



September 26, 2013

SNAPS Weekly Focus: Working Together to End Homelessness

The idea of collaboration is not a new one – the entire Continuum of Care (CoC) concept was born out of the recognition that in order to effectively address homelessness it needed to be done in a coordinated fashion. However, in many communities, collaboration is still limited to those entities that are already focusing on homelessness. In order to really increase progress and meet the goals of [Opening Doors](#), we're going to have to think outside of the box and establish partnerships with entities that are not already engaged. Today I'll focus on two key partners: **Public Housing Agencies** and the **Philanthropic Community**. In conjunction with this message, we are also posting a guest blog from one of our national philanthropic partners.

Partnering with local Public Housing Agencies (PHA) in particular is key to meeting our goals. On June 10, 2013, HUD issued PIH Notice 2013-15 (HA), [Guidance on housing individuals and families experiencing homelessness through the Public Housing and Housing Choice Voucher Programs](#), which provided PHAs with strategies for documenting and housing individuals and families experiencing homelessness through the Housing Choice Voucher program and Public Housing. As a follow-up, HUD hosted a webinar entitled [Ending Homelessness Through the Housing Choice Voucher and Public Housing Programs](#) in which PIH staff presented information related to this Notice. CPD and PIH have also developed two additional webinars ([CoC 101 for PHAs](#) and [PHA 101 for CoCs](#)) targeted to CoC and PHA audiences to provide introductory information. Communities can use these webinars locally as a tool to help inform their partners about each other's work and identify specific strategies they can work on together.

In addition to PHAs considering implementation of a homeless preference, one strategy in particular is adopting what we have been calling a **move-up strategy** – where a PHA creates a preference for persons that have been living in permanent supportive housing (PSH) but who no longer need the level of supportive services provided in that program. In other words, the CoC would identify persons or families in PSH that **want** to leave a PSH program in favor of another affordable housing option. A PHA could then provide a public housing unit and/or voucher to that household. This would only apply to those households that volunteer to participate, since HUD-funded PSH has no legal length of stay limitation. For those families and individuals that have been in PSH for long period of time and have stabilized, this may be an excellent option. The benefit would be both to the household that receives the affordable housing unit, and to the new household that can be placed in PSH because of the vacancy. Stay tuned for an upcoming webinar related to this topic!

Another important consideration is how philanthropy can play a role within the community. When we talk about philanthropy, we are referring to foundations, donors, and corporations that work on addressing social issues, including homelessness. There may already be such entities in your community that are actively engaged but, for whatever reason, may not be working in partnership with the CoC or aligned with the CoC's areas of focus. There may be others that are not currently working to address homelessness, but may not be aware of the extent of the problem or the local need. CoCs and project recipients should consider how to proactively engage with philanthropic organizations in a way to maximize resources and increase progress



towards ending homelessness. At the national level, we have been engaging with a group called [Funders Together to End Homelessness](#), a “national network of funders supporting strategic, innovative, and effective solutions to homelessness.” This has resulted in a better alignment between government and private funders on policy and priorities, research initiatives, and promising practices. To learn more about some of the great examples of collaboration involving Funders Together, please read the [SNAPS Weekly Focus Guest Blog](#).

Don’t forget to check back to [SNAPS Weekly Focus page](#) over the coming weeks as we will continue to post related materials and TA products related to each weekly focus, as they become available.

As always, we thank you for your commitment to ending homelessness.

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