Fidelity to Housing First

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Pathways to Housing

National Alliance to End Homelessness 2014
The Pathways Housing First Model

• A program that provides immediate access to permanent housing and support services with a philosophy of participant choice. Clients are not required to participate in psychiatric treatment or attain a period of sobriety in order to obtain or keep permanent housing.

• Scatter-site housing, choice, no housing readiness, harm reduction...
HF Requires Change

• Change in view of those served
• Change in goals of the system
• Change in power relationships
• Change in focus and locus of care
• Change in treatment culture
• Change in funding patterns
Stages of Change

- Pre-contemplation
- Contemplation
- Preparation
- Action
- Maintenance
- Relapse
HUD CoC Applications: Housing First

Extent to which PSH programs within a CoC implement a Housing First approach

- Prioritization of chronic homelessness
- Housing offered without preconditions
- Rapid placement (and stabilization) in permanent housing
Why Fidelity?
Fidelity

• Assess the extent to which components of the program model are being implemented

  – Structural features: what does the housing look like? What services are provided?

  – Philosophy, values: participant choice? Harm reduction?
The case of Housing First...”It’s all about Housing & Choice”

Pathways Housing First Fidelity Scale Results: Program Spectrum

“Participants can choose the housing they want regardless of whether they are actively using.”

“Participants can choose to be clean and sober and they’ll get an apartment. Or they can choose to continue using and we’ll still give them housing in a room & board”
Why Fidelity?

• Housing First is not Housing Only
• Housing First is not “Housing is the first thing after they...”
• Choice is not laissez-faire
• Assertive engagement is not coercion
• Peer Specialists are not junior case managers

• Understand current practice & make improvements
• Maximize outcomes
Fidelity Development

Pathways Housing First Fidelity

- PSH Fidelity Scale
- Housing First Descriptions
- Surveying Early HF Implementers
- DACTS Fidelity Scale
- T-MACT Fidelity Scale
Pathways Housing First Fidelity

5 Domains:

1) Housing Choice & Structure
2) Separation of Housing & Treatment,
3) Service Philosophy
4) Service Array
5) Program Structure
Sample Items

- Rights of Tenancy, affordability, integration
- No housing readiness requirements
- No treatment contingencies: Can keep housing as long as participant follows a standard lease
- Extent of implementation of harm reduction
- Availability of services for assistance with psychiatric, substance abuse, employment/educational, and social integration needs
Fidelity: Multi-purpose

Program Development

Targeted Technical Assistance

Research
Multiple Uses of Fidelity

Fidelity: determine the degree to which the key components of the Housing First model are being implemented

• Program Development
  – How can we guide programs to begin implementing the model?

• Targeted Technical Assistance
  – What specific areas does a program need assistance with?

• Research
  – How are program components linked to outcomes?
Fidelity

• Influences on Multiple Levels
  • Agency implementing the program
  • Local Housing
  • Local Policy
  • Social and Cultural Context
  • Geography
  • Funding

• Needs of the Participants
Housing First Fidelity
• When does the program change the system?
• When does the system change the program?
Fidelity Site Visit

• **Before visit: collect basic info**
  – What types of housing do participants live in
  – How long did it take to get into housing
  – What percentage of participants have been discharged

• **Team meeting observation**

• **Individual interviews with staff**
  – All frontline providers; Each discipline
  – Team Leader
  – Program Director, Administrators

• **Focus group with program participants**

• **Chart review (random selection)**

• **Optional: home visits**
Housing First Fidelity: Tools

• Pathways Housing First Fidelity Scale (Stefancic et al., 2013, American Journal of Psychiatric Rehabilitation)

• Housing First Program Practices Self-Assessment (Gilmer et al., 2013, Psychiatric Services)

• Workbook: How to Start a Housing First Program

• Pathways Housing First Manual – Housing First: The Pathways Model to End Homelessness for People with Mental Illness and Addiction (Tsemberis; Hazelden)
Fidelity Self-Assessment Survey & Residential Outcomes for California Full Service Partnerships (FSP)

- 93 programs
- 6,584 participants
- Diagnosis – Schizophrenia 62%
- Housing Outcomes 1 year pre- and post-enrollment into housing & services
FSP Fidelity & Outcomes

• High fidelity programs: Better targeting - Enrolled consumers with much longer histories of homelessness (High = 101, Low = 46) and higher rates of substance abuse

• Days living independently in an apartment or SRO increased among high fidelity programs, but declined among low fidelity programs

UCSD: Gilmer et al., Psychiatric Services, 2014
At Home / Chez Soi: Fidelity & Outcomes

• 2,251 participants
• 5 cities
• Random assignment to Treatment as Usual or Housing First (High and Moderate Need)

• Higher fidelity was associated with participants’ higher social functioning, increased quality of life, and more time stably housed

• Overall fidelity was correlated with direct service time, indirect service time, and number of contacts with providers

Goering et al., under review
Housing First for Persons with Substance Use Problems
9 Scatter-site Housing Providers
358 Participants
Modified Fidelity Assessment

Participants in programs with greater Housing First fidelity along principles of client-centered services and harm reduction interventions/open communication:
• More likely to stay in housing
• Less likely to report using stimulants, opiates at 1-yr follow-up

CASAColumbia: Davidson et al., 2014, Psychiatric Services
Higher fidelity to Housing First is associated with more recovery-oriented practice and improved outcomes.
THANK YOU!

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