

Taking Stock: Housing, Homelessness, and Prisoner Reentry

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TAKING STOCK: HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS, AND PRISONER REENTRY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report, *“Taking Stock: Housing, Homelessness, and Prisoner Reentry,”* examines how those who have spent time in prison or jail fare in securing safe and affordable housing following their release and discusses housing programming and practice designed to assist them. Every prisoner facing discharge from a correctional institution must answer this question: “Where will I sleep tonight?” For many returning prisoners, the family home provides an answer to that question. But reunions with families are not always possible—or are only temporary—sometimes due to the dictates of criminal justice or housing policies, or sometimes due to family dynamics. For those who cannot return to the homes of families or friends, the question of housing becomes considerably more complex. For some, the final answer to the question “Where will I sleep tonight?” is a homeless shelter or the street. Many are finding that the difficulties in securing affordable and appropriate housing complicate the reentry process, further reducing already limited chances for successful community reintegration.

The report is the culmination and synthesis of three tasks designed to inform the state of knowledge around housing, homelessness, and prisoner reentry: (1) a descriptive report on the barriers and challenges facing returning prisoners, as well as potential opportunities for serving or supporting the housing-related needs of returning prisoners, (2) a scan of promising housing and other housing-related service programs for returning prisoners and ex-offenders, and (3) a roundtable discussion by experts in the field held in Washington, D.C., on October 30, 2003. The goal of the roundtable was to bring together prominent practitioners, researchers, and community leaders to identify the most pressing housing issues and the most promising strategies for resolving these issues. The report and scan of practice were developed to serve as background materials to help frame the discussion, already underway in many communities, about the extent of the housing challenges faced by returning prisoners. The roundtable participants were provided a copy of the draft report and scan of practice. After the roundtable, the report was revised to include a synthesis of the roundtable discussion.

Our ultimate aim is to sharpen the nation’s thinking on the issue of housing and prisoner reintegration, and to foster policy innovations that will improve outcomes for individuals, families, and communities. In this executive summary, we provide brief background information on the issues surrounding housing and prisoner reentry to lay the foundation for a presentation of the highlights from the day-long roundtable discussion.

BACKGROUND

Reentry—The Issue

Over the past generation, the United States has placed greater reliance on incarceration as a response to crime. As a consequence, far more people in our country have spent time

behind bars, some in prisons, and some in jails. This year, more than 600,000 prisoners will be released from state and federal prisons across the country, more than four times as many as were released in 1980. An estimated 10 million people will be released from local jails (Beck, Karberg, and Harrison 2002). These record levels of movement in and out of the country's prisons and jails have far-reaching consequences for the individual prisoners themselves, their families, and the communities to which they return (Petersilia 2003; Travis, Solomon, and Waul 2001).

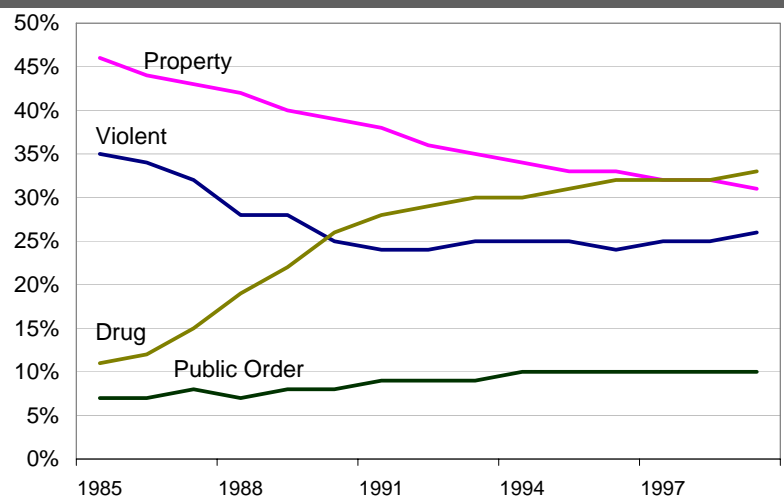
During the past 20 years, the United States experienced a massive increase in incarceration. The total prison population increased from 330,000 in 1980 to nearly 1.4 million in 1999 (Lynch and Sabol 2001). At the end of 2002, 1 in every 1,656 women and 1 in every 110 men were incarcerated in a state or federal prison (Harrison and Beck 2002). The demographic characteristics of individuals being released mirrors the characteristics of those incarcerated. Most returning prisoners are male (88 percent). (See table 1.) The median age is 34 and the median education level is 11th grade (Bonczar and Glaze 1999). In 1998, more than half of returning prisoners were white (55 percent) and 44 percent were African American. Twenty-one percent of parolees were Hispanic (and may be of any race). Since 1990, drug offenders have comprised an increasing percentage of prison releases. In 1999, 33 percent of state prison releases were drug offenders, 25 percent were violent offenders, and 31 percent were property offenders (figure 1).

Table 1. A Profile of Parolees

| Gender | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Male | 88% |
| Female | 12% |
| Race | |
| White | 55% |
| Black/ African American | 44% |
| Other | 1% |
| Hispanic Origin | |
| Hispanic | 21% |
| Non-Hispanic | 79% |
| Age (median) | |
| | 34 years |
| Education level (median) | |
| | 11 grade |

Source: U.S. Dept. of Justice, 2001

Figure 1. Percent of Releases from State Prison by Most Serious Offense, 1985–99



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2002

Of prisoners released in 1998, five states (California, Florida, New York, Ohio, and Texas) accounted for just under half of all offenders released (Lynch and Sabol 2001). Furthermore, within states, a large proportion of released prisoners return to a small number of disadvantaged communities. The Urban Institute's *Returning Home* study has examined concentrations of returning prisoners in three states. In

Maryland, 59 percent of state prison releasees returned to Baltimore City. Within Baltimore, 30 percent returned to just six of Baltimore's 55 communities. In Illinois, 51 percent of state prisoners returned to Chicago. Within Chicago, 34 percent returned to just six of Chicago's 77 communities (LaVigne and Kachnowski 2003; LaVigne et al. 2003). In Ohio, 22 percent returned to Cuyahoga County. Of those, 79 percent returned to Cleveland and 28 percent of those returned to five communities (LaVigne and Thomson 2003). Consequently, the flow of prison releasees compounds challenges to communities, posing severe social and economic consequences for neighborhoods and families (Hagan and Coleman 2001; Hagan and Dinovitzer 2001).

Generally, prisoners released today have been in prisons for longer periods of time, and fewer of them have participated in education and drug treatment programs compared to those released in the 1990s (Hagan and Coleman 2001; Lynch and Sabol 2001). Many will return to prison within three years of release. The largest recidivism study ever conducted—undertaken by the Bureau of Justice Statistics—examined 38,000 (projected to represent 270,000) prisoners released in 1994 from prisons in 15 states, and found that 67.5 percent of those released were rearrested for a new crime (either a felony or a serious misdemeanor) within three years following their release (Langan and Levin 2002). The study also found that most recidivism (two-thirds of all events) occurs within the first year after release. When these numbers are compared to a previous recidivism study of prison releasees in 1983 (Beck and Shipley 1989), the trends are disturbing. Today, the overall rearrest rate is five percent higher and a higher percentage of releasees were rearrested in the first six months after release.

Public health issues—the large number of returning prisoners with HIV and AIDS infection and related illnesses—complicate the housing needs for many returning prisoners (GAINS Center 1999; Roberts et al. 2002). Ex-prisoners also have high rates of substance abuse and mental illness that may reduce chances for finding housing (Beck and Maruschak 2001). In addition, women face unique barriers in securing safe and affordable housing when they return home from prison or jails (Ritchie 2000). Women may have special service needs and often must find a home not only for themselves, but also for their children.

Reentry and Homelessness

According to a number of different studies that examine the demographics of prisoners, the population coming in and out of America's prisons has high rates of homelessness:

- A Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) study of state prisoners (Langan and Levin 2002) found that among those state prisoners expected to be released to the community in year-end 1999, 12 percent reported being homeless at the time of their arrest.
- Another BJS study found that in 1998, 9 percent of state prison inmates reported living on the street or in a shelter in the 12 months prior to arrest (Ditton 1999). Looking only at inmates who were mentally ill, the level of homelessness was even higher—20 percent.

- A California study reported that in 1997, 10 percent of the state’s parolees were homeless. In urban areas such as San Francisco and Los Angeles, an estimated 30–50 percent of all parolees were homeless (California Department of Corrections 1997).
- A 1999 Urban Institute three-site study of 400 returning prisoners with histories of drug abuse found that 32 percent had been homeless for a month or more at least once in their lifetimes. Eighteen percent reported they were homeless for at least a month in the year after they were released from prison (Rossman et al. 1999).

New attempts at matching parole client names and identification numbers to homeless shelter rolls also show large numbers of parolees relying on shelter systems—though the numbers may underestimate the true extent of the overlap due to missing information. For example, New York reported that at any one time about 800 parolees are in the New York City shelter system (Riley 2003). This represents roughly 3 percent of the New York City parole caseload. The findings from a recent study examining the intersection of corrections services and shelter use suggest that prisoners that were homeless at some time in their life were more likely to be homeless after a state prison incarceration (Metraux and Culhane 2004). Specifically, those released prisoners with a history of shelter use were almost five times as likely to have a post-release shelter stay. The same study also found that of New York State prison releases entering homeless shelters sometime after release, 54 percent did so within the first 30 days.

