Toolkit for Ending Long-Term Homelessness

CSH's *Toolkit for Ending Long-Term Homelessness* highlights promising practices for ending long-term homelessness. In addition to key lessons learned by supportive housing projects and programs across the country, the *Toolkit for Ending Long-Term Homelessness* includes profiles of both individual supportive housing projects and systems-wide strategies, photo tours of supportive housing projects profiled, sample documents from supportive housing services and property management teams, and a listing of key additional resources. This Toolkit highlights some of the most promising practices for ending long-term homelessness today.

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I. Project Profiles by Topic

This listing of topics is a great place to start if you are looking for targeted information about serving the long-term homeless. All of the projects we profiled highlight one or two promising practices. It is these areas of work that are listed below. A range of approaches is detailed in the profiles below, including different approaches to addressing the same area of work or challenge (e.g., Services and Property Management Integration). Profiles that only briefly address these topics are not noted here.

A. Community acceptance
- Outreach Apartments
- Cedar Hill

B. Design
- Anishinabe Wakiagun
- Design standards

C. Employment
- Community Engagement Program
- Deborah's Place

D. Eviction prevention
- Deborah's Place

E. Family supportive housing
- Canon Barcus

F. Local Financing Efforts
- San Francisco

G. Multiple entries to services
- Lamp Community

H. New focus on the long-term homeless
- Jericho Project

I. Rural housing
- Kentucky Housing Corporation
- Outreach Apartments

J. Scattered-site projects
- Community Engagement Program

K. Services and property management integration
- Cedar Hill
- Lamp Community

L. Single-site projects
- Anishinabe Wakiagun
- Canon Barcus
- Cedar Hill
- Lamp Lodge
- Outreach Center Apartments

M. Systems-wide strategies
- Chicago
- New York

II. Photo Tours

We've assembled photo tours of eight different supportive housing projects from across the country to give you a more direct experience of many of the project profiled in this Toolkit. Some of the projects are small and some of them are very large, some are rural and some are in the most densely populated parts of the US. They all provide permanent housing with supportive services to people who were previously homeless for the long term. For profiles of these projects, see Profiles by Topic.

- Anishinabe Wakiagun, located in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is home to 40 homeless chronic inebriates, many of whom are American Indian. Anishinabe Wakiagun pays particular attention to matching physical design of the building with its population.
- Canon Barcus, located in San Francisco, California, is a 48-unit permanent supportive housing apartment building for homeless, very low-income families living with special needs. Canon Barcus apartments are virtually indistinguishable from surrounding market rate buildings.
- Cedar Hill, located in New Haven, Connecticut, has 25 efficiency apartments for formerly homeless and dually diagnosed adults.
- The Community Engagement Program, located in Portland, Oregon, is serving the long-term homeless population by pairing permanent housing with customized employment services for up to 89 individuals. Tenants live in private market units throughout the city.
- Deborah's Place, a program serving women in Chicago, Illinois, offers a continuum of services including permanent supportive housing. Two Deborah's Place buildings as well as their tenant education program are included in this photo tour.
- Jericho Project, is a nonprofit organization that owns, operates, and provides services for supportive housing in New York City. Loring Place Residence in the Bronx is home to 52 men and women.
- Lamp Lodge is a 48-unit permanent supportive housing project for homeless single adults with severe mental illness. The project, built in 1991, is located in downtown Los Angeles and was the first building in the neighborhood with private kitchens and baths.
- Outreach Center Apartments in Cloquet, Minnesota are five apartments with supportive services built above a consumer-run drop-in center for individuals with mental health issues.

III. Sample Documents

The sample documents included here are directly from the programs and projects profiled. While these are samples documents, not necessarily CSH-endorsed models, there are many items of value. Take a look, learn, modify, and start producing your own documents. As with any legal document, you are advised to consult an attorney before adopting documents such as leases or operating policies.

