



The Way Home: Lane County Reentry Collaborative Public Hearing Brief April 4, 2019

Project Overview

Overview

The Way Home: Lane County Reentry Collaborative (TWH), a partnership between Sponsors, Homes for Good, and Lane County Parole & Probation (P&P) strives to measurably improve the lives of those who were formerly incarcerated, have the highest probability to recidivate, and are homeless upon reentry into Lane County.¹ Life improvement will be measured by maintaining stable housing, reduction of “high cost” recidivism (incarceration due to a new felony conviction), and more appropriate utilization of health care services (e.g., decrease in emergency department visits).

Housing First Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) will accomplish these objectives by enrolling eligible individuals into stable housing without preconditions or barriers to entry. Based upon the well-established premise that many people experience improvements in quality of life—in health, mental health, substance abuse, and employment—as a result of achieving housing, TWH eliminates financial and social barriers to access, and provides community-based, client-centered supports that enable residents to address critical needs and work towards self-sufficiency.

Services

Housing, case management and supportive services from Sponsors, Homes for Good, and P&P will serve 125 individuals with criminal histories, prioritizing women, veterans, & those excluded from federal funding/program (e.g., sex crimes). TWH delivers evidence-based practices through integrated case management, including:

- Permanent housing without pre-conditions (Housing First)
- Comprehensive individualized case management
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and behavioral health services including counseling
- Supervision services, service linkage, and navigation support
- Additional support services related to self-sufficiency, employment, education & mentoring programs

Data

Data infrastructure and a rigorous evaluation have been developed to evaluate the success of TWH, as well as to establish a performance “feedback loop” among the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC), HMIS, CCOs, and TWH to improve service delivery with data driven decision-making.

¹ All eligibility criteria will be determined by validated assessment tools, including LSCMI, WRNA, STATIC, and the Coordinated Assessment Tool for Reentry.

Services for People with Criminal Histories Since 1973

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Partnerships

TWH is a collaborative partnership between Sponsors, Homes for Good, Lane County P&P. The three Lane County-based organizations have worked together for more than 20 years to develop affordable housing and comprehensive re-entry services for people with criminal histories, and they have received national recognition for the development of model programs that utilize evidence-based practices to reduce homelessness and recidivism.

Current State of Housing Services for the Reentry Population

Lane County adults with a medium to high risk to recidivate that are homeless upon reentry face a 33% likelihood of re-incarceration due to a felony conviction within 3 years. These individuals cycle in and out of temporary housing support & experience high rates of emergency department visits and inpatient hospital stays. The Oregon and Lane County specific data assessed for this project validates research from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) indicating that individuals experiencing homelessness are five times more likely to be admitted to a hospital inpatient unit, and are also more likely to experience untreated mental illness and to engage in high-risk substance use.

The relationship between homelessness, chronic health conditions, and prison is well-established in Lane County and throughout Oregon. Of the individuals currently incarcerated in Oregon State Prisons, 52 percent have a diagnosed mental health need, and 69 percent have a history of substance abuse or addiction. Approximately 600 individuals are released from state custody directly back to Lane County each year. On the day they are released, more than 50 percent are homeless and 90 percent are indigent with no employment prospects. Most arrive on a Greyhound bus, wearing a prison-issued sweat suit and carrying a plastic bag that contains all of their belongings. Without access to stable housing and appropriate support services, it becomes near impossible for most recently released individuals to obtain preventative health care, secure employment, maintain sobriety, reunite with family members, and adhere to the conditions of their release. Chronic homelessness, deteriorating health conditions, and eventual reengagement with the criminal justice system may seem, for many, all but inevitable.

The current service offerings in Lane County are not adequate to meet the needs of the current homeless population, let alone the additional 600 individuals who are released from prison and return to Lane County each year. More than 1,600 individuals were homeless in Lane County on a single night in 2018² yet local shelters and homeless service providers only have the capacity to complete intake for approximately 900 cases per year.³ Local homeless services are primarily accessed by justice-involved individuals who suffer from mental, physical and behavioral health challenges.⁴ THW offers a way to collaboratively address systematic housing and reentry barriers, including:

- Serving a population that is typically challenging for reentry, housing & health providers to engage and sustainably support
- Adding to the limited resources/tools in existence to appropriately prioritize PSH enrollments for those most in need (e.g. women, families, seniors, people with disabilities, and those with convictions that restrict housing access)

² Lane County 2018 Point in Time Homeless Count

³ Based on HMIS county-wide utilization data by service provider from January 2015 through June 2017 compiled for TWH. Service providers only had the capacity to serve 1,250 individuals over an 18-month period, and primarily for immediate relief direct services.

⁴ Ibid

- Breaking down silos between long-term affordable housing, self-sufficiency support, and healthcare services
- Creating incentives for multiple organizations to collaborate and meaningfully improve outcomes across sectors
- Contributing to the currently sparse evidence-base and track record that allows agencies to assess the effectiveness of services for this reentry population

The Funding Model

Funding Opportunity

The Way Home is seeking \$3.2mm in support from the State of Oregon to support the project in the form of an outcomes contract with funding tied to the achievement of successful outcomes. Currently, State funding for the justice-involved population that is experiencing homelessness and the service providers that are attempting to improve their outcomes has limited coordination or community-level incentives for performance.

Entering into an outcomes contract with THW allows the State to sustainably support a challenging population, coordinate long-term affordable housing with self-sufficiency support, and provide incentives for multiple organizations to collaborate and meaningfully improve outcomes across sectors (housing, reentry, and healthcare).

