also offers non-residential services including counseling, community advocacy, children’s activities, and legal services.

Hotline & Emergency Response: Needs/safety assessment, diversion & referral

- Hotels
- Safe Houses
- Transitional Housing
- Rental Assistance

Safety

Stability

We have been asking ourselves...

❖ If housing stability is a key to safety, how do we keep people housed safely? Can they be safe in their home?
  ◦ What if the aggressor had to move and the victim/kids could stay in the home?
  ◦ Would they be safe in their home if there was funding to change the locks?
  ◦ If the housing is safe, could we help them to continue to pay rent so they don’t have to move? Could we pay the rent long enough for the assets to be divided in court?
  ◦ Would repairing their car help them keep their job - and home? Easier access to child care?
  ◦ Could supportive service go to them instead of them coming to us?
We have been asking ourselves...

- If there were adequate stability options available, would it change the demand for safe house?
  - Could we reserve the safe house for those with the highest safety risks (ex: stalking)?
  - What is the right number of shelter beds to meet this need?
  - Could we shorten stay and then move a client to permanent housing as soon as the risk is resolved?
- What is realistic in this housing market?

Housing is Foundational for DV Survivors

Housing is key to safety for survivors; it provides protection against continued abuse and is linked to a host of positive health outcomes in survivors and children.
What’s Happening Nationally?

- Changing HUD requirements reflect increased awareness of the intersection
- Promising models/Current research and evaluation
- DV and Homeless systems learning effective practices from one another

DV Housing First

- Housing is a right
- Housing FIRST, not Housing READY
- No prerequisites; assessment done to identify and help mitigate potential barriers
- Tailored, voluntary services provided to retain housing
Survivor Housing Options

Prevention (Diversion)—Survivor may choose to stay in the home or may leave temporarily if safety is a concern

Bridge housing (shelter/transitional)
Rapid re-housing
Subsidized housing with services available
Permanent supportive housing

DV Housing First (WSCADV)
Survivor-Driven Mobile Advocacy

- Working flexibly and in the community with survivors; survivors lead the process
- Historically what DV advocates did - before owning buildings
- Broadly used in culturally-specific communities
- Allows for highly individualized/low-barrier services that consider culture and are trauma-informed

Flexible Financial Assistance

- Unrestricted funds used to support survivors to become/stay stably housed
- May be applied to housing costs, employment-related expenses, survivor safety, and other critical needs.
- Amount of assistance determined in partnership with survivor.
- Additional assistance may be provided based on changing needs of survivor.
Community Engagement

Working in and engaging with the community to build connections to support survivors' safety, independence and housing stability.

- Develop strong relationships with housing authorities and landlords
- Cultivate relationships with community members, businesses, and service providers
- Educate community members about domestic violence and increase awareness of survivor needs

Discussion

- Questions?
- Comments/Concerns?
- Next steps?