Building a Full Continuum of Housing: Creating Safe Housing Options for Survivors

Kris Billhardt, M.ED., ED.S, Director of Program and Practice Innovation, National Alliance for Safe Housing
Millie Brown—DVHSC Advocate
Linda Olsen, MA, MSW—Housing Director, Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Amy Turk, LCSW, Chief Innovation Officer, Downtown Women’s Center

Domestic Violence Homeless Services Coalition
Community Connections Summit
August 8, 2019
Housing Approaches that are Working for Survivors

Kris Billhardt, Director of Program and Practice Innovation, National Alliance for Safe Housing
DV and Housing: The Context is Changing!

• HUD requirements, funding increases reflect increased attention to need for targeted response to survivors’ safe housing needs

• Solid and growing evidence base for importance of centering racial equity and scaling up promising models

• Broader inclusion of DV/SA programs in Continuums of Care in growing number of jurisdictions = a “cultural shift” in BOTH systems
DV & Housing TA Consortium

Four Federal Agencies

• Family Violence Prevention & Services Program/HHS
• Office on Violence Against Women/DOJ
• Office for Victims of Crime/DOJ
• Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs/HUD

Five Technical Assistance Providers

• National Alliance for Safe Housing (NASH)
• National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (NRCDV)
• National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)
• Collaborative Solutions, Inc. (CS)
• National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)
Federal Funding Increases for DV Housing

- 2018 spending bill included increases in Family Violence Prevention Services Act (FVPSA), Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and Victims of Crime Act (VOCA).
- HUD increases in Homeless Assistance included new DV set-aside for Rapid Re-housing and supportive services; 177 new DV projects funded last year (available again this year)
- RELATED DEVELOPMENT: VOCA Final Rule (8/2016): Expanded uses of VOCA to support safe and stable housing for DV/SA survivors
Beyond Shelter: Safe Housing as DV Intervention

• Housing and food insecurity is linked and increases risk of violence (CDC NISVS studies)

• Survivors of violence face complex barriers – including an immediate need for safety and confidentiality, economic insecurity, and discrimination when trying to access shelter and housing.

• Housing and supportive services play major roles in trauma recovery and long-term stability.
Research and Evaluation of Innovative Approaches

What components of housing lead to safety, housing stability and well-being for survivors and their children?

- Intentional use of same measures across studies where possible – housing barriers, financial stability, housing stability, safety, well-being
- Aim: Identify what works best for whom, and under what circumstances (no “one-size-fits-all”)
Three Approaches of Particular Interest

- **Domestic Violence Housing First**: Uses intensive mobile advocacy and flexible funding to help survivors remain in or obtain and sustain housing.

- **Flexible Funding with brief advocacy**: A promising approach in preventing survivors from becoming homeless.

- **Rapid Re-housing with population-specific modifications**: Combines housing identification, financial assistance for rent and related expenses, and supportive services.
The Potential of Flexible Funding

- Flex funding with brief advocacy is a promising option for survivors who were relatively stable and are now experiencing a crisis (Ex: DASH Survivor Resiliency Fund)
- Flex funding is far cheaper than shelter
- Flex funding with longer-term advocacy (DV Housing First, DV Rapid Re-housing) is also promising, needs further research
Safe Rapid Re-housing for Survivors

- Flexible programming and financial assistance
- Mobile advocacy
- Low-barrier, minimal program eligibility requirements
- Survivor-driven, trauma-informed, culturally responsive and voluntary services
- Flexible duration for those needing longer-term support
- Support for reconnecting with community
Examples of Innovative Uses of VOCA

• **COLORADO** - Housing for Crime Victims Special Project
  o Initial launch: 8 sites around the state with support from the Division of Criminal Justice Office for Victims Programs and Colorado Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV)
  o Projects use the Domestic Violence Housing First model

• **CALIFORNIA** - DVHF Process Evaluation of 32 pilot sites
  o Using VOCA support to provide flexible financial assistance and mobile advocacy to survivors to help them avoid homelessness and achieve safety in housing.

• **NEW HAMPSHIRE, ARIZONA, NORTH CAROLINA** and others
Other Studies in Progress

• Survivor-friendly alternative to VI-SPDAT
• Successful transitional housing program – what are its elements?
• Survivors on the margins: what are they doing to get/stay housed
• Impact of opioids on survivor housing
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
HOUSING FIRST

WHAT IS IT?
IS IT SUSTAINABLE?

Linda Olsen, MA, MSW—Housing Director, Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Survivor-Driven
Focused on the survivor’s choice
Orientation to the “whole person”
Validation and acceptance
Action Oriented
Establish safety

Discuss triggers

Rebuild control

Establish connection

Trauma Informed
Mobile Advocacy

Meeting survivors where they are, literally

Walking along side

Support self-advocacy

Speaking on behalf
Flexible Financial Assistance

- Funds are used to support housing, employment, survivor safety, and other critical needs.

- Level of need and amount of financial assistance determined in full partnership with survivor

- Additional assistance may be provided based on changing needs of survivor. No requirements to meet goals or participate in services
Flexible Financial Assistance

- Rent, Deposit, Utilities
- Reduce Debt
- Transportation
- Many Others!
- Back Rent
- Children
- School or Work

Many Others!
Community Engagement

- Partnerships with service providers (health clinics, daycares, treatment centers)
- Partnerships with resources (schools, job training, legal services, law enforcement, stores, food and clothing banks, auto shops)
- Relationships with private market landlords, public housing authorities, realtors
- Community affinities (faith communities, culturally specific community, hobbies, interests, neighborhood organizations)
Community Partnerships have led to...