In short, about a tenth of the population coming into prisons have recently been homeless, and at least the same percent of those who leave prisons end up homeless, for at least a while. And those with histories of mental illness and drug abuse are even more likely to be homeless.

Studies indicate that parole violation and rearrest may be more likely for those prisoners with no place to go upon release. An exploratory study by the Vera Institute of Justice following 49 individuals released from New York State prisons and city jails found that those individuals living in temporary shelters upon release had more difficulty resisting drugs and finding jobs. Furthermore, 38 percent of the people who reported during the study’s pre-release interviews that they were going to live in a shelter absconded from parole supervision, compared to only 5 percent of the individuals who reported they were not going to a shelter (Nelson, Deess, and Allen 1999).

Studies of homeless individuals and families also suggest a relationship between homelessness and time spent in prison or jail. A synthesis of 60 research studies on homelessness conducted in the 1980s found that on average 18 percent of the population of homeless persons had served time in prison after being convicted of a felony, and about one-third of the population of homeless persons had been jailed for misdemeanor charges (Shlay and Rossi 1992). According to the 1996 National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients (NSHAPC), 49 percent of homeless adults reportedly spent five or more days in a city or county jail, 4 percent had spent time in a military lock-up, and 18 percent had been incarcerated in a state

or federal prison (Burt et al. 1999). A 1997 "snapshot" survey of the inhabitants of Boston homeless shelters found that 57 percent of the people surveyed had lived in at least one institutional setting within the prior year—including hospitals, mental health facilities, jails, detoxification centers, or halfway houses—and 22 percent had recently lived in a criminal justice institution (Friedman et al. 1997). In a survey of city officials in 36 cities regarding hunger and homelessness, prison release was identified by six cities (Cleveland, Denver, New Orleans, Phoenix, Seattle, and Washington, D.C.) as a major influence on homelessness (U.S. Conference of Mayors 2002).

Current Housing Options for Returning Prisoners and Ex-Offenders

For a majority of returning prisoners, their first home post-release is with a family member, a close friend, or a significant other. The Vera Institute of Justice study found that of the 49 offenders followed after their release from prison, 40 were living with a relative, or with their spouse or partner, in the month right after they were released (Nelson et al. 1999). In the Urban Institute's *Returning Home* study in Maryland, 153 respondents were interviewed about two months after their release. When asked where they went after getting out, nearly half (49 percent) said they slept at a family member's home their first night. Another 10 percent slept at a friend's house the first night out of prison. At the time of the interview (two months out) the overwhelming majority (80 percent) were living with a family member.

For some returning prisoners, residing in the home of a family member, friend, or significant other is not an option. This may be the result of family conflict, the reluctance of family members to welcome a violent individual back into their lives, or the lack of an immediate family. In some cases there are additional legal restrictions involved. Conditions of parole may prohibit returning prisoners from residing with a family member or close friend if that individual has a criminal history. According to a 1988 survey of conditions placed on former prisoners under parole supervision, 31 of the 51 responding parole agencies reported that they prohibited parolees from associating with anyone who had a criminal record (Rhine et al. 1991).

The process of securing housing may be further complicated by the returning prisoner's ineligibility for food stamps, veterans benefits, and benefits through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. Anyone with a drug conviction is barred for life from obtaining food stamps and TANF benefits, unless a state modifies or eliminates this prohibition (Koyanagi 2002). Other guidelines restrict the use of TANF funds for housing services. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) considers any TANF-funded housing subsidy that is not short term as "assistance," even if families are working and not receiving TANF cash benefits. Therefore, a TANF-funded housing subsidy provided for more than four months counts against the family's federal lifetime benefit limit (Sard and Waller 2002). Returning prisoners not able to access TANF may be able to obtain other benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). However, when an individual is incarcerated for more than a month, these benefits are suspended. Upon release from prison, it may take weeks to reinstate these benefits.

For those returning prisoners who do not live with loved ones or friends upon release, the housing options include (1) community-based correctional housing facilities; (2) transitional (service-enriched) housing (non-corrections based and non-HUD funded); (3) federally subsidized and administered housing; (4) homeless assistance supportive housing, other service-enhanced housing, and special needs housing supported through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and (5) the private market. These options are discussed in greater detail below.

Community-Based Correctional Facilities

Halfway houses or community reentry centers are residential programs designed to transition individuals returning to their communities from prison, representing a “halfway” step between prison and the community. Halfway houses are used by both the federal and state correctional systems. However, halfway house use is more prevalent within the federal system. In 2000, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) contracted for 282 halfway houses that provided 6,911 beds for over 18,000 inmates (U.S. General Accounting Office 2001). Generally, federal inmates enter halfway houses 11 to 13 months before their probable release date. The average length of stay is roughly 104 days. Community organizations such as Dismas Charities, Inc., and the Salvation Army operate a number of these residential facilities across the country. In contrast to the federal system, across the state systems, there were only 55 halfway houses operated by 10 state agencies in 1999. It is estimated that less than .5 percent of all inmates released in 1999 were released through halfway houses (American Correctional Association 2000).

A number of barriers stand in the way of expanded use of halfway houses for returning prisoners. First, there has been little research on their effectiveness or cost effectiveness. The few studies we found are nonexperimental studies that use no comparison group but instead attempt to isolate variables associated with successful halfway house program completion. Second, the siting of these facilities often provokes community opposition. This opposition, known as NIMBY (Not in My Backyard), can be very powerful. Third, the use of this form of facility may be politically unpopular or deemed contrary to government policy. For example, in December 2002, the U.S. Department of Justice issued an opinion that reduces the time spent in halfway houses for federal prisoners nearing the end of their sentence. Finally, these facilities can be very expensive and may be difficult to justify in times of fiscal constraints.

Transitional (Service-Enriched) Housing (Non-Corrections Based and Non-HUD Funded)

In addition to halfway houses run by corrections agencies, there is a wide variety of housing programs that are funded by private foundations, charitable giving, and a mix of grants or subsidies from the state and federal government. These residential facilities, most of which have some form of treatment focus, are generally run by nonprofit or faith-based organizations and do not have large contracts with correctional agencies. Residents in the facilities often have to pay a fee to live there. The fee is usually based on a sliding scale of ability to pay and may increase as the resident progresses through program phases.

The Ridge House in Reno, Nevada, is one example of a nonprofit organization that provides residential and case management services to men and women released from prison. Other examples include Woman at the Well House Ministries (WWHM) in San Antonio, Texas, and Aletheia House in Birmingham, Alabama. These programs have one or more facilities that specially target returning prisoners for their available beds.

Not all communities can successfully develop and implement these types of housing programs. These programs often result from community coalitions or partnerships where government and community agencies have long histories of working together. They are likely to crop up in communities that are ready to tackle the issue of crime and reentry, or in communities that have strong, well-funded community-based or faith based organizations. Like corrections-run halfway houses, these programs must overcome NIMBY, but may have an easier time because they are run by nonprofits—and hence, may be viewed by residents as having the interests of the community at heart.

In addition, the availability of funding for these programs is a barrier for many communities. Often, creativity and dedication are needed to piece together a variety of funding sources to sustain a residential program. Community organizations and partnerships that implement these programs must be committed to the mission of serving returning prisoners and seek to institutionalize these programs over time.

Federally Subsidized and Administered Housing

Federally subsidized and administered housing is another option for very low income individuals and families. There are three main *federally subsidized* housing programs offered by HUD: (a) the Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly called Section 8), (b) the Federal Public Housing Program, and (c) a variety of projects and programs that can be categorized as *privately owned* federally subsidized stock. Combined, these three programs serve about one-third of all eligible renter households with incomes up to 80 percent of the area median.

In addition to the federally subsidized housing for the very poor, there are *federally administered* programs that assist in the provision and development of affordable housing. Two of these programs include the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)¹ program of 1988 and the HOME program of 1990 (O'Reagan and Quigly 2000).²

The barriers for returning prisoners to federally subsidized and administered housing generally fall into two categories: (1) scarcity of housing stock, and (2) formal and informal regulations and prejudices that restrict tenancy.

The scarcity of federally subsidized housing creates barriers for all individuals seeking affordable housing. It has been estimated that only one-third of all individuals and families eligible for subsidized housing actually gain access to federally subsidized housing. During the last decade the number of available public

¹ LIHTC is run by the Treasury Department.

² The federally administered HOME and LIHTC programs—while important for supporting affordable housing production—do not generally pertain to assisting returning prisoners or ex-offenders.

housing units has decreased. The HOPE VI public housing redevelopment program has contributed to the reduction in the nation's supply of public housing. Estimates suggest that tens of thousands of families nationally have been displaced (National Housing Law Project et al. 2002) by HOPE VI activities.

Some community leaders have suggested that given an individual's criminal history, it may not be feasible to expect that returning prisoners access this housing resource when thousands of law-abiding individuals are awaiting housing. In addition, some communities have voiced concerns about concentrating individuals with criminal histories into disadvantaged communities.