Advantage of CJC as contract administrator

A contract for services would be issued by the State through the CJC to TWH, and success payments from the State would be made only when TWH achieves measurable outcomes. The CJC has proactively welcomed the role of host agency to administer the outcomes contract with TWH, as their mission is “to improve the legitimacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of state and local criminal justice systems”. The CJC has been tasked with achieving this mission through various means, including:

- Providing a centralized and impartial forum for statewide policy development and planning;
- Developing a long-range public safety plan for Oregon;
- Analyzing capacity and use of state prisons and local jails, implementation of community corrections programs and methods to reduce future criminal conduct; and
- Conducting research (see “*Evaluation*” section below)

TWH contributes to each of those mandates, establishing the platform in which the CJC can better inform the effective use of public resources for holistic reentry services in the future. CJC leadership and its research staff is also already familiar with TWH, understand the impact of the evidenced-based model, and has been supporting the project for the past 18 months by providing data access and analysis support on historical and the pilot phase recidivism outcomes.

Evaluation & Continuous Improvement

New York University & University of Oregon are conducting a 5-year study to evaluate recidivism, housing and healthcare outcomes with participant and control groups, using a natural experiment evaluation design. The evaluator will regularly provide both quantitative and qualitative findings on the project outcomes (recidivism, housing, and healthcare) to the CJC, Sponsors, Homes for Good, Lane County P&P,

and relevant government partners as part of their internal continuous quality improvement activities and to validate outcomes for the purposes of the State issuing performance payments.

In line with CJC's mandate of conducting research for the purpose of improving the effectiveness of criminal justice funding, this project and its evaluation is one of the few efforts in the state that is actively integrating programmatic and administrative data from reentry (CJC, DOC, and P&P), housing (HMIS, Sponsors, and Homes for Good), and healthcare (OHA and CCOs). Analyzing data across these sources is meant not only to monitor outcomes, but to support all project partners to manage and improve service delivery towards decreased recidivism, improved housing stability, and more appropriate utilization of healthcare services.

An annual progress report will be provided to U.S. HUD/DOJ, funder(s), the CJC, DOC, OHCS, in addition to any other stakeholders interested for the purposes of learning, scaling, and/or replicating through policy-making or special initiatives.

Outcomes Tied to Performance Payments

Recidivism

All program participants will be assessed as medium- to very high-risk to recidivate (as determined by the LSCMI, WRNA, and STATIC)⁵ prior to enrollment. The recidivism status of each individual in the treatment group will be reviewed every 12 months for up to three years from the first day of project enrollment. An individual will be considered recidivated if the individual has been incarcerated in state prison for a new felony conviction. The avoidance of recidivism every 12 months will be categorized as a successful outcome for state-issued success payments. Information on re-arrests, charges, and convictions will also be gathered for learning purposes.

Housing

All program participants housing needs will be assessed and prioritized by the Coordinated Assessment Tool for Reentry prior to enrollment.⁶ The housing status of each individual in the treatment group will be reviewed every 6 months for up to three years from the first day of project enrollment. Outcomes for participants who (i) remain in a TWH PSH unit or (ii) exit a TWH PSH unit to reside in another unit with a validated lease or sub-agreement will be deemed stably housed, and categorized as a successful outcome for state-issued success payments every 6 months.

Healthcare

Over 90% of program participants are expected to be on Medicaid. Each individual's appropriate healthcare utilization will be reviewed every 12 months from the day of project enrollment. "Appropriate" utilization is defined as improved utilization of primary care, pharmaceutical, and behavioral health services, and decreased utilization of emergency department and inpatient hospital stays. TWH will have the programming and data to formally explore a formal partnership with Trillium (Lane County's CCO) to recognize how project participations are seeking more appropriate healthcare services. TWH establishes a framework to implement the goals of CCO 2.0 (namely addressing the social determinants of health) and develop a future value-based program with Trillium and/or the Oregon Health Authority (OHA).

⁵ Validated by Oregon DOC, CJC, Lane County Parole & Probation, and US DOJ

⁶ Validated by Homes for Good, Sponsors, National Alliance to End Homelessness, and US HUD

Intervention Track Record

Baseline

Baseline metrics, established through TWH's analysis of state data from 2013-2017 for all individuals who met the TWH eligibility criteria at the time of release, are as follows:

- 33% rate of re-incarceration due to a felony conviction within 3 years of DOC release
- Emergency department utilization of 185 per 1,000 Oregon Health Plan (OHP) member months

Sponsor's Track Record

Project partners also worked with Trillium, CJC, and HMIS Administrators to assess the impact of Sponsors' existing long-term housing programs. Metrics included individualized Medicaid claims, housing instability, and jail/prison stays. This analysis confirmed Sponsor's success track record, and revealed that, compared to similar individuals released from prison to Lane County during the same three-year period, individuals enrolled in Sponsors' long-term housing programs demonstrate a:

- 60% reduction in recidivism and days incarcerated (decrease from 139 to 54 days incarcerated)
- 85% housing stability at 6 months and 77% housing stability at 12 months from enrollment
- 29% decrease in emergency department visits and a 5% decrease in inpatient hospital stays
- 23% increase in primary care utilization, 23% increase in pharmacy utilization, and 14% increase in behavioral health service utilization

PSH Investment across Communities

Permanent Supportive Housing efforts have been effective, particularly through outcomes oriented funding throughout the county. The following communities are funding PSH through outcomes contracts (or are currently exploring implementation), all of which rely on sustainable, local public funding:

1. Anchorage County
2. Austin County
3. City of Denver
4. Los Angeles County
5. Montgomery / Prince George's County
6. Salt Lake County
7. Santa Clara County
8. State of Rhode Island

In addition, substantial research shows that PSH positively impacts housing stability, reduces recidivism, and results in more appropriate use of healthcare services. Substantial literature, including seven randomized controlled trials, has demonstrated that components of the model are successful in achieving each of these outcomes year.⁷

⁷ Rog et al (2014)

