



OPERATING A LOW- BARRIER HOUSING PROJECT

Presenters:

Arielle Anderson, Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners

Meg Martin, Interfaith Works Homeless Services

Danielle Rylander, WA State Department of Commerce

Sharon Stadelman, Catholic Charities of Eastern WA

WELCOME!

- Who we are...
- Who's in the room?
- What are some specific expectations you have of today's session?



SO MUCH KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE IN THE ROOM!

- How do you define low-barrier?



LOW-BARRIER IS...

A project that operates with as *few barriers* as possible
so *more people* can access services.

AKA: Making it as easy as possible to get people in the
door quickly.

Also... Required of many programs receiving
state or federal dollars!!



DANIELLE RYLANDER
WA STATE DEPT. OF COMMERCE

Birth



Homelessness



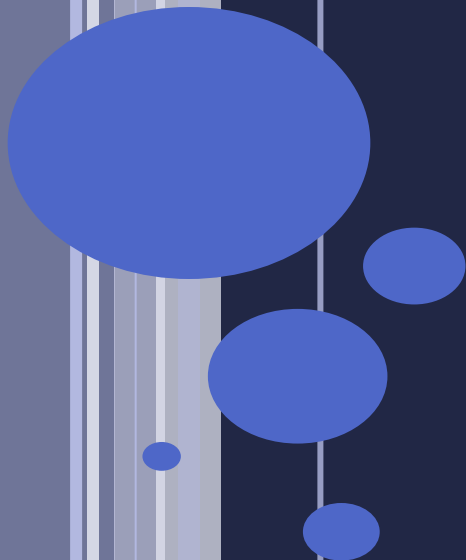
Employment



Training



Empowerment



A Low-Barrier Project Model:



- Follows **All** Anti-Discrimination Laws
- Simplified Eligibility Criteria
- Flexible Intake Process
- Rules Narrowly Focused on Safety and Avoiding Exits to Homelessness
- Realistic, Clear Expectations
- Client-Driven Services Focused on Housing
- Avoids Termination from Program Unless Absolutely Necessary



Little or No
Income

Credit Score



Poor or No
Credit History



Poor or Lack of
Rental History



Involvement With
Criminal Justice
System

At a Minimum, Do Not Screen Out Based On...



Active/History of
Substance
Abuse



History of
Victimization



Type or Extent of
Disability Support
Needed



Lacking ID
or Proof of
Citizenship

A Low-Barrier Project Model:



- Follows **All** Anti-Discrimination Laws
- Simplified Eligibility Criteria
- Flexible Intake Process
- Rules Narrowly Focused on Safety and Avoiding Exits to Homelessness
- Realistic, Clear Expectations
- Client-Driven Services Focused on Housing
- Avoids Termination from Program Unless Absolutely Necessary

Low Barrier is NOT...

- Unsafe
- A “Free For All”
- Free of Expectations and Rules
- Letting Anything Happen or Anyone in.





SHARON STADELMAN

CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF EASTERN WASHINGTON

Sharon Stadelman has almost 20 years of experience in the homeless arena. In 2000, Sharon launched her professional career working for Catholic Charities Eastern Washington (CCEW) at their family shelter site—St. Margaret's Shelter. In 2004 she moved into CCEW's family Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program, and in 2005 became Program Coordinator for the family shelter and family PSH programs. In 2010, Sharon became an Assistant Director and expanded to overseeing family Rapid Rehousing and in 2016, began administering the Homeless Families Coordinated Assessment, City-wide Diversion and the Homeless Student Stabilization Program. In 2017, she became a Director and extended her portfolio to include direct oversight for the Governor's Opportunity for Supportive Housing (GOSH) and STR Peer Supports and in 2018, Foundational Community Supports: Supportive Housing & Supportive Employment. In 2019, Sharon moved into her current position as Interim VP of Transitional Housing and Community Supports and provides direct administrative oversight for low barrier programs throughout CCEW.



**CONTINUOUS STAY SHELTER | LOW BARRIER SERVICES:
ST. MARGARET'S**



FAMILY SHELTER PROGRAM



History



Review/Overhaul of
Program



Staff + Family +
Administration Partnership



It takes time to make change ...



2011(ish): Reviewed House rules and reduced from 8 pages to 2 pages



2012: Coordinated Entry began for Families—Diversion-first; short shelter stays; shift in intake screening



2012-2015: Continuous Quality Improvement: Continuous feedback from families & implementation of National Low Barrier Shelter Best Practices



2016: HUD Equal Access Rule: shifted to full families vs. women with children only



2018: Yearly Program Evaluation began utilizing HUD Housing First Assessment



2019: Removed Strict Health & Safety rule; Shift to focus on Social Determinants of Health

...Low Barrier does not mean “no rules.”



Great Example
from NAEH on
Evaluating Rules--



CHALLENGES



SUCCESS STORIES

THERE WILL BE HICCUPS & WONDERFUL SUCCESS...
HOUSING-FOCUSED/PROGRESSIVE ENGAGEMENT WORKS!

IMPACT: OUTCOMES & COMMUNITY RESPONSE



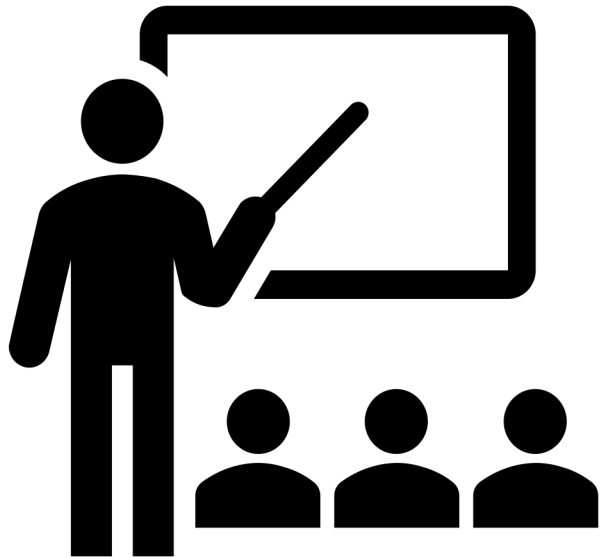
EXITS TO PERMANENT HOUSING LOCATIONS
DECREASED BY (APPROXIMATELY) 10% AS
ACUITY INCREASED AND HOUSING INVENTORY
DECREASED



THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES SERVED
INCREASED BY 12%-18%
**2011 VS. 2013 – 2015*



COMMUNITY MESSAGING HAS SHIFTED



LESSON'S LEARNED--

- The fear/anxiety of change was worse than the actual change itself.
- Having an Administration/ Board that trusts the work that we do is HUGE!

you can do it!! ☺

Contact Information:
Sharon Stadelman, Interim VP of Transitional Housing & Community Supports
Catholic Charities Eastern Washington; Sharon.Stadelman@cceasternwa.org





ARIELLE ANDERSON

*SPOKANE NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PARTNERS
(SNAP)*

Arielle Anderson helps oversee Singles Coordinated Entry, Diversion and Homeless Street Outreach at SNAP. She holds her own case load to ensure ongoing connection to the community she is honored to serve. She was born and raised in Spokane (although left from time to time) and her connection to the Spokane Community is unwavering.

MEETING FOLKS WHERE THEY'RE AT (AKA LOW BARRIER HOUSING)

- Low barrier housing is rooted in the philosophy that by providing basic needs first it will allow the individual to thrive in other areas of their lives
- Depending on the housing intervention, low barrier looks different
 - Rapid Rehousing
 - Permanent Supportive Housing



LANDLORD LIAISON

- Ensuring a robust Landlord Liaison program in your community equates to keeping and recruiting low barrier market rate housing
- Spokane's Landlord Liaison Cohort is made up of multiple agencies which ensures a streamlined approach to working with local Landlords
- We work closely with Landlords to connect them with existing mitigation funds offered through the State



LANDLORD LIAISON AND LOW BARRIER

- There is a symbiotic relationship between our Landlord Liaison cohort and Rapid Rehousing Programs
- We continue to provide mediation services even after a tenant has exited either RRH or Deposit Only assistance.



MEG MARTIN

INTERFAITH WORKS HOMELESS SERVICES

Meg is the Executive Director of the Interfaith Works Homeless Services, a Certified Peer Counselor and a Social Worker. She earned her Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Washington, Tacoma in 2013 and founded the Interfaith Works Emergency Shelter in 2014 with two other dedicated street outreach workers, Cassie Burke and Jefferson Doyle from the Emma Goldman Youth Homeless Outreach Project (EGYHOP) a local volunteer run street outreach organization that she volunteered with for 8 years.

Since the shelter opened in 2014, IW Homeless Services has grown from 12 to 40 staff and now provides services nearly 24/7 between three programs – the Nightly Shelter, the Community Care Center, and the Navigation Team case management program and is preparing to build 65 units of PSH in 2021.