With regard to regulations, current HUD policy provides public housing authorities (PHAs) power to deny admission or to terminate the lease of individuals with a history of use or abuse of drugs or alcohol, or of criminal behavior. The PHA property manager has discretion to determine admission policies. The same One Strike policy, upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court (*Department of Housing and Urban Development v. Rucker* [122 S. Ct. 1230 2002]), encourages housing authorities to include in leases a provision that a tenant in public housing can be evicted if the tenant, any member of the tenant's household, or any guest engages in drug-related criminal activity on or off the premises. A 1997 HUD survey shows that housing authorities are using the regulations to deny admission or evict individuals with criminal histories from public housing. That year, the One Strike regulation was used to deny 19,405 individuals admission, out of a total 45,079 individuals denied admission for various reasons.

Looking at individual cities, *The View From the Ground*, an occasional online publication produced by representatives of the Stateway Gardens public housing development on Chicago's South Side, reports that Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) statistics show that of One-Strike cases initiated between August, 2000, and April, 2002, 717 One-Strike cases involving families were concluded. The dispositions of these cases were as follows: 26 percent of all judgments were in favor of the CHA; 37 percent ended in "agreed orders" (negotiated settlements where offending party is taken off lease, barred from unit, or put on probation); and 20 percent resulted in move-outs (tenants move out on their own after receiving and eviction notice). Only 1 percent of the judgments were for the tenant.³

Homeless Assistance Supportive Housing, Other Service-Enhanced Housing, and Special Needs Housing Supported through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Given the scarcity of corrections-run transitional facilities and the complex needs of many returning prisoners, many returning prisoners end up entering the web of housing and homeless assistance and special needs programming supported through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (Cho, Ball, and Ladov 2002). Returning prisoners with nowhere to go upon release often end up in shelters, but shelters are simply short-term facilities that are most often not tasked with providing services to assist the search for permanent housing.

³ See <http://www.viewfromtheground.com/view.cfm/stories/onestrikeintro.html>.

The HUD-funded network of homeless assistance housing resources includes supportive housing and service-enhanced housing. *Supportive housing* is permanent housing for lease holding tenants, in which social service provision and funding is an integral component of the housing operation. *Service-enhanced housing* includes two categories: transitional and phased-permanent housing. Transitional housing is provided for a fixed length of stay and offers a variety of support services to assist clients in achieving self-sufficiency. In most cases, clients do not have occupancy agreements or leases. Phased-permanent housing refers to a new housing model where residents have month-to-month occupancy agreements (not leases), and therefore have some rights of tenancy. Phased-permanent is also intended to be short term, with the goal of assisting residents to move on to more permanent forms of housing.

Most often, regardless of program length or permanency, supportive or service-enhanced housing programs offer a range of services: family counseling, case management, medical services, substance abuse counseling, socialization skills groups, anger management, vocational training, and assistance with obtaining vital documents such as Social Security cards and birth certificates. Though some jurisdictions have used these programs specifically to target returning prisoners or ex-offenders, the majority serve these individuals simply because they are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

The first federal legislation to provide a range of supportive housing options and service-enhanced housing was the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987. The Act resulted in the creation of three programs: the Supportive Housing Program (SHP), the Shelter Plus Care Program (S+C), and the Section 8 Mod Rehab (dedicated to moderate rehab projects)—each intended to serve different needs. Unfortunately, returning prisoners cannot utilize these McKinney programs as their first housing option after release. According to federal policy, individuals must be homeless for a period of time before they are eligible for McKinney programs.

However, HIV/AIDS housing funding, because it utilizes different eligibility requirements, has been used successfully for projects that include ex-offenders. Federal Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) funding has been particularly useful in this regard. Across the country, providers have successfully used HOPWA funds to develop supportive housing for formerly incarcerated people living with HIV/AIDS (Corporation for Supportive Housing 2002; Hals 2003).

Funding for McKinney programs has suffered setbacks in recent years. Although funding was authorized, the actual expenditures were not sufficient to address the widespread need across the country. Congress authorized just over \$1 billion in expenditures for McKinney Act programs for 1987 and 1988; however, only \$712 million was appropriated for those years.

For several years, homeless advocates have been asking HUD for clarification as to whether persons leaving correctional institutions are considered homeless. In February 2000, the definition was changed to include as “homeless” someone who was in jail or prison for over 30 days, and who had no subsequent residence identified, or no support networks outside of prison, or was evicted from a prior residence. Some organizations have used Shelter Plus Care because HUD has not made a clear-cut statement regarding the eligibility of ex-offenders.

As with correctional halfway houses the NIMBY phenomenon may create hurdles for community groups seeking to develop group homes or supportive housing to house returning prisoners. Surveys show that community opposition is greatest when facilities are developed for substance abusers (National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty 1997). Research also shows that small facilities can be successful in overcoming community opposition (ibid).

The Private Market

In addition to the housing options described above, returning prisoners can seek housing in the private market. The most likely option is the rental market. Some inmates may have owned housing before their incarceration and, hence, would return to their homes after release. But given the likelihood that mortgage payments cannot be made while incarcerated, it is improbable that released prisoners who owned homes prior to imprisonment will be able to return to these homes. Returning prisoners must overcome many barriers to access housing in the private rental market. These barriers include affordability, improper personal documentation, stigma of criminal history, and associated community objection due to public safety issues. Affordability is the most significant barrier. Most prisoners leave prison without enough money for a security deposit on an apartment. Most states provide a token amount of “gate money,” ranging from \$25 to \$200, hardly enough for a deposit in most cases. One-third of all states provide no gate money at all (Petersilia 2003). In addition, as stated earlier, without some type of income or income support, returning prisoners will be unable to access private market housing.

REENTRY ROUNDTABLE SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS

On October 30, 2003, the Urban Institute convened a national forum of experts, sponsored by the Fannie Mae Foundation, to chart a course for housing organizations and criminal justice organizations to work together to improve housing outcomes for individuals leaving prison, their families, and the communities to which they return. The Forum participants represented housing organizations, housing intermediaries, transitional and permanent housing providers, criminal justice practitioners, researchers, public housing managers, community leaders, and former prisoners. Prior to the Forum, the participants had the opportunity to read the draft literature review and the draft scan of innovative practice so that the discussion was informed by the most comprehensive information available. Jeremy Travis, senior fellow at the Urban Institute, served as facilitator of the roundtable discussion. In addition to the participants at the table, 75 key individuals from federal and local government agencies, other foundations, research agencies, advocacy organizations, and national associations attended the Forum as observers.

The key questions the roundtable sought to uncover included:

1. Within the many issues related to the housing dimensions of the reentry experience, which are the most pressing?
2. Where do the most promising opportunities lie for addressing the housing issues confronting returning prisoners?
3. What are the steps needed to make these opportunities become well-established realities in policy and practice?

The Pressing Priorities

The morning began with a discussion of the housing challenges and barriers facing returning prisoners with the goal of explicating the most pressing priorities for policy and practice. One panelist suggested that the priorities be organized into “hard targets” versus “soft targets.” Hard targets are those issues, policies, and practices that would be the most difficult to change. Soft targets are those that might be changed with much less effort. For the most part, throughout the morning, the other panelists couched their discussion using these phrases, with equal time spent discussing both the hard and soft targets. Although there was no universal agreement whether the stated priorities fell into the hard category or soft category, a general consensus emerged. Below we lay out the priorities first by hard target, followed by soft target priorities.

The Hard Target Priorities

Motivate the correctional system to be a force in creating the momentum for positive change

Panelists agreed that the criminal justice system could be a large force in creating the momentum for change. Many stated that it is unrealistic to expect housing systems to carry the burden for supporting improved housing options for returning prisoners. Some saw corrections as the agency with the most power to leverage or

effect change. Panelists suggested that analyses of costs and benefits of correctional housing programs could demonstrate to corrections systems that coordinated reentry programs would be of great benefit across systems (i.e., corrections, community corrections, and homeless services system) and the community.

Change could also occur with a reevaluation of parole restrictions and requirements that make it difficult for parolees to secure housing with their families or near their jobs. Some parole restrictions have unintended consequences where the consequences may outweigh the intended benefits. For example, restrictions that stipulate a returning prisoner not associate with criminal peers may result in individuals living in halfway houses far from family and job opportunities.

Establish alternatives to shelters for returning prisoners

Similar to motivating the correctional system to seek change, three practitioner panelists set the stage early for the discussion by stressing the need for establishing alternatives to shelters for returning prisoners. The panelists felt that there may be an overreliance on the shelter system by criminal justice agencies. The corollary observation was that corrections and parole agencies know little about housing programs that could be available to returning prisoners. Corrections and other criminal justice officials should collaborate with local shelter boards to expand the understanding of the housing services and options available, and develop procedures stipulating how the systems can work together.

Other panelists emphasized that the need for effective pre-release planning that would identify housing needs and match services to fit needs. Many panelists also mentioned the importance of in-prison programming aimed at rehabilitation. The most-voiced priorities related to pre-release planning included:

- Begin to prepare for reentry at the time of sentencing. Reentry planning that begins at the time of sentencing should support transitional and post-release programming. Reentry planning should include identification and assessment of an individual's housing needs. In addition, procedures should include full support (e.g., an advocate available around the clock) for the 24-hour period following release.
- Establish and utilize pre-release facilities that would transfer soon-to-be-released inmates to facilities near their intended homes. Inmates could begin to search for a job, as well as reconnect with family and loved ones, and connect with any needed community supports. A number of panelists reiterated the importance of reconnecting returning prisoners to their family and children.
- Reestablish SSI and Medicaid eligibility, as well as identification paperwork, before people leave prison/jail.
- Develop a "kinship" housing subsidy where the prison releasee would be provided with a subsidy that is given to his or her family to pay for subsidized housing. This would take corrections monies and apply it directly to housing upon release. This could potentially reduce the burden for families that intend to help support their loved one upon release.