A. Cedar Hill
- Operating policies and procedures
- Tenant selection plan
- Lease
- House rules

B. Community Engagement Program
- Criteria for residency
- Housing plan form
- Flow chart of tenant application process
- Addendum to lease
- Management plan
- Fresh Start MOA with City of Portland

C. Deborah's Place
- CSH's involvement in Rebecca Johnson Apartments
- Job descriptions:
  a. Learning center assistant
  b. Homeless prevention specialist (case manager)
- Humanities course brochure
- Lease
- Social services intake interview form
- Tenant goal sheet
- Move out follow-up form
- Tenant needs assessment form
- Eviction request form

D. Jericho Project
- Job descriptions
  a. Site director
  b. Assistant site director
  c. Case manager
  d. Aftercare and family reunification case manager
  e. Vocational counselor
- Summary of services plan
- Intake questionnaire
- House rules
- Tenant service plan form

E. Lamp Lodge
- Lease and house rules

F. Outreach Center Apartments
- Newspaper column explaining the project
- Brochure explaining the project to neighbors
- Application form
- Lease
- Crisis prevention plan
- Functional assessment form

- Treatment plan form
- Pet policy
- Information release form

G. Chicago Collaborative Initiative
- Application timeline
- Descriptive chart of participating agencies

IV. Resource List

A. Resources

CSH has a wealth of resources available on our website. Visit csh.org and search our resource library. Some publications you might consider include the following.

- Closer to Home Initiative Closer to Home Initiative is a program developed by CSH and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to foster new approaches to helping homeless people with multiple problems and disabilities. The now-complete research focuses on six supportive housing and shelter programs that aim to engage and house people whose combinations of disabilities, long histories of homelessness, and repeated use of emergency services have marked them as "difficult to serve." The study was designed to describe the program models, document their implementation and development over time, and assess outcomes achieved by an initial cohort of individuals. Key findings include: substance use does not predict housing retention when tenants are housed in settings committed to keeping them housed; barriers in the admission process to supportive housing impede long-term shelter stayers from accessing the housing; and 83% of long-term homeless people placed in supportive housing remain in that housing after one year.
- Keeping the Door Open to People with Drug Problems
  This three-part guide offers employment program managers and staff encouragement, strategies and tips for serving long-term homeless people with drug problems.
- Supportive Housing and Its Impact on the Public Health Crisis of Homelessness
  This publication summarizes the results of research done between 1996 and 2000 about more than 250 formerly long-term homeless people living at the Canon Kip Community House and the Lyric Hotel in San Francisco. It examines pre-occupancy and post-occupancy use of emergency rooms and inpatient care and demonstrates the cost savings of supportive housing for the long-term homeless.
- Financing Supportive Housing Guide

B. Other Resources

- NAEH's "Ten Essentials Toolkit"
  This toolkit highlights The National Alliance to End Homelessness's ten essential steps for ending homelessness. The projects profiled focus on state, local, and neighborhood-based solutions, so this is a good resource no matter what level you are working at to end homelessness. Governments and coordinating bodies should focus on the sections for planning, data collection, systems prevention, shortening homelessness. Local providers should look at the sections on emergency prevention, outreach, rapid re-housing, service

provision, permanent housing development, and income assistance. Of special note are the DAH program under "Making Systems Changes that Prevent Homelessness" and the projects under "Putting Together Treatment and Other Services for Homeless People." Each of these ten areas includes an explanation, examples of organizations that are doing good work in the area, and additional resources.
http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/library (Other NAEH resources, such as their weekly newsletter, are also available at this link).

- HUD's "Strategies for Reducing Chronic Street Homelessness"
  This comprehensive document, published January 2004, is based on extensive research in seven cities across the country. The document takes a city-wide, rather than an individual provider, approach, and thus is especially valuable to governments and coordinating bodies. By studying the work in the seven cities, the authors identify key elements of success in reducing chronic street homelessness. The first third of the book is a report on the findings, with chapters including "Elements of Success," "New Strategies for Programs and Services," "Assembling Resources and Supports," "Documenting Progress," "How Communities Pay for Their New Approaches," and "Policy, Practice, and Research Implications." The last two-thirds of the book profiles the programs and philosophies of each of the seven cities in-depth. We recommend reading the Executive Summary and Chapter 1 in order to determine which portions of the book might be helpful.
  http://www.huduser.org/Publications/PDF/ChronicStrtHomeless.pdf

- Community Model replication manual
  This manual is intended to assist service providers and policy makers who wish to incorporate the Community Model (outlined in the LAMP project profile) approach into programs for people who have been homeless for the long-term.
  http://www.communitymodella.org/replication_manual.html

