



Housing Toolkit: Helping People Obtain and Maintain Housing

Focus: Shared Housing Model



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Housing Toolkit

Helping people obtain and maintain housing.

Focus: Shared Housing Model



One Size Doesn't Fit All

- Medical model
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Rapid Rehousing
- Non-subsidized Affordable Housing
 - Affordable rental
 - **Shared Housing**
 - Rooming Houses, Sober Houses, Faith-based Housing
 - Other

Obtaining Housing

- Meet with person served to narrow housing search for compatibility:
 - Will person live alone or with someone
 - Where is their support system located (medical, SA, church, family...)
 - Criminal background (is person on SOR?) - If yes, what do you have to consider?
 - Income
 - Help person get income from work or benefits or both
 - Subsidies (limitations, FMR), one time assistance, etc.
 - Neighborhood amenities (busline, laundry, groceries, etc.)

Shared Housing Model

Screening:

- Income, preferences, backgrounds (violent offenders are not matched), drug use (active users are not matched).

Preparation:

- Focus groups that cover: responsibilities, living together, negotiating bills (cable, phone, etc.), details about how people live (housekeeping habits, cooking, etc.).

Matches:

- Match people who seem compatible and meet with them.

Shared Housing Model - Why?

- Rental subsidies are limited and population specific.
- People do not always want to live alone.
- Rents are not affordable with limited income.
- Multi-bedroom units are not in as high demand as one-bedroom units.
- There is a “normalization” aspect to the model.
- Leases are only 6 months.

Implementation

- Hired person to oversee program.
- Started “Housing Readiness” Groups in our Day Program (homeless day services)
- The group was required each day. This generated first set of referrals to establish a cohort.
- People were screened.
- Staff person negotiated leases with landlords
- Case management services followed placed persons.
- Ongoing referrals come from day program, outreach, word of mouth and CAN.

Shared Housing

Targeted Housing Search:

- Seek 3 to 4 bedroom apartments.
- Negotiate all utilities included, one lease per tenant, 6 month duration leases.
- Rents are prorated by the size of the bedroom.
- Case management follows up with tenants about every 2 to 3 weeks.

Benefits:

- Non-subsidized, affordable housing. People do not experience the same isolation. They have supports. They eat better. If something goes wrong, someone reports.
- Landlords benefit (a vacancy in one room is 1/3 less rent vs 100% less rent, etc.)

Tips

- Housing search is a collaborative process (you, colleagues, person served, other providers, etc.).
- Know your strengths (who is best on phone, who is a good negotiator, who uses technology best, etc.).
- Protect private information.
- Be honest, however, DON'T TELL TOO MUCH.
- Make it safe for the person you serve to be honest with you.
- Build positive relationships with landlords – KEEP THEM.
- Other.

Maintaining Housing

- All housing options (with the exception of the medical model) have one common goal - lease compliance/housing stability.
 - Go over the lease and provisions with person.
 - Money management: Go over bills/obligations – financial literacy training.
 - Tenant handbook (what it means to be a responsible tenant).
 - Service plan that includes objectives that relate to lease compliance (pay rent on time, keep noise down, maintain apartment, report problems, don't let people live with you, etc.).
 - Home visits.
 - Work with navigator/case manager to submit required information.

Resources & Relationships

- Greater New Haven Regional Supportive Housing Program Blog: <http://nhregionalsupportivehousing.blogspot.com/>
- Liberty Job Seekers Blog: <http://libertycsjobs.blogspot.com/>
- craigslist.org, Google.com, apartment search websites
- Friends, family, co-workers, people in line at store, etc.
- Driving around looking for rent signs
- Other organizations
- People you have already placed in housing

Thank You