Encourage community understanding and support for returning prisoners

Panelists thought that encouraging community understanding and support for returning prisoners should be a priority. Some identified this as a hard target, while others thought that more community exposure to the issue would generate more support. Panelists suggested that the “not in my backyard” (NIMBY) opposition could be offset by transmitting information to the public and by showing the community that ex-offenders are making strong contributions to society. Suggestions included:

- Educate the community about the needs of returning prisoners and demonstrate that services are available and constructive in supporting ex-offenders.
- Engage the community from the beginning when a new program is being implemented. Through this approach, trust can be built.
- Provide communities with information that shows that locking up prisoners does not always make communities safer. Demonstrate that supportive housing programs can be successful for ex-offenders and benefit the community overall.
- Examine successful practices from harm reduction approach utilized in providing housing services to people with HIV/AIDS. The Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program is a successful partnership between government agencies, communities, and the residents the programs serve.

Reduce discrimination

One panelist suggested that Congress should be encouraged to enact legislation similar to Minnesota’s Criminal Offenders Rehabilitation Act. This act stipulates that ex-offenders cannot be discriminated against after one year following release from prison. The legislation could also stipulate that discrimination was unlawful except where the opportunity (e.g., a job, housing, etc.) was directly linked to the specific crime committed.

Another panelist suggested that progress could be made by examining the issues of housing, homelessness, and reentry through a race perspective. Racial disparities in sentencing do a great disservice to the American public and should be examined, dissected, and discussed.

The Soft Target Priorities

Synthesize knowledge on successful programs; share best practices

In general, the panelists agreed that, to date, little is known about model programs. Many panelists referred to the importance of documenting the successful strategies, programs, and partnerships that currently exist. The first step should be to look for successful models, and encourage programs and key leaders to document the impact of their programs, including the costs and benefits. As mentioned above, many felt that the cost-benefit argument would be a strong foundation to demonstrate the success of programs. A few panelists reiterated this thought throughout the day, and stated that building an evaluation component into housing programs should be a priority for community agencies. Successful models can then

be brought to scale. Understanding successes could lead to an understanding of the different types of interventions; how to match needs to services; what length of stay is appropriate for clients with different needs—basically, to determine *who* needs *what* intervention.

A panelist emphasized that there is great need for coupling employment services and sober living with housing services, and hence, the documentation of successful models that are comprehensive in nature would be of great use to communities, funders, and government agencies.

Encourage the support of the faith community

Many panelists mentioned that governments should seek to learn about how the faith community is serving returning prisoners. They cited anecdotal and emerging research evidence that the faith community is heavily involved in serving returning prisoners. Partnerships between criminal justice and housing agencies could benefit from the inclusion of congregations and other faith-based institutions.

Establish state and local regulations for safe and drug-free housing

Often, there are no regulations particular to establishing and running safe and drug-free housing facilities. A few panelists suggested that uniform quality standards and codes for existing housing facilities and programs would greatly benefit clients and communities.

Dispel the myths regarding restrictions to Public Housing and Section 8 Housing

With regard to using public housing as an option for returning prisoners, many panelists felt there were too many myths surrounding ex-offender restrictions in public housing and Section 8 housing. Many jurisdictions use discretion in determining whether public housing and/or Section 8 housing may be a viable option for many returning prisoners. Documenting the ways that this discretion can be exercised to benefit the community, the returning prisoners, and the tenants could help overcome more rigid interpretations of the One Strike policy.

The Promising Opportunities

In the afternoon, the panelists switched focus to discuss the opportunities for new strategies and policy innovations. The panelists pinpointed opportunities that fell into three categories: (1) comprehensive, neighborhood-based strategies, (2) flexible funding streams, and (3) education and transmission of knowledge.

Comprehensive Services

Throughout the discussion, the word “partnership” was mentioned numerous times. The panelists felt that comprehensive reintegration services that involve the community are the most successful in serving returning prisoners. Many encouraged the participation of community agencies and residents. Some panelists suggested the programs that the most successful programs are those that serve returning prisoners using a *customer* or *client* perspective, not a third party perspective. The *customer/client* perspective will build trust among all parties involved. Utilizing the customer perspective could also help to determine the most needed supports and develop informal networks to link individuals to jobs and housing.

Other panelists suggested the use of intermediaries to bridge different systems so systems could begin to become less fragmented and more likely to collaborate. The panelists discussed how nongovernmental organizations could be strong intermediaries within partnerships. In addition, comprehensive programs that work directly with businesses and/or utilize the entrepreneurship model were identified as promising opportunities.

One panelist suggested that interagency alliances that have high-level political involvement would enable successful reentry models. HUD's initiative to develop ten-year plans to end homelessness has resulted in strong interagency collaborations within a number of states that could be used as a model to develop a national or statewide reentry plan. With regard to the HUD initiative, state efforts are trickling down to the local level. States and local governments could work together to develop a continuum for returning offenders. Successful programs could then be brought to scale. Another panelist added that the reverse can also happen—that a successful small-scale program receiving national attention can then be transferred and formalized into a state plan for replication by counties within the states. This strategy was successful in Baltimore, where the Reentry Partnership (REP) of the Enterprise Foundation is currently being brought to scale across the state of Maryland. Similarly, panelists suggested examining other tried-and-true program models like Oxford House⁴ to determine if these can be brought to scale.

Flexible Funding Streams

Some panelists suggested that housing programs that defy categorization are the most effective programs. These programs are utilizing either a variety of funding streams or are not mandated to utilize restrictive eligibility criteria. Often, blended funding provides the opportunity to be innovative and nonrestrictive in services and eligibility. Similarly, programs that are built on multisystem partnerships (e.g., corrections, homeless services system, community) provide flexibility in the types of clients served, and the suite of services provided. In many cases, flexible funding streams provide the opportunities to utilize funds for housing subsidies, thereby making traditionally unaffordable housing affordable. Many panelists agreed that simply adding funding for services with a reentry system would not solve the unaffordable problem.

Documentation of Successes and Transfer of Knowledge to the Community

The panelists agreed that more opportunities would arise as successes are documented and publicized. In this view, success breeds interest, which breeds more success. Panelists suggested that funding agencies should mandate documentation of outcomes in a systematic method. Aggregation of data from programs and models would provide knowledge of successes and best practices. Evidence of successful programs could then be transferred to the community and assist in building community understanding and interest in the reentry process.

⁴ An Oxford House is a self-governing alcohol- and drug-free house chartered by Oxford House, Inc. The first Oxford House was founded in 1975 by the residents themselves.

Next Steps

The day culminated with a synthesis of the earlier two sessions. The panelists were asked to put forth one or two ideas describing what they thought were the critical next steps for policy, practice, or research. The following is an inclusive list and does not represent group consensus.

Next Steps for Policy

- Encourage high-level political endorsement in reentry planning;
- Set goals and standards for discharge planning from correctional facilities. Create standards at both the state and national level. This can help change practice
- Modify one-strike housing regulations so discretion is not used to target ex-offenders with minor offenses, or offenses that occurred far in the past.
- Legislate reforms in corrections. Revise the “get tough” statutes and related policies to take into account the need for supervised release.
- Educate the community about the problems facing returning prisoners. Encourage input from the community. Community forums and informal discussions with community residents can establish trust and lead to appropriate types of services that fit particular needs of communities. Encourage the development of partnerships between government agencies and community organizations.
- Mandate specific performance measures and evaluation with government and private funding of programs.

Next Steps for Practice

- Encourage investment from private donors, and bring together partners. Partnership programs can bridge fragmented services systems. Private funders are good sources of funding to address systems change. When systems change is successful, replicate.
- Reentry partnerships should not only include government agencies, but also faith community and business community.
- Utilize nongovernmental organizations as intermediaries in reentry partnerships.
- Dispel myths about restrictions to public and Section 8 housing and provide incentives (e.g., rent vouchers or tax credits) to landlords who house returning prisoners or ex-offenders.
- Build evaluation into program implementation and maintenance.
- Develop tools and curriculum around training for multiple systems that are supporting common interest of serving returning prisoners. Train parole officers to work with community organizations and to be knowledgeable about the

services community organizations can provide. Parole officers should utilize graduated sanctions that incorporate supervision needs.

- Convene siting commissions or community boards that work together with government to determine the best sites for halfway houses and community reentry centers.

Next Steps for Research

- Catalog the policy obstacles and clarify what is myth. Disaggregate obstacles into categories: which are federal obstacles, state, local government, or community obstacles.
- Examine partnership successes and document successful strategies to implement and maintain strong partnerships. Research that utilized case studies of promising programs could provide insight on what works and why, and what could be replicated in other communities.
- Document funding streams. By understanding how the different systems fund housing-related services, communities can benefit. Document who is successful with the various funding streams.
- New studies could examine the nature and extent of housing services being utilized at pre-release facilities and halfway houses and identify promising models along a continuum of services. Similarly, research could quantify the costs and benefits associated with these facilities as compared to direct release.
- Research could also begin to focus on the promising practices for specialized populations. For instance, are there successful housing opportunities for violent offenders or sex offenders?