- National Healthcare for the Homeless Council
  NHCHC is the definitive source for information about providing healthcare for homeless individuals, including those homeless for the long-term. Publications include a comprehensive manual of common health issues for homeless persons, a publication focusing on health care for homeless young adults, and "Casualties of Complexity," a document examining the difficulty homeless persons experience with Medicaid.
  http://www.nhchc.org/publications.htm

- National Resource Center on Homelessness and Mental Illness
  This website maintains listings of most major publications related the homelessness and mental illness. You can access these bibliographies with the "search database" or "bibliographies" buttons on the page. Some documents are available electronically and others are available for purchase. The site also includes information about upcoming trainings and a national organization referral listing. http://www.nrchmi.samhsa.gov/

- Assertive Community Treatment Toolkit
  This toolkit assists providers in the implementation of Assertive Community Treatment programs with definitions, links to valuable resources, and academic research on the topic.
  http://www.mentalhealthpractices.org/act.html

- Assertive Community Treatment Technical Assistance Center
  The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill maintains the Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Technical Assistance center in order to help make high-quality ACT teams available

to all who need them and to educate others about the effectiveness of this model.
http://www.nami.org/Template.cfm?Section=ACT-TA_Center

- Harm Reduction Coalition
  This center for harm reduction resources includes an introduction to the principles behind harm reduction, information about training and educational materials, and a quarterly newsletter.
  http://www.harmreduction.org

- Enhancing Motivation for Change in Substance Abuse Treatment (SAMHSA Tip Series Number 35)
  This booklet focuses on how substance use treatment staff can influence positive change in the lives of clients by respecting and building on the client's autonomy and, at the same time, making staff a partner in the change process. Client motivation is seen as a dynamic process which can be purposeful, intentional, and positive--directed toward the best interests of the self. (Free hard copies of Tip #35 can also be obtained by calling 800.729.6686.)
  http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/bv.fcgi?rid=hstat5.chapter.61302

- Over the Influence: The Harm Reduction Guide for Managing Drugs and Alcohol.
  This recent book by Patt Denning, Jeannie Little, and Adina Glickman is written for the person using drugs and alcohol, but can be extremely useful in understanding theories of harm reduction and addiction. The book offers strategies for avoiding or reducing harm with continued use alcohol and drugs as well as advice on quitting. The book also includes a thorough bibliography. This resource is available from the bookstore of your choice.

- Rural Homelessness and Health Care
  This document published by the National Healthcare for the Homeless Council begins with a good introduction to rural homelessness, including how rural homelessness is different than urban homelessness. The document then goes on to examine the health care problems and access challenges facing the rural homeless.
  http://www.nhchc.org/Publications/RuralHomeless.pdf

- Resources for Mental Health Services in Rural Settings
  Rural Mental Health Grand Rounds Webcasts address all types of issues facing medical professionals dealing with mental health issues in rural settings. Some webcasts deal specifically with issues related to mental health and homelessness. Past and potential future topics include: Assessment and Treatment of Mental Health Issues in the Primary Care Setting; Screening for Depression and Suicide; Youth Violence Prevention and Intervention; The Shift to Evidence Based Practice: What Rural Providers Need to Know; and Assertive Community Treatment: Making ACT Work in Rural Places.
  http://www.wiche.edu/mentalhealth/Grand_Rounds

- Housing Assistance Council
  The nonprofit Housing Assistance Council has been helping local organizations build affordable homes in rural America since 1971. Their website contains information about events, obtaining technical assistance, training opportunities, and financing options.
  http://www.ruralhome.org

- For a wide selection of city and state Ten Year Plans to End Homelessness, visit the National Alliance to End Homelessness website at
  http://www.endhomelessness.org/section/library/?type=32

- NPR's Housing series
  http://www.npr.org/news/specials/housingfirst/
- San Francisco Chronicle's Homeless Series
  http://www.sfgate.com/homeless/
- SF Weekly's Homeless article
  http://www.sfweekly.com/issues/2004-06-16/feature.html/1/index.html
- Christian Science Monitor's Pathways to Housing article
  http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0501/p11s02-lihc.html
- Newshour Pathways to Housing video segment
  http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/health/july-dec02/housing_12-30.html
- HHS's Ending Chronic Homelessness report
  http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/homelessness/strategies03/index.htm
- Pathways to Housing
  http://www.pathwaystohousing.org/

