



March 11, 2015

SNAPS In Focus: A Message from Norm Suchar, Director of the SNAPS Office

Hello,

A couple months ago, I took over as Director of the Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS) from Ann Oliva who is now focusing on her crucial role as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Special Needs. Ann served as SNAPS' Director for 7 and a half years, taking us through some momentous changes, including HPRP, the changes made by the HEARTH Act, and Opening Doors. I am fortunate to come on board at a time when there is great momentum and progress on ending homelessness and a great team in place at SNAPS and throughout HUD.

At the same time, there are many challenges ahead. We are working to end veteran homelessness this year, end chronic homelessness by 2017, and end family and youth homelessness by 2020. We are very aware that these are extremely ambitious goals, and we expect to reach them. Doing so will take bold action in communities and at HUD, and we will be taking big steps to reach these goals through our NOFAs, guidance, and messaging.

We also recognize that ending homelessness requires a true partnership between communities and the federal government, and partnership requires good communication about what we are trying to achieve and how we expect to achieve it. Over the past several years, SNAPS has been providing more information about the strategies it will take to end homelessness, and we plan to increase that messaging. In the coming months, Ann and I will be sending you messages on a variety of topics, including coordinated assessment/coordinated entry, system performance measures, transitional housing, and a number of other topics. We will do our best to be as clear and direct as possible.

I am deeply committed to our mission of ending homelessness. Prior to coming to HUD, I worked for 12 years at the National Alliance to End Homelessness, where I worked with communities to implement the very things we work on here at SNAPS—coordinated entry, housing first, permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, prioritization, outcome measures, and more. I look forward to working with you all on these things and much more and to ending homelessness in the coming years.

Regards,

Norm Suchar
Director
Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs