Shelter: Becoming A Housing Intervention

Shifting your system, program, and services to move people from shelter to housing
Introductions

Dusty Olson, MA
Strategic Advisor
Seattle Human Services Dept.

Noah Fay, MPA
Director of Housing Programs
Downtown Emergency Services Center

Peter Kurtz-Glovas
Director
 Compass Housing Alliance
Historical Context of Seattle’s Shelter System

Basic Crisis Intervention

- Overnight only in shared facilities
- Mats on floor
- Staff focused on safety only
- Poor utilization rates for shelter
- High numbers of people unsheltered
### 2016 Homeless Needs Assessment

#### Why are you not currently in shelter?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They are too crowded</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bugs</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are full</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are too many rules</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germs</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can’t stay with my partner</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They don’t accept my pet</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is nowhere to store my stuff</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are far away</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can’t stay with my friends</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N= 481 respondents offering 1,137 responses
A More Effective Shelter Model

Enhanced Shelter

• 24/7 hours with flexible access
• Staff ratio of 1:35
• Case-management ratio of 1:25
• Hygiene – showers and laundry
• Right of return
• Storage for belongings
• Low barrier/Housing first
# Shifting from Basic to Enhanced Shelter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Type</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>% of Total Capacity</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>% of Total Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Shelter Beds/Units</td>
<td>964</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced Shelter Beds/Units</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>1,411</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Shelter Beds/Units</td>
<td>1,632</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Cost Comparisons
- Basic Shelter ranges from $7K to $12K per bed
- Enhanced Shelter averages $22K per bed
Supporting Providers in this Transition

Training and Technical Assistance

• Data clean-up
• Shelter focused housing trainings
• Motivational Interviewing
• Trauma Informed Care
• Cultural Competency
• De-Escalation Techniques
• Diversion
• Learning Circles / Community of Practice
### Performance Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Rate of Exit to Permanent Housing</th>
<th>Length of Stay</th>
<th>Rate of Return to Homelessness</th>
<th>Entries from Homelessness</th>
<th>Utilization Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single Adults</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth &amp; Young Adults</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Enhanced Shelter Moves People to Housing

Rates of Exit to Permanent Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Shelter</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced Shelter</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DESC’s Main Shelter Program
THEN AND NOW
Past Program Design

- Origin
- Low Barrier and High Volume
- Services Offered
Move to Enhanced Shelter Program Design

Operational Changes

- Lessons learned from Navigation Center
- Limited Day Services
- Increased access to storage and sleeping rooms
- Increased attention on outdoor environment
Move to Enhanced Shelter

Staffing Changes

- “Housing Assistance Case Managers”
- Use of FCS and Diversion Coaches
- Increased Medical Services
Remaining survival service
Finding a balance

Approx 25% of clients directly referred from first responders/ER’s

Majority short stayers: Median length of stay: 4 days

Minority stay much longer and living with major challenges

- Average income: $7000 – 92% of all 30 day+ stayers on disability/no income
- Average age: late fifties
- Tri-Morbidity
Intended Consequences of the Change

- Renewed focus on housing support
- Improved staffing ratios
- Program flow improvement
- More space and more calm
Unintended Consequences

- Increased attention on data collection (at what cost?)
- Loss of day time drop-in access
- Staff morale
Focused on Housing, but where is it?!
Compass Housing Alliance

Changes in Service Delivery
Moving from Discretionary Training to Standardized Training

- First Aid/CPR
- Crisis Prevention Institute
- Compass Insights Training
- Case Manager/Housing Navigator Training
Understanding How Trauma Impacts Clients

Trauma Informed Care

- Creating welcoming spaces
- Understanding client triggers
- Building rapport
- Interacting without re-traumatizing clients
Helping People be Ready to Move to Housing

Motivational Interviewing

- Strengths based approach
- Rapport is the base to motivate
- Empowering creative problem solving
- Leading clients to answer their own questions
- 70/30 split for conversations
Identifying Housing Barriers

Financial Barriers
- Source of income
- Outstanding debt
- Vouchers

Legal Barriers
- Prior evictions
- Criminal history

Life Skills Barriers
- Being a good tenant
- Accessing support and services
Guiding Client Towards Housing that Will Last

Developing a Housing Plan

- Creating an action plan
- Navigating identified barriers to housing
- Identifying housing needs versus wants
- Preparing for application process
Moving Away from Clients Doing their Own Housing Search

Housing Search

• Contacting landlords, building managers, and other community partners
• Identifying viable housing options
• Applying for housing
• Meeting with landlords and setting a move in date