

# Public Housing Agency Partnerships - a local preference model

Asheville Housing Authority

NCCEH CONFERENCE – MAY 2017

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# Malcolm Gladwell, *Million Dollar Murray*

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In the early 1990s, [data indicated] that New York City had a quarter of a million people who were homeless at some point in the previous half-decade – which was a surprisingly high number. But only about twenty-five hundred were *chronically* homeless.

It turns out, furthermore, that this group costs the health-care and social-services systems far more than anyone had ever anticipated. ... [I]n New York at least \$62 million was being spent annually to shelter just those twenty-five hundred hard-core homeless.



# HUD Chronic Homeless Definition

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A homeless individual with a disability who lives in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter, and has been homeless for at least 12 months or on at least 4 separate occasions in the last 3 years [totaling 12 months]...

A family with a head of household who meets all of the criteria above...

24 CFR 91.5



# NAEH - Housing First

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Housing First is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing people experiencing homelessness with permanent housing as quickly as possible – and then providing voluntary supportive services as needed. This approach prioritizes client choice in both housing selection and in service participation.



# Background in Asheville

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Homeward Bound of WNC— closed and sold its emergency shelters; converted all staff to day center and supportive services for chronic homeless in permanent housing.

Asheville Housing renovated the 19-unit Woodfin Apartments for the chronically homeless, with supportive services provided by Homeward Bound.

Late 2009 - What next?



# Keys to Expansion

## - Housing & Supportive Services

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**Housing:** With approximately 35 public housing units and 25 vouchers turning over every month, AHA adopted a local preference for chronic homeless people receiving ongoing case management support.

**Supportive Services:** Supported by Homeward Bound case managers for at least one year (now reduced to six months), with close collaboration to demonstrate that the model works

# Overall Results (all programs)

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Asheville Housing Authority – 3,302 Vouchers (including project-based); since 2007:

- Homeless Individuals/Families Housed: 1,097
- Terminated for Fault (Evicted): 187
- Moved Voluntarily: 294
- Currently Residing: 616
- Success Rate: 83%



# Successes

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Program was established without the need for a major new housing development grant – from existing resources.

Police and community are seeing improvements on the streets.

HACA has a resource to call when these residents have a problem.

We are ending chronic homelessness – one person at a time.





# Challenges

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Community and resident education.

Some new residents have not made the adjustment – they were given multiple chances, but ultimately terminated.

Requires cross-silo collaboration locally and, if similar models are to be developed, at HUD.

Securing the resources for supportive services to take this PSH model to the next level.

# Tips for Service Providers

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Explain to the PHA that this is not the old federal homeless preference.

Your agency will provide long term on-site support for the new residents – whatever it takes.

Some screening flexibility is required by the PHA with criminal records, but your agency will be there to help.

Be ready to help move clients out if they can't stop disturbing their neighbors.



# Tips for PHAs

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(Remember, HUD wants you to do this.)

Explain the PHA admissions process and the need for basic quiet enjoyment.

Check the service provider's track record, or start small.

Require verification by the service provider of its long term commitment before approving the applicant's preference.

Be ready to meet early and often to iron out problems; provide on-site space for case managers if you can.



# One More Thing – Small PHAs

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Brevard Housing Authority – 163 total units; last four years:

- Homeless Individuals/Families Housed: 77
- Terminated for Fault (Evicted): 13
- Moved Voluntarily: 8
- Currently Residing: 56
- Success Rate: 83%



# Contact Info

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