



Health Care for the Homeless, Inc. of Maryland Baltimore, MD

Overview

Baltimore's Healthcare for the Homeless, Inc. (HCH), established in 1985, was one of nineteen demonstration programs founded under a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to examine a new model of providing health care and support services to individuals experiencing homelessness. Now part of the Health Center program administered by HRSA, HCH is a federally qualified health center (FQHC) that served nearly 12,000 homeless individuals in Maryland in 2010. HCH strives to end homelessness by providing health-related services, education, and advocacy, envisioning a future where all Maryland citizens can find access to a decent wage, health care services, and reasonably priced housing.¹ As a member organization of the Joint Commission, HCH has made every effort to provide top quality care to its' patients, while also partnering with organizations such as the United Way, the State of Maryland, and the City of Baltimore. Healthcare for the Homeless Inc. has amassed a multitude of projects, including one such program involving a partnership with HUD to provide housing, along with a care program for those homeless individuals diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.² In 2005, HCH developed a scattered-site **Housing First Model** and implemented a program that would accommodate 30 people.³ Utilizing a model of care that vigorously attempts to provide a variety of needed services (i.e., case management, mental health, addictions, and health care) allowed this program to expand to include an additional 50 people between 2007-2011.

Services

Health Care for the Homeless, Inc. provides health-related services, education, and advocacy to reduce the incidence and burdens of homelessness in Maryland. In 2011, HCH delivered pediatric, adult, and geriatric medical care, mental health services, case management, addiction treatment, dental care, prison reentry services, housing, and access to employment to nearly 12,000 Marylanders at clinic sites in Baltimore City, Frederick, and Montgomery, Harford, and Baltimore Counties.

Understanding the vulnerable nature of homeless individuals, HCH also utilizes a Convalescent Care Program (also known as Medical Respite Care for Homeless Persons), providing health care services to 25 individuals discharged from area hospitals who are not well enough to remain hospitalized, but who still require ongoing care. These services are now provided at a nearby emergency shelter. Knowing the dangers of homelessness, Health Care for the Homeless goes "on the street to get people off the street" using Community Health Outreach Teams, which are interdisciplinary teams comprised of social workers, counselors, mental health advisors, as well as HIV specialists. The organization works to inform homeless individuals of the various programs they staff, including medical, health, addiction and social services that help individuals stay off of the street. In addition, HCH's new facility at 421 Fallsway has allowed the organization to provide much-needed expansions to programs to better serve the homeless community, including: a pediatric clinic, a full-service dental clinic, optometry, and an onsite pharmacy. HCH utilizes a plethora of various types of clinical and non-clinical staff to administer their range of care, including nurses and nurse practitioners, physicians, dentists, oral hygienists, social workers, and case managers.

¹Health Care for The Homeless Inc. (2010). *History and Mission*. Retrieved November 15, 2011, from <http://www.hchmd.org/history.shtml>

² Housing and Urban Development. (2009, September 30). *Coordination within Continuum of Care Homelessness Assistance*. Retrieved November 15, 2011, from Healthcare for the Homeless, Inc.: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/comm_planning/aidshousing/showcase/hch

³ Health Care for the Homeless, Inc. (2010). *"Housing First" at HCH*. Retrieved November 15, 2011, from <http://www.hchmd.org/housingfirst.shtml>

Outcomes

- HCH Housing First Program has facilitated an 85% housing retention rate among its participants since 2005.
- When HCH's Housing First Program began in 2005, it permanently housed 30 individuals. That number reached 80 individuals in 2011.
- The aforementioned partnership with HUD to help HIV Patients has yielded positive results for 56 total clients in 2010-2011; 90% maintaining permanent or transitional housing.

Major Funding Sources

- HRSA Health Center Grant
- Ryan White CARE Act Grant
- Maryland Medical Assistance Program (Medicaid)
- Medicare
- State of Maryland and the City of Baltimore
- Baltimore Substance Abuse Systems
- HUD HOPWA Supportive Housing Grant
- HHS Counseling Testing and Referral Grant

Engaged Partners

- United Way of Maryland
- Baltimore Homeless Services
- University of Maryland Dental School
- Baltimore City's Civic Leadership Council
- BlueCross BlueShield

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