

Frequently Asked Questions

■ **How do I know if my health center needs a partnership with the housing sector?**

The United States is amidst a serious and ongoing housing affordability crisis with no end in sight. Housing is consistently recognized as the leading social driver of health and need among patients. To effectively meet patient SDOH needs, health center and housing sector partnerships are essential to tap into needed resources such as housing subsidies and support.

■ **My leadership isn't convinced that such a partnership is necessary, how can I convince them?**

Addressing Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) is one of the key priorities for health center program grantees under the Bureau of Primary Care. As of 2022, 95% of health centers are now collecting patient SDOH data and the scale of housing need has come into focus. Health Centers cannot possibly address patient and community housing needs single-handedly and need new partnerships to fill this need.

■ **My leadership understands that housing is a need among our patients, but we do not have the capacity to manage a housing partnership, how should we proceed?**

Health and Housing partnerships can come in many forms. Examine your current efforts to understand patient social risk needs.

Does your health center have a firm understanding of who needs housing support among your patients? Once the housing needs are firmly understood, map out potential partners to approach based on the resources you need. Refer to the *Housing Quick Guide* in the Toolkit to learn more about the different housing models and programs available. The best place to start for partners is usually the Continuum of Care (CoC) and Public Housing Authority (PHA).

■ **We have tried to form housing partnerships in the past, but our potential partners are overloaded and waiting lists are long. How should we approach this?**

Successful partnerships rely on both parties understanding what they bring to the table as well as individual needs. Health Centers have services to offer a partnership that can benefit the community at large by increasing access to care for highly vulnerable populations such as individuals experiencing homelessness. One approach is partnering with Continuum of Care (CoC) street outreach teams and providing mobile health services. This will create an incentive for partnership while strengthening the overall homeless response system. Such initial partnerships can lead to longer-term opportunities for deeper partnership.

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