“"If the abuser shows up, the abuser is not going to get away with being violent. There's zero tolerance for DV, and the agency has partnerships with everyone in the community, which won't allow it to happen. They are keeping an eye out for survivors."—Survivor

“"In the past, landlords said, ‘I'm not renting to those kind.’ Now landlords say, ‘What's going on and how can I help?’ In some cases, landlords have reduced rent for survivors and counted it as a donation.”—DVHF staff
Restoring Connection

Community is vital for restoration of social network.

Community is vital for a survivor to heal from trauma and for children to build resiliency.

Community is vital for connection to resources and relationships.

Community is vital for safety.
Housing Options

• Retain current housing (Prevention/Diversion)
• Rapid Rehousing (Private Market; Short –term HUD funding)
• Subsidized Housing (HUD Tenant or Project based housing)
• Home sharing
• Employer-based housing, such as migrant farmworker
• CoC Permanent Supportive Housing
Is Housing First Sustainable?

• Advocates building bridge into previous or new community
• Focused work on income sources, budget planning, unexpected crises
• Encouraging community connections
BIGGEST QUESTION

Are we setting survivors up to fail?
What happens when the money and the advocacy go away?

Community
Rebuilt Social Network=Resilience and Housing Retention
Available Housing Options Tailored for Survivors in Los Angeles

Amy Turk, LCSW, Chief Innovation Officer, Downtown Women’s Center
# Shelter Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DV Specific Shelter</strong></th>
<th><strong>Homeless Services Shelters for Women</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessed through individual agency hotlines:</td>
<td>Shelters for only women:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV Emergency Shelter (378 emergency shelter beds for DV survivors in our Continuum of Care)</td>
<td>24 beds opening on August 12th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Shelter (570 beds for survivors in our Continuum of Care)</td>
<td>PATH Bridge Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hollywood Studio Club, 64 beds with YWCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casa Azul in McArthur Park for 28 women and 5 families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delores Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Good Shepherd Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergency and Transitional Shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Weingart Center Bridge Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gardner Street (under construction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LA Family Housing Bridge Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sylmar Shelter (under construction)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Domestic Violence Rapid Re-Housing

Funding Source

Eligibility
- Homeless due to domestic violence OR domestic violence history
- Annual income below ($46,500)
- Open to families

Local Programs
- 1736
- Bridge to Home
- Downtown Women’s Center
- East LA Women’s Center
- House of Ruth Pomona
- Human Services Association
- Jenesse Center
- Korean American Family Services
- LA LBGT Center
- Rainbow Services
- Southern CA Alcohol and Drug Programs, Inc
- St. John’s Well Child and Family Center
- Su Casa
- Valley Oasis
- YWCA Glendale
# LAHSA IPV Rapid Re-Housing Pilot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Local Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| LAHSA          | • Homeless HUD Category 1 (chronically homeless) or 4 (fleeing domestic violence)  
                 • Youth 18-24; Individuals 18+; Families (households with minor children)  
                 • Income below 50% AMI  
                 • Current Resident of Los Angeles County | • 1736  
• House of Ruth Pomona  
• LA House of Ruth  
• Valley Oasis  
• Volunteers of America |
Building A Full Continuum of Housing Includes Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

- Community-based housing
  - Scattered-site and on-site
- Permanent housing with indefinite leasing and rental assistance
- Paired with supportive services to assist homeless persons with a disability or families with an adult or child member with a disability
- Lease is renewable and is terminable only for cause
- Accessing support is voluntary; Housing First model
Downtown Women’s Center PSH

119 Onsite PSH
300 Offsite in Scattered Site Housing

Resident

- Coordination and collaboration with partners; etc.
- Outreach and engagement
- Intake and assessment
- Goal planning
- Linkage to health and mental health
- Substance use disorder services and other supportive services
- Ongoing monitoring and follow up
- Assistance with benefits establishment, transportation, and legal issues
- Crisis management
- Eviction prevention
- Client education
- Housing location services
Permanent Supportive Housing from a Lived Experience Perspective

Millie Brown, DVHSC Advocate
Reflections from a Survivor on Supportive Aspects of PSH

Most importantly, the PSH building that I live in is an environment free of aggressive behavior, verbal abuse, and threats of violence.
Reflections from a Survivor on Improvements Needed in PSH

• I see that management needs better understanding of trauma specifically as it relates to DV survivors.
• Staff need to take a calm approach to dealing with people that have suffered and who have survived trauma.
• Staff need better training and overall knowledge.
Permanent Supportive Housing—Creating it for Survivors

Audience Discussion
Audience Feedback Questions

• What are the physical design needs to ensure that PSH is appropriate for survivors?
• What are the program design needs to ensure that PSH is appropriate for survivors?
• What are the screening/eligibility considerations (keeping in mind HUD guidelines) to ensure that survivors access PSH?
• What is currently missing in existing PSH to ensure survivors are housed?
Contact Us

• Kris Billhardt, M.ED., ED.S, Director of Program and Practice Innovation, National Alliance for Safe Housing, kbillhardt@nashta.org, 503-750-7376

• Millie Brown—DVHSC Advocate, DVHSC@DowntownWomensCenter.org

• Linda Olsen—Housing Director, Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, linda@wscadv.org, 206-389-2515 x 205, www.wscadv.org.

• Amy Turk, Chief Innovation Officer, Downtown Women’s Center, AmyT@DowntownWomensCenter.org, 213-680-0600, www.downtownwomenscenter.org.