PROGRAMS WE PROVIDE

- **Nightly Shelter: 42 beds, low-barrier shelter**
 - Barriers we would like to lower – conditional use permit limitations (syringe exchange/sex offender limits/overnight only etc.), facility limitations sharing space with the church
- **Community Care Center: Drop in day center and licensed mental health clinic**
 - 180-275 people per day on average
- **Navigation Team: Peer support based advocacy and case management**
 - 80% connection to mental health, 40% connection to substance use treatment, 42% moves to permanent housing
- **Permanent Supportive Housing coming in 2021: 64 units**



HOW WE INCREASE ACCESS

- Pets allowed
- Couples stay together
- ID not required
- Flexible curfew/missed nights policies
- Minimal/supportive intake paperwork
- Clear expectations - Space Use Agreement
- Opioid overdose policy
- Robust front line staff support, supervision, training
- Ongoing work towards improving racial equity and facing the truth of disproportionality
- Ongoing work towards LGBTQIATS+ equity and facing the truth of disproportionality



FOCUS ON THE WHY: TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

- “Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) involves ‘understanding, anticipating, and responding to the issues, expectations, and special needs that a person who has been victimized may have in a particular setting or service. At a minimum, trauma-informed services endeavor to do no harm - to avoid retraumatizing or blaming [clients] for their efforts to manage their traumatic reactions.’”

Hopper, K. H., Bassuk, E. L. & Olivet, J.. (2009). Shelter from the Storm: Trauma-Informed Care in Homeless Service Settings. *Open Health Services and Policy Journal*, Volume(2), pp. 131-151.



FOCUS ON THE WHY: TRAUMA INFORMED CARE

- Principles of professional boundaries
- Harm reduction
- Culture of Recovery and a sense of hope
- Knowing your work environment
- Having and following clear behavioral expectations
- Accessible language
- CONSISTENCY
- Know your people
- Moving from “*What is wrong with you?*” towards “*What happened to you?*”
- If you want to win... it's time to walk



FOCUS ON THE WHY: HARM REDUCTION

- **A spectrum of “success” approach** -- An intervention is always possible no matter how big or small. Showing up once for services = success, drinking more water = success, quitting one of three drugs as a poly substance user = success, total abstinence = success....
whatever the person defines as success = success.
- **In practice** – Housing First, syringe exchange, medication assisted treatment like buprenorphine and methadone, wound care for injection drug users, drop in mental health med management
- **We aim to raise the “bottom”** -- “Hitting rock bottom” can be deadly and a way that helpers can dismiss people who’s coping mechanisms are challenging.
- **Bottom line** -- You can’t make positive change if you’re dead.



IW SPACE USE AGREEMENT

- Come As You Are, Accept Others As They Are
- Be Safe, Act Safe
- Respect People's Bodies/What They Do With Their Bodies
- Respect the Routine
- No Sex In/Around The Shelter or CCC at Anytime/No Nudity in Common Areas
- Respect and Protect the Space
- No Drug Use/Dealing
- Take Responsibility For Yourself and Your Belongings
- Respect the Neighborhood



BARRIERS TO GOING LOW-BARRIER

- Landlord limitations and lease agreements in private market and PSH
- Funder requirements (real and perceived)
- History – “We’ve always done it this way”
 - Management, Front Line Staff, Board of Directors, policies and procedures
- Front line Staff Support limitations
- What else?



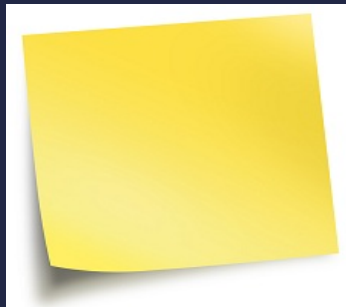
HERE'S WHY IT'S WORTH IT

- **Critical performance measures depend on it!**
- **Better use of your time and energy**
- **More chill less friction when we give up need to control environment**
- **Free from the burden of judgment and more capacity for hope that things may change**
- **Super fun and wild conversations**
- **Power struggles burn everyone out!**
- **Safer for people who are at highest risk of death**
- **Trust increases and people engage more in available services**
- **Everyone deserves to have their basic needs met regardless of circumstances**



WHAT BARRIER WILL YOU COMMIT TO LOWERING?

WRITE IT...



POST IT...



TAG IT...

#COEH2019

CONTACT INFORMATION

Arielle Anderson

Spokane Neighborhood
Action Partners (SNAP)
Spokane, WA
anderson@snapwa.org

Danielle Rylander

Department of Commerce,
Washington State
Danielle.rylander@commerce.wa.gov

Meg Martin

Interfaith Works
Homeless Services
Thurston County, WA
meg@iwshelter.org

Sharon Stadelman

Catholic Charities of Eastern WA
Spokane, WA
sharon.stadelman@cceasternwa.org