V.   Definitions and Terminology

- Long-Term Homelessness**:** This term includes all people who have been homeless for long periods of time, as evidenced by repeated (three or more times) or extended (a year or more) stays in the streets, emergency shelters, or other temporary settings, sometimes cycling between homelessness and hospitals, jails, or prisons. This definition intentionally includes a larger group of people than the federal government's definition, such as families and youth. The federal government (and as a result, many states, cities, and service providers) frequently uses the term "chronically homeless," defined as "an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years" (Notice of Funding Availability for the Collaborative Initiative to Help End Chronic Homelessness/Federal Register, Vol. 68, No. 17/Monday, January 27, 2003, 4019). This definition excludes homeless families and partnered homeless people as well as those who do not have a documented disability. We believe that anyone who has been homeless for the long-term may be well served by the services and housing offered by permanent supportive housing providers.
- Permanent Housing**:** In the world of supportive housing, the term "permanent" typically refers to affordable rental housing in which the tenants have the legal right to remain in the unit as long as they wish, as defined by the terms of a renewable lease agreement. Tenants enjoy all of the rights and responsibilities of typical rental housing, so long as they abide by the (reasonable) conditions of their lease.
- Voluntary Services**:** The term "supportive" in supportive housing refers to voluntary, flexible services designed primarily to help tenants maintain housing. Voluntary services are those that are available to but not demanded of tenants, such as service coordination/case management, physical and mental health, substance use management and recovery support, job training, literacy and education, youth and children's programs, and money management.

- Housing First: The goal of "housing first" is to immediately house people who are homeless. Housing comes first no matter what is going on in one's life, and the housing is flexible and independent so that people get housed easily and stay housed. Housing first can be contrasted with a continuum of housing "readiness," which typically subordinates access to permanent housing to other requirements. While not every community has what it needs to deliver housing first, such as an adequate housing stock, every community has what it takes to move toward this approach.
- Low-demand Housing: Housing provided in a low-demand environment emphasizes ease of entry and ongoing access to services with minimal requirements. The focus is on helping tenants retain their housing, rather than layering the housing within various program participation requirements. The application and admission processes, admission criteria, and conditions of tenancy are limited in their demands of tenants and potential tenants. This term is usually closely related to "voluntary services" and "harm reduction."
- Tenant: Whenever possible, this Toolkit uses the term "tenant" (rather than consumer, resident, client, or participant) to refer to the people who live in supportive housing projects. This emphasizes the importance of permanent housing in ending homelessness and recognizes that in many programs, tenants may or may not also be voluntary customers of support services provided. This is not meant to minimize the great amount of time and energy some programs spend with people before they are actually tenants. It is, however, intended to underscore that tenants of supportive housing should have the same rights and responsibilities of tenants of other lease-based, permanent housing.
- Harm Reduction: Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies that reduce the negative consequences associated with drug use, including safer use, managed use, and non-punitive abstinence. These strategies meet drug users "where they're at," addressing conditions and motivations of drug use along with the use itself. Harm reduction acknowledges an individual's ability to take responsibility for their own behavior. This approach fosters an environment where individuals can openly discuss substance use without fear of judgment or reprisal, and does not condone or condemn drug use. Staff working in a harm reduction setting work in partnership with tenants, and are expected to respond directly to unacceptable behaviors, whether or not the behaviors are related to substance use. The harm reduction model has also been successfully broadened to reducing harms related to health and wellness as well as many other issues.
- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT): ACT is a service-delivery model that provides comprehensive, locally based treatment to people with serious and persistent mental illnesses. Unlike other community-based programs, ACT is not a linkage or brokerage case-management program that connects individuals to mental health, housing, or rehabilitation agencies or services. Rather, it provides highly individualized services directly to consumers. ACT recipients receive the multidisciplinary, round-the-clock staffing of a psychiatric unit, but within the comfort of their own home and community. For homeless clients, this can mean providing services on the streets or in shelters. To have the competencies and skills to meet a client's multiple treatment, rehabilitation, and support needs, ACT team members are trained in the areas of psychiatry, social work, nursing, substance use, and vocational rehabilitation. (This definition is excerpted from the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, www.nami.org).