Taking Stock: Housing, Homelessness, and Prisoner Reentry

INTRODUCTION

Over the past generation, the United States has placed greater reliance on incarceration as a response to crime. As a consequence, far more people in our country have spent time behind bars, some in prisons, and some in jails. This year, more than 600,000 prisoners will be released from state and federal prisons across the country, more than four times as many as were released in 1980 (Beck, Karberg, and Harrison 2002). An estimated 10 million people will be released from local jails (as cited in NCCHC 2002). These record levels of movement in and out of the country's prisons and jails have far-reaching consequences for the individual prisoners themselves, their families, and the communities to which they return (Petersilia 2003; Travis, Solomon, and Waul 2001).

This report examines how those who have spent time in prison or jail fare in securing safe and affordable housing following their release and discusses housing programming and practice designed to assist returning prisoners. Every prisoner facing discharge from the institution must answer this question, "Where will I sleep tonight?" For many returning prisoners, the family home provides an answer to that question. But reunions with families are not always possible—or are only temporary—sometimes due to the dictates of criminal justice or housing policies, or sometimes due to family dynamics. For those who cannot return to the homes of families or friends, the question of housing becomes considerably more complex. For some, the final answer to the question "Where will I sleep tonight?" is a homeless shelter or life on the street. Many are finding that the difficulties in securing affordable and appropriate housing complicate the reentry process, further reducing already limited chances for successful community reintegration.

The report is the culmination and synthesis of three tasks designed to inform the state of knowledge around housing, homelessness, and prisoner reentry: (1) a descriptive report on the barriers and challenges facing returning prisoners, as well as potential opportunities for serving or supporting the housing-related needs of returning prisoners, (2) a scan of promising housing and other housing-related service programs for returning prisoners and ex-offenders, and (3) a roundtable discussion by experts in the field held in Washington, D.C., on October 30, 2003. The goal of the roundtable was to bring together prominent practitioners, researchers, and community leaders to identify the most pressing housing issues and the most promising strategies for resolving these issues. The report and scan of practice were developed to serve as background materials to help frame the discussion, already underway in many communities, about the extent of the housing challenges faced by returning prisoners. The roundtable participants were provided a copy of the draft report and scan of practice. After the roundtable, the report was revised to include a synthesis of the roundtable discussion.

Our ultimate aim is to sharpen the nation’s thinking on the issue of housing and prisoner reintegration, and to foster policy innovations that will improve outcomes for individuals, families, and communities. In this report, we draw on current research, policy, and practice to identify housing challenges for returning prisoners, as well as opportunities to improve the current system. In considering the housing dimensions of the reentry experience, this report casts a wide net. We examine the extent to which the population living in homeless shelters or on the streets has been involved in the criminal justice system. We explore the experiences of former prisoners in returning to their family homes, both in the private sector and particularly in public or subsidized housing. We examine the barriers former prisoners and ex-offenders face in securing their own housing, both in the private and public housing markets. The report documents efforts to develop housing options for this population, including halfway houses and other service-enriched transitional and permanent housing. Throughout the report, you will find sections titled “*Some Questions Remaining*” where we list a number of specific topics and issues where information that potentially could be used to guide policy and practice is unknown or unavailable.

Even though there has been very little systematic research examining the housing dimensions of reentry, we can still begin to understand the challenges facing returning prisoners and their families in a housing context. We also use anecdotal evidence, journalistic accounts, and individual experiences to add some of the missing details. The portrait that emerges from this review is compelling. As a nation, we have adopted many criminal justice and housing policies that hinder returning prisoners from reestablishing themselves following their incarceration. Transitional housing programs are few and criminal justice officials say that finding housing for parolees is by far their biggest challenge—more difficult and more challenging than finding a job. Community leaders within the supportive housing and homeless systems are struggling to meet the needs associated with increased numbers of prisoners returning home. We know that there is a large intersection between the population in the nation’s homeless shelters and those that have been involved in the criminal justice system, yet, historically, collaboration between the correctional system, supportive housing, and homeless providers is rare.

To provide grounding for this research overview, we have also conducted a scan of practice to see how programs around the country have addressed the housing challenges of returning prisoners. Their stories provide evidence both of the extent and complexity of the housing needs faced by returning prisoners, as well as the potential for new policies and innovative strategies to address those needs. The scan of practice undertaken for this report is by no means exhaustive; the intent is to provide some understanding of the flavor of practice and programming developed and implemented to assist the transition from prison and jail to the community.

Our focus is mostly on individuals being released from state and federal prisons. They have spent on average two and a half years in prison; they have been convicted of crimes sufficiently serious that they must serve at least a year in prison. But we are also interested in the housing experiences of individuals held in local jails. They are far larger in number, but are removed from their communities for much shorter periods of time, sometimes only a few days, but often stretching to several months.

To a lesser extent, we consider the experiences of individuals who have not been incarcerated, but have been convicted of felonies, because current housing policies limit their access to housing as well.

The report is structured as follows: Section I provides an overview of the issue of prisoner reentry. This section is divided into four parts. The first part of section I examines the shifts in criminal justice policy, the concentrations of returning prisoners in a small number of communities, and the changes in the profile of the reentry population. The second part documents the intersection between homelessness and the criminal justice population. The third part explores the health profile of the criminal justice population and the fourth part discusses the issues surrounding female returning prisoners. Section II explores the various housing options for returning prisoners and ex-offenders. This section includes a discussion of corrections-based halfway houses; federally subsidized and administered housing; service-enriched transitional housing (non-HUD/non-corrections based); homeless assistance supportive housing and other service-enriched and special needs housing programs, and the private housing market. For each of these categories, we summarize the available information, then discuss the barriers to utilizing these housing options, new and growing opportunities, and finally list some key questions that still need to be answered. Section III summarizes the dialog from the Roundtable discussion that took place on October 30, 2003. Section IV includes a scan of practice that portrays a variety of programs operating around the country.

SECTION I: REENTRY—THE ISSUE

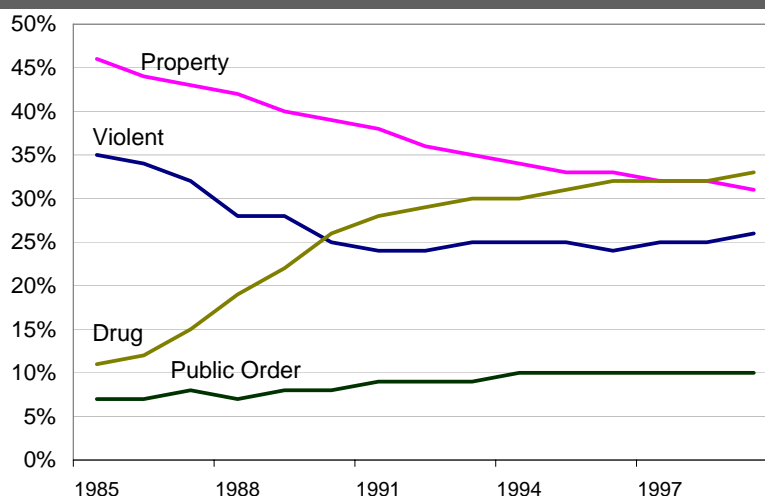
During the past 20 years, the United States experienced a massive increase in incarceration. The total prison population increased from 330,000 in 1980 to nearly 1.4 million in 1999 (Lynch and Sabol 2001). At the end of 2002, 1 in every 1,656 women and 1 in every 110 men were incarcerated in a state or federal prison (Harrison and Beck 2002). Most returning prisoners are male (88 percent). (See table 1.) The median age is 34 and the median education level is 11th grade (Bonczar and Glaze 1999). In 1998, more than half of returning prisoners were white (55 percent) and 44 percent were African American. Twenty-one percent of parolees were Hispanic (and may be of any race). Since 1990, drug offenders have comprised an increasing percentage of prison releases. In 1999, 33 percent of state prison releases were drug offenders, 25 percent were violent offenders, and 31 percent were property offenders (figure 1).

Table 1. A Profile of Parolees

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Gender | |
| Male | 88% |
| Female | 12% |
| Race | |
| White | 55% |
| Black / African American | 44% |
| Other | 1% |
| Hispanic Origin | |
| Hispanic | 21% |
| Non-Hispanic | 79% |
| Age (median) | 34 years |
| Education level (median) | 11 grade |

Source: U.S. Dept. of Justice, 2001

Figure 1. Percent of Releases from State Prison by Most Serious Offense, 1985–99



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2002

As stated earlier, over 600,000 ex-offenders will be released into America's communities this year (Beck, Karberg, and Harrison 2002). Of prisoners released in 1998, five states (California, Florida, New York, Ohio, and Texas) accounted for just under half of all offenders released (Lynch and Sabol 2001). Furthermore, within states, a large proportion of released prisoners return to a small number of disadvantaged communities. The Urban Institute's *Returning Home* study has examined concentrations of returning prisoners in three states. In Maryland, 59 percent of state prison releasees returned to Baltimore City. Within Baltimore, 30 percent returned to just six of Baltimore's 55 communities. In Illinois, 51 percent of state prisoners returned to Chicago. Within Chicago, 34 percent returned to just six of Chicago's 77

communities (LaVigne and Kachnowski 2003; LaVigne et al. 2003). In Ohio, 22 percent returned to Cuyahoga County. Of those, 79 percent returned to Cleveland and 28 percent of those returned to five communities (LaVigne and Thomson 2003). Consequently, the flow of prison releasees compounds challenges to communities, posing severe social and economic consequences for neighborhoods and families (Hagan and Coleman 2001; Hagan and Dinovitzer 2001).

