

DIVERSION IN PRACTICE



Homeward and the Greater Richmond CoC

- City of Richmond, Town of Ashland, and Counties of Chesterfield, Charles City, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, and Powhatan
- Homeward is a nonprofit organization and the CoC lead organization (HMIS, PIT Count, committee staff, and collaborative applicant)
- 2017 Winter PIT Count: 662 Individuals
- Rural and Urban Community



Using Data to Change

- 2015 Focus Strategies Report
- >50% of shelter users from housed situations
- Perfect fit for Diversion; low barrier, still in housing



A Coordinated Entry Approach

- Dual Pilot: Diversion Intentional Services and Phone Access
- Phone Line as part of Coordinated Entry system to allow access across large CoC without having to access physical location
- Diversion conversation empowers clients to resolve housing crises before falling into homelessness
- Saves clients trauma and cost of losing housing. Saves more intensive resources and shelter beds for more vulnerable clients.



The Shelter Diversion Line

- Provides Diversion services/assistance M-F, 9-5 to individuals and families that are three days or less to losing housing
- Housing option and resource exploration, family and friend mediation, landlord mediation, and community resource navigation
- Referral for full intake and shelter access if Diversion is unsuccessful



Flexible Funds

- Used for indirect payments that will enable a successful diversion
- Gas cards, utility and rent arrears, one-time transportation to housing, relocation
- Allows for diversion plans to be more creative
- Always reality-tested



Outcomes

- Served 241 households in first 10 weeks
- During the first quarter of 2017, only 11% of households that were successfully diverted fell into homelessness (CE or Shelter)
- BUT! Even among those who were not diverted, only 20% accessed shelter or came to CE with a homeless prior living situation
- Diversion has a follow-on effect that promotes self-resolution



Tommy Joe Bednar
Diversion Coordinator, Homeward

tbednar@homewardva.org

804-343-2045 ext.15

