



WORKING WITH PEOPLE WITH HIV WHO ARE EXPERIENCING UNSTABLE HOUSING FAQs

Why This Topic?

Access to safe, stable, and affordable housing is a public health issue that directly impacts the health and wellbeing of people with HIV. As of 2020, 4.8 percent of Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) clients were experiencing unstable housing.¹

Since 2010, the RWHAP has significantly improved viral suppression among clients experiencing unstable housing; however, disparities in viral suppression persist. Today, 90.4 percent of RWHAP clients who have stable housing are virally suppressed compared to 76.8 percent of those with unstable housing.¹

When housing needs are addressed, people with HIV are better able to access and be retained in HIV medical care and achieve viral suppression.² Additional programs are needed and should address the intersection of housing and other social determinants to improve the overall wellbeing of clients.

What are Some Tips for Success?

Make marketing a priority. Disseminate information about housing services using outreach materials such as social media posts, flyers, pamphlets, presentations, and branded swag. Ensure that these materials are available at appropriate partner organizations to encourage client referrals.

Provide tangible reinforcements. Address common barriers to engagement in care by providing tangible reinforcements such as food, clothing, cellphones, and hygiene kits to eligible clients. The implementers of KC Life 360, a housing and employment intervention, utilized outside donations to provide free bikes to clients facing transportation barriers.

What are the Capacity Requirements for Working with People with HIV Experiencing Unstable Housing?

RWHAP-funded organizations are uniquely positioned to meet the needs of people with HIV experiencing unstable housing. Here are a few questions to consider:

- Does your organization offer housing services and, if not, are you able to partner with an organization that does?
- Are your services accessible to people experiencing unstable housing? Consider proximity to public transit, appointment times, cost of care, etc.
- What services can you offer to build trust with clients experiencing unstable housing (e.g., food and transit vouchers, toiletries, comfortable waiting area, linkage to supportive services)?
- Are you able to co-locate housing and medical case management services to facilitate seamless care coordination?
- Has your staff received the proper training to deliver culturally responsive, trauma-informed care to clients experiencing unstable housing? If not, are you willing and able to access such trainings?

Engage community experts. Engaging local service providers and people with lived experience is essential to providing clients with access to a full range of supportive services. Input from experts allows for tailored referrals and interagency collaboration. Identify and build relationships with local housing, health care, behavioral health, hospitals, landlords, and other support services.

Featured Intervention

Homeless Health Outreach Mobile Engagement (HHOME) is a robust mobile, team-based, and systems-level intervention designed to link, engage, and deliver care to people with HIV who have experienced chronic housing instability, mental illness, and substance use. HHOME leverages a multi-disciplinary team to conduct mobile outreach, case management, assessment, and care planning. As clients progress through their individual-level HHOME care plan and develop increased autonomy, they are supported to “step down” to lower-intensity levels of the program.

Innovations

A key component of the HHOME model is the peer navigator. An effective HHOME peer navigator is an individual who is not only familiar with and respectful of members of the local community but understands how to navigate the community. This allows the peer navigator to foster close one-on-one relationships with HHOME clients.

Accomplishments (among 106 clients)

- 79.3 percent achieved viral suppression at least once
- 83.6 percent were retained in care
- 83.6 percent were stably housed
- 73.8 percent acquired permanent housing³

Where Can I Find Additional Resources?

Innovative HIV Care Strategies to Support Individuals Who Are Unstably Housed

<https://targethiv.org/library/innovative-hiv-care-strategies-support-individuals-who-are-unstably-housed>

Homeless Health Outreach Mobile Engagement (HHOME) Intervention Implementation Guide

<https://targethiv.org/ihip/HHOME>

KC Life 360 Intervention Implementation Guide

<https://targethiv.org/ihip/kclife360>

The HIV, Housing & Employment Project

<https://targethiv.org/housing-and-employment>

Building Medical Homes for Multiply Diagnosed HIV-Positive Homeless Populations

<https://targethiv.org/library/building-medical-homes-multiply-diagnosed-hiv-positive-homeless-populations>

Best Practices Compilation

<https://targethiv.org/bestpractices/search>

Featured Intervention

KC Life 360 is an employment-focused intervention that utilizes the intersection between employment services, HIV care and treatment, and housing to improve health outcomes of people with HIV. The intervention seeks to engage clients into supportive services to ensure the ability to obtain and maintain employment, earned income, and economic mobility to secure permanent housing placement.

Innovations

A key component of the KC Life 360 model is the co-location of services. Co-locating employment, housing, and case management services at the housing location(s) facilitates interagency collaboration and relieves barriers to client engagement and follow-up.

Accomplishments (among 115 clients)

- 67 percent secured employment
- 78.3 percent secured permanent housing
- 96.7 percent were engaged in care
- 93.9 percent achieved or maintained viral suppression⁴

References

¹Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). (2022, January 21). *HRSA Infographic: RWHAP Clients, Housing Status, and Viral Suppression*. *TargetHIV*. Retrieved September 1, 2022, from <https://targethiv.org/news/hrsa-infographic-rwhap-clients-housing-status-and-viral-suppression>

²U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Minority HIV/AIDS Fund. (2019, August 21). *Housing and health*. [HIV.gov](https://www.hiv.gov). Retrieved September 1, 2022, from <https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/living-well-with-hiv/taking-care-of-yourself/housing-and-health>

³Tryon J, Borne D, Franza K, et al. *The Homeless HIV Outreach and Mobile Engagement (HHOME) Program*. [Manual.] 2017. Available at: <https://ciswh.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/HHOME-SFDPH.pdf>

⁴U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, HIV/AIDS Bureau. *KC Life 360 Intervention Implementation Guide*. Rockville, Maryland: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2022.

About IHIP

Integrating HIV Innovative Practices (IHIP) includes implementation tools and resources, peer-to-peer technical assistance, and other capacity building support to help providers address needs and gaps in the delivery of HIV care and treatment along the HIV Care Continuum. Visit www.targethiv.org/ihip to subscribe for updates on intervention materials, trainings and TA opportunities.