Preparation for Release

Generally, prisoners released today have been in prisons for longer periods of time, and fewer of them have participated in education and drug treatment programs compared to those released in the 1990s (Hagan and Coleman 2001). Many are poorly educated, typically with histories of substance abuse. Research also indicates that many prison releasees fail to become law-abiding citizens. The largest recidivism study ever conducted—undertaken by the Bureau of Justice Statistics—examined over 270,000 prisoners released in 1994 from prisons in 15 states, and found that an estimated 67.5 percent of those released were rearrested for a new crime (either a felony or a serious misdemeanor) within three years following their release (Langan and Levin 2002). The study also found that most recidivism (two-thirds of all events) occurs within the first year after release. When these numbers are compared to a previous recidivism study of prison releasees in 1983 (Beck and Shipley 1989), the trends are disturbing. Today, the overall rearrest rate is 5 percent higher and more releasees were arrested in the first six months after release.

There are a number of changes that have occurred within the criminal justice system that may have influenced the overall success rate of those returning from prison. The criminal justice system has changed the way in which it deals with offenders, with a transformation in philosophy from one of rehabilitation in the 1970s to a get-tough philosophy today (Denney 1992; Tonry 1999; Travis et al. 2001). As crime increased during the 1980s and early 1990s, many states adopted determinate sentencing. Determinate sentencing removed parole board discretion to determine when prisoners were deemed “ready to be released.” In 1976, 65 percent of prison releases were discretionary, meaning that a parole board decided release decisions. By 1999, the share of prison releases that were made by a parole board dropped to 24 percent (Travis and Lawrence 2002). In addition to changes in parole discretion, other “get tough” legislative changes increased sentence lengths. Three strikes laws, truth-in-sentencing and other mandatory minimums were adopted by most states by the mid-late 1990s. Truth-in-sentencing structures meant that inmates can no longer attain “good time” toward release for good behavior until they have served at least 85 percent of their sentence.

With the shift to determinate sentencing and truth-in-sentencing, the incentive for inmates to prepare for their release is likely reduced since their parole date is not discretionary. In addition, these changes in sentencing have increased the number of prisoners who serve their entire sentence in prison. Today, under the new statutes about 20 percent of inmates serve the entire percent of their sentences in prison (Petersilia 2003). These individuals—those who “max out”—are not placed on parole supervision, but return to the community without any regulations. These changes have implications for reentry. Under parole supervision, an individual, in most cases,

would have to provide a community address to the parole agency indicating where they will live after release, which is then verified. In many cases, if the address could not be verified a community supervision officer would assist the returning prisoner in finding a place to live. The inmate would not be released until housing was verified. For those who max out, there is no correctional or community authority with the mandate to verify that the released individual has a place to live, let alone provide assistance with securing living arrangements.

In addition to changes in sentencing, changes also have occurred with regard to prison programming. As states increase fiscal resources for building prisons and escalating health care costs, fewer resources are available for in-prison rehabilitative services. From 1991 to 1997, participation of soon-to-be-released inmates in vocational programs decreased from 31 percent to 27 percent and from 43 percent to 35 percent in educational programs (Lynch and Sabol 2001). According to the Government Accounting Office (2001), in 1997, less than one-third of inmates received any vocational training; only 17 percent of federal and 3 percent of state inmates had assignments in prison industry jobs; and fewer than half of all inmates had been involved in an education program since being admitted. These numbers do not signify that inmates are unwilling to participate; waiting lists are high for most programs in all states and the federal system. In New York by the end of 2001, almost 10,000 state inmates were on waiting lists for vocational programs (Ostreicher 2003). An Ohio survey of inmates found that 68 percent of incoming inmates reported that they would be very likely to participate in prison job skills programs; only 10 percent expressed any *unwillingness* to participate (Henderson 2001).

In addition to decreasing percentages of inmates participating in vocational and educational programming, participation in pre-release planning is also declining (Hals 2003; Lynch and Sabol 2001). Pre-release planning programs are short-term programs—ranging from a few weeks to six months—that offer inmates nearing the end of their prison sentence a number of services to prepare inmates for return to society. Some pre-release programs offer inmates the opportunity to meet community service providers and vice versa. In some programs, the inmates may work closely with case workers that assist in setting up housing and other service needs in the community. Although the availability of these programs varies widely across states, overall participation in pre-release planning is extremely low. In 1997, within the year before release, only 12 percent of state releasees and 37 percent of federal releasees participated in pre-release programs (Government Accounting Office 2001).

There are also fewer resources today for supervision activities when individuals transition from prison to parole (Petersilia 2003). While expenditures for parole supervision more than doubled from 1985 to 1996, the parole population tripled, suggesting that on a per-parolee basis, resources did not keep pace (Lynch and Sabol 2001). The nature of parole supervision for many states has also changed. During the past few years, parole officers that were once committed to providing counseling and brokering community services may have become more surveillance oriented (Petersilia 2003). Not only has the public's "get tough on crime" stance demanded a more punitive approach, but also the increasing prison population has resulted in an increasing parole population, thus causing high caseloads. As a result of increasing

caseloads and diminishing budgets for parole services across many jurisdictions, regular parole officers may carry an average caseload of about 70 parolees, far higher than the recommended 35 to 50 parolees; and parole officers see their clients on regular parole an average of less than two 15 minute visits per month (Petersilia 1999).

From the perspective of housing policy, these changes in criminal justice policies and practices have the following consequences. First, many more people are coming out of prison than ever before, returning to a very small number of communities, which increases the number and concentration of returning prisoners seeking safe and affordable housing, whether with families or through other resources. Because of a shift away from indeterminate sentencing, corrections practitioners (and prisoners themselves) are under less pressure to secure housing as a condition of release. And the criminal justice agencies that are supposed to oversee this large-scale reintegration effort—the parole supervision system—suffers from increasing caseloads, reduced resources, and a mission shift away from services and supports in favor of surveillance and enforcement. These broad changes in the criminal justice policy environment mean that there is less attention to the housing needs of a larger number of people than ever before.

Reentry and Homelessness

According to a number of different studies that examine the demographics of prisoners, the population coming in and out of America's prisons has high rates of homelessness:

- A Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) study of state prisoners (Langan and Levin 2002) found that among those state prisoners expected to be released to the community in year-end 1999, 12 percent reported being homeless at the time of their arrest.
- Another BJS study found that in 1998, 9 percent of state prison inmates reported living on the street or in a shelter in the 12 months prior to arrest (Ditton 1999). Looking at only inmates who were mentally ill, the level of homelessness was even higher—20 percent.
- A California study reported that in 1997, 10 percent of the state's parolees were homeless. In urban areas such as San Francisco and Los Angeles, an estimated 30–50 percent of all parolees were homeless during this same year (California Department of Corrections 1997).
- A 1999 Urban Institute three-site study of 400 returning prisoners with histories of drug abuse found that 32 percent had been homeless for a month or more at least once in their lifetimes. Eighteen percent reported they were homeless for at least a month in the year after they were released from prison (Rossman et al. 1999).

New attempts at matching parole client names and identification numbers to homeless shelter rolls also show large numbers of parolees relying on shelter

systems—though the numbers underestimate the true extent due to missing information. New York for instance, reported that at any one time about 800 parolees are in the New York City shelter system (Riley 2003). This represents roughly 3 percent of the New York City parole caseload. The findings from a recent study examining the intersection of corrections services and shelter use suggest that prisoners that were homeless at some time in their life were more likely to be homeless after a state prison incarceration (Metraux and Culhane 2004). Specifically, those released prisoners with a history of shelter use were almost five times as likely to have a post-release shelter stay. The same study also found that of New York State prison releases entering homeless shelters sometime after release, 54 percent did so within the first 30 days.

In short, about a tenth of the population coming into our prisons has recently been homeless, and at least the same percent of those who leave our prisons end up homeless, for at least a while. And those with histories of mental illness and drug abuse are even more likely to be homeless.

Studies indicate that parole violation and rearrest may be likely for those prison releasees with no place to go upon release. A study following 49 individuals released from New York State prisons and city jails found that those individuals living in temporary shelters upon release had more difficulty resisting drugs and finding jobs. Furthermore, 38 percent of the people who reported during the study's pre-release interviews that they were going to live in a shelter absconded from parole supervision, compared to only 5 percent of the individuals who reported they were not going to a shelter (Nelson et al. 1999). If these percentages were extrapolated to the large number of returning prisoners that populate shelters, violation and rearrest rates would likely be very high.

Studies of homeless individuals and families also suggest a relationship between homelessness and having spent time in prison or jail. A synthesis of 60 research studies on homelessness conducted in the 1980s found that on average 18 percent of the population of homeless persons had served time in prison after being convicted of a felony, and about one-third of the population of homeless persons had been jailed for misdemeanor charges (Shlay and Rossi 1992). According to the 1996 National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients (NSHAPC), 49 percent of homeless adults reportedly spent five or more days in a city or county jail, 4 percent had spent time in a military lock-up, and 18 percent had been incarcerated in a state or federal prison (Burt et al. 1999). A 1997 "snapshot" survey of the inhabitants of Boston homeless shelters found that 57 percent of the people surveyed had lived in at least one institutional setting within the prior year—hospitals, mental health facilities, jails, detoxification centers, or halfway houses—and 22 percent had recently lived in a criminal justice setting (Friedman et al. 1997). In a survey of city officials in 36 cities (U.S. Conference of Mayors 2002) on hunger and homelessness, prison release was identified by six cities (Cleveland, Denver, New Orleans, Phoenix, Seattle, and Washington, D.C.) as having a major impact on homelessness.

Reentry and Public Health

Studies suggest that public health issues complicate the housing needs of returning prisoners (GAINS Center 1999; Roberts et al. 2002). And the public health concerns are serious and deep-rooted. People returning from prisons are disproportionately burdened by health problems (Hammett et al. 2001). HIV and AIDS infection and related illnesses, such as hepatitis and sexually transmitted diseases, are particularly prevalent among prison and jail releasees. One study found that one-fourth of all people living with HIV infection or AIDS in 1997 were released from a correctional facility in that same year, while almost one-third of all people with hepatitis C infection and more than one-third of all people who had tuberculosis were also released from a correctional facility in 1997 (Hammett et al. 2001). Given the nature of these illnesses, these releasees are in need of medication and continued medical support.

Ex-prisoners also have high rates of substance abuse and mental illness. The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse estimated that in 1997, about 75 to 80 percent of all prison inmates had substance abuse problems, while only about 13 percent of inmates received any kind of treatment while in prison (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse 1998). This estimate was confirmed through a BJS report, which found that at mid-year 2000, an estimated 191,000 prisoners in state prisons (16.2 percent) self-reported some form of mental illness; one in every eight state prisoners was receiving some mental health therapy or counseling services, and almost 10 percent were receiving psychotropic medications (Beck and Maruschak 2001). Youth offenders are also burdened by mental health problems. A recent study of 1,800 arrested and detained youth found that nearly two-thirds of males and nearly three-quarters of females met diagnostic criteria for one or more psychiatric disorders (Templin et al. 2002).

Factors such as substance abuse and health issues can compound chances for finding housing. A survey of housing service providers in Washington, D.C., found that mental health problems and drug problems provide serious barriers with regard to providing housing assistance to returning prisoners (The Urban Institute forthcoming). These barriers are likely to influence an individual's ability to abide parole regulations and find and maintain stable jobs. Problems may arise when inmates receiving psychotropic medication or HIV medications in prison are released with no transition plan to obtain these vital medications in the community (Stommel 2002). A survey of correctional facilities found that 35 percent do not assist mentally ill inmates in obtaining community mental health services at release (Beck and Maruschak 2001). Mentally ill releasees rarely have private insurance and only a minority are Medicaid recipients (GAINS Center 1999). And if Medicaid coverage lapsed during incarceration, individuals would have to reapply for benefits upon release. Furthermore, mentally ill inmates are likely to max out their sentences, leaving incarceration unsupervised by parole (Hals 2003). These intertwined issues can impact the chances of finding stable housing and ultimately realizing success in the community.

Reentry and Women

Women face unique barriers in securing safe and affordable housing when they return home from prison or jails (Austin, Bloom, and Donahue 1992; Dodge and Pogrebin 2001; Mumola 2000; Ritchie 2000). Women may have special service needs and often must find a home not only for themselves, but also for their children. Finding habitable, safe, and secure housing for one person alone may be difficult, but with minor children involved, there may be significantly more hurdles to overcome. Furthermore, a BJS study found that incarcerated women are in worse economic circumstances than either incarcerated men or other economically disadvantaged women (Mumola 2000). The study showed that few women are employed in the month before arrest; few have high school diplomas; most women in state prisons report a drug or alcohol addiction; and one in five were homeless during the year prior to their arrest. Another study found that in 1998, nearly 6 in 10 women in state prisons had experienced physical or sexual abuse in the past; just over a third of imprisoned women had been abused by an intimate in the past; and just under a quarter reported prior abuse by a family member (Greenfield and Snell 1999). Women under supervision by justice system agencies were mothers of an estimated 1.3 million minor children. Approximately 7 in 10 women under correctional sanction have children under the age of 18. An estimated 72 percent of women on probation, 70 percent of women held in local jails, 65 percent of women in state prisons, and 59 percent of women in federal prisons have young children. These women face the additional trauma of being separated from their children (Austin et al. 1992).

Finding suitable housing for women and their families may become more problematic as the number of females serving time in prisons continues to increase. Since 1995 the number of female prisoners under federal jurisdiction has increased 52 percent, from 7,398 to 11,234, while the number under state jurisdiction has increased 41 percent, from 61,070 to 86,257. As the number of women in prison increases, the programming available to them is likely to decrease. Because facilities for women are generally much smaller than those for men, fewer resources are dedicated to them. More women in prison may mean crowding and longer waitlists for rehabilitative programs and pre-release support. In addition, correctional programs are often designed to serve male offenders; little programming exists that specifically has been designed to meet the multidimensional needs of female offenders. Furthermore, very little information is available to guide the development of appropriate interventions—in prison or in the community—to improve outcomes for mothers and their children (Austin et al. 1992; LaLonde and George 2002). Limited pre-release preparation and community programming, coupled with heavy responsibilities to care for custodial children upon release, create deep-seated barriers for women trying to secure stable housing on the path toward self-sufficiency.

SECTION II: CURRENT HOUSING OPTIONS FOR RETURNING PRISONERS AND EX-OFFENDERS

This section explores the housing options available for returning prisoners. We outline a wide range of housing options for returning prisoners and discuss the barriers returning prisoners and ex-offenders may experience in trying to access these options. We first discuss the extent to which returning prisoners return to live with

their families and the associated restrictions and barriers. Then we present the more formal or systems-based housing options. These options include: (1) community-based correctional housing facilities; (2) transitional (service-enriched) housing (non-corrections based and non-HUD funded); (3) federally subsidized and administered housing; (4) homeless assistance supportive housing, other service-enhanced housing, and special needs housing supported through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and (5) the private market.

For each category of housing options, we review what information is known, discuss the barriers, present new or recent opportunities and, finally, list a number of questions that have yet to be explored. Where possible, we also include information on costs of housing options. However, the costs of housing programming and facilities are often difficult to assess, not only because the range of services within similar programs is great, but also because states and jurisdictions often use different methods of cost measurement. As a result, in most cases we do not address costs. Some information on costs is provided in the scan of practice (section IV).

For a majority of returning prisoners, their first home post-release is that of a family member, a close friend, or a significant other. This may be the result of supports—financial, emotional, and other—that are provided by family members. A Vera Institute of Justice study found that of 49 offenders followed post-release from prison, 40 were living with a relative, or with their spouse or partner, in the month right after they were released from prison (Nelson et al. 1999). In the Urban Institute’s *Returning Home: Maryland* study, 153 respondents were interviewed about two months after their release. When asked where they went after getting out of prison, nearly half (49 percent) said they slept at a family member’s home their first night. Another 10 percent slept at a friend’s house the first night out of prison. At the time of the interview (two months out) the overwhelming majority (80 percent) were living with a family member (LaVigne and Kachnowski 2003).

For some returning offenders, residing in the home of a family member, friend, or significant other is not an option. This may be the result of family conflict, the reluctance of family members to welcome a violent individual back into their lives, or the lack of an immediate family. In some cases there are additional legal restrictions involved. In cases of domestic violence, for example, there may be restraining orders disallowing an individual from returning to the home of a family member who had been victimized, or who had been abusive. Conditions of parole may also prevent returning offenders from returning to the home of a friend or family member. Many supervision conditions prohibit offenders from residing with a family member or close friend if they have a criminal history. According to a 1988 survey of conditions placed on former prisoners under parole supervision, 31 of the 51 responding parole agencies reported that they prohibited parolees from associating with anyone who had a criminal record (Rhine et al. 1991).

In many cases, abiding by parole conditions not to fraternize with anyone on supervision may be impossible. For many families, multiple family members are on supervision, and in many public housing units and neighborhoods a large proportion of residents are being supervised by a criminal justice agency. Federal regulations that allow local public housing authorities to evict entire families when resident family

members or guests commit certain crimes may also cause families to be reluctant to allow ex-offender family members to live in publicly owned or subsidized residences.

Given these and other issues described in more detail below, simply going to live with loved ones does not mean housing issues have been resolved for a returning prisoner. Living with family or friends may only be a temporary arrangement as the individual begins the daily routine of community life. An Urban Institute focus group with successful ex-offenders found that many did not succeed on their first release from prison. And part of the problem was having nowhere to go. Some ex-offenders said they could not return to family members because their criminal behavior destroyed ties to loved ones; others said they did not want to go back to their families because they would get thrown into the same negative lifestyles they had before their incarceration (Solomon, Roman, and Waul 2001).

In addition, limited financial resources may increase a returning prisoner's likelihood that he/she will revert to behaviors that led to his/her original incarceration. The Bureau of Justice Statistics recidivism study (Langan and Levin 2002) found that those rearrested within the first year were more likely to be arrested for property offenses, as opposed to violent or other crimes, suggesting some economic motivation for continued criminal behavior. Indeed, individuals released from prison without federal or state benefits, income support or personal savings will have difficulties securing housing.

Not surprisingly, returning prisoners may be ineligible for food stamps, veterans benefits, and benefits through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. For returning prisoners who are caretakers of children, TANF assistance offers both cash assistance and services. However, anyone with a drug conviction is barred for life from obtaining food stamps and TANF benefits, unless a state modifies or eliminates this prohibition (Koyanagi 2002). These restrictions can hinder housing support to ex-offenders with children because some states⁵ and several counties in two additional states have committed federal TANF and/or state maintenance-of-effort funds to programs that provide housing subsidies. Other guidelines restrict the use of TANF funds for housing services. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) considers any TANF-funded housing subsidy that is not short term as "assistance," even if families are working and not receiving TANF cash benefits. Therefore, a TANF-funded housing subsidy provided for more than four months counts against the family's federal lifetime benefit limit (Sard and Waller 2002). This restriction hinders jurisdictions from providing ongoing rental assistance to working families. Returning prisoners not able to access TANF may be able to obtain other benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). However, when an individual is incarcerated for more than a month, these benefits are suspended. Upon release, reinstatement of benefits may take weeks or even months.

Researchers know little about the financial assets available to returning prisoners and how these benefits and assets factor into housing options and choices. Similarly, information is not readily available about the path returning prisoners take to stability

⁵ The states are CT, KY, MD, MI, MN, NJ, NC, PA, VA, and the counties of Denver, LA, and San Mateo.

and productivity. What percent of returning prisoners find stable housing with families? What percent of returning prisoners living with families or loved ones succeed compared to those that do not live with loved ones? Furthermore, we know little about how increasing numbers of prisoners being released without post-release supervision (parole) fare the first few months out. Policies made to get tough on crime by increasing time served could have unintended consequences for communities already suffering from high crime.

1. Community-Based Correctional Facilities

Within the corrections system, housing assistance typically comes in two forms: through pre-release facilities while individuals are still incarcerated, or as they transition into community-based supervision through the use of halfway houses. Although pre-release facilities do not fall under the purview of community-based housing options, we discuss these facilities here because of the potential these facilities have for strengthening the reentry process overall, and assisting with housing.

As discussed earlier, only a small percentage of soon-to-be-released inmates participate in pre-release programs (Lynch and Sabol 2001). And, most likely, an even smaller percentage receives housing assistance within these programs. Part of the limitations in providing housing assistance as part of pre-release programming is that many correctional facilities are located far from the area where the releasees intend to live upon release, making it difficult to offer direct connection to the available housing market. A small number of state correctional systems, however, utilize a process where inmates nearing release are moved to special pre-release facilities located near large metropolitan areas where community-based service providers come to the facility to network with inmates before release. These specialized pre-release facilities are usually located in large metropolitan areas that are near the communities where many prisoners return. The Maryland Division of Correction has been utilizing such a facility in Baltimore for pre-release programming as part of the Baltimore Reentry Partnership (REP). Assisting with housing-related services is part of the program.

Apart from pre-release facilities, some state correctional systems and the federal system utilize halfway houses to assist in the reentry process. Halfway houses or community reentry centers are residential programs designed to help transition individuals returning to their communities from prison, representing a “halfway” step between prison and freedom. These facilities are overseen by either corrections or community corrections agencies (i.e., probation and parole). Although eligibility varies by state, some inmates are eligible for release into a transitional program for the last 90 to 120 days of their sentence. Halfway houses serve several purposes. They provide a structured and regulated environment for releasees in need of direction and assistance in returning to the community. They attempt to increase public safety by monitoring client progress. In addition, the residential facilities often offer supportive services and staff that act as case managers to broker employment and social service assistance to their residents. Many advocates of halfway houses argue that halfway houses are more likely than prisons to ensure treatment needs (e.g., medical, drug abuse, mental health) of residents are being met.

Halfway houses are used both by the federal and state correctional systems. However, halfway use is more prevalent within the federal system. In 2000, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) contracted for 282 halfway houses that provided 6,911 beds for over 18,000 inmates (U.S. General Accounting Office 2001). Generally, inmates enter the halfway houses 11 to 13 months before their probable release date. The average length of stay is roughly 104 days. Large community organizations such as Dismas Charities, Inc., and the Salvation Army operate a number of residential facilities across the country. In contrast to the federal system, across the state system, there were only 55 halfway houses operated by 10 state agencies in 1999. It is estimated that less than 0.5 percent of all inmates released in 1999 were served by halfway houses (American Correctional Association 2000).

It remains unclear why the use of halfway houses is very limited in state corrections and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Negative publicity and the erosion of public support is likely a cause. After the Willie Horton case, Massachusetts saw a steep decrease in the number of halfway house beds, from 240 in 1989 to 30 in 2000 (Abel 2002). Perhaps these facilities are not more common because little research exists on their effectiveness. It is not that the research shows the facilities are ineffective in reducing recidivism or that the facilities increase crime in neighborhoods, but simply because research examining the general topic of halfway houses is rare. Most of the few studies we found are nonexperimental studies that use no comparison group but instead attempt to isolate variables associated with successful halfway house program completion (Calathes 1991; Donnelly and Forscher 1984; English and Mande 1991; Walsh and Beck 1990). These variables associated with successful program completion are often the same variables associated with completion of other types of alternative placements, and hence, do little to impart insight on the effectiveness specific to the nature of halfway houses.

However, a few studies exist that demonstrate the effectiveness by comparing those in halfway houses to those on parole supervision but not participating in a residential transition program (Allen and Seiter 1976; Beck 1979; Dowell, et al. 1985; Lowencamp and Latessa 2002). A study of a California halfway house for women found that the average number of crimes in the halfway house group was half that of the control group that did not go through a halfway house, and that the halfway house group committed less severe crimes (Dowell et al. 1985). An evaluation of 3,629 individuals released from prison in 1999 in Ohio showed that high-risk offenders released into halfway houses have lower recidivism rates (63 vs. 68 percent), compared to high-risk offenders released directly onto parole supervision (Lowencamp and Latessa 2002).

With regard to costs, a 1994 study of the costs of correctional programs in four states (Colorado, North Carolina, Ohio, and Virginia) averaged the annual costs per offender of different correctional options and found that, average annual costs of halfway houses to be \$12,494, compared to \$17,794 for prison (Shilton 1994 as cited in Marion 2002). In addition, most halfway houses require clients to pay some treatment or living costs, lessening the financial burden to the state.

Barriers

A key barrier to the use of halfway houses for returning prisoners is simply the lack of halfway houses across the nation, which translates into a very limited number of available beds. The scarcity of transitional facilities may be the result of a combination of the get-tough policies and the current fiscal environment. Corrections budgets have been used for increasing spending to build prisons, not to create community-based facilities. During the last decade there have been funds available for construction of facilities—the Violent Offender Incarceration and Truth-in-Sentencing Grant Program (VOI/TIS), a U.S. Department of Justice program authorized by the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 and aimed to increase prison and jail capacity, could be used to build community corrections facilities as long as the new facilities free up prison bed space for violent offenders. The money, however, could only be used for constructing the facilities and cannot be used for operating costs. VOI/TIS was not funded for fiscal year 2002.

Even in jurisdictions that have money to build or operate halfway houses, community opposition can stop the siting of a halfway house. This opposition, known as NIMBY (Not in My Backyard), can be powerful. Residents may fear for their safety as well as fear subsequent negative effects on property values (Lake 1993). A 1997 study by the National Law Center polled 89 supportive housing programs from around the nation and found that 41 percent had experienced NIMBY opposition from either neighbors or their local governments prior to beginning their operations. The most prevalent reasons for this opposition were anticipated loss of property values (64 percent), and a potential increase in crime (61 percent). Other motivations behind NIMBY include worries about possible increases in disorder and traffic (Galster et al. 2002).

In contrast to public opposition and perception, research has shown that if negative impacts do occur, it is most likely because community-based facilities are forced into already densely populated areas or poor neighborhoods, providing more victims, opportunities for crime, and an overall inability for the community to maintain a level of control and stability over its neighborhood (Galster et al. 2002; Goetz, Lam, and Heitlinger 1996).

In December 2002, a new barrier to the use of halfway houses was erected by a U.S. Department of Justice opinion to alter how the Federal Bureau of Prisons can use halfway houses. The DOJ opinion was meant to close a federal loophole that allowed white collar offenders to bypass prison altogether and, instead, spend their sentences in less restrictive community facilities. The ruling—basically stating that community confinement does not equal imprisonment—unintentionally affects all federal prisoners (and all District of Columbia prisoners) who could be released to halfway houses near the end of their sentences. The new opinion stipulates that halfway houses can only be used for 10 percent of the total sentence. Before the ruling, prisoners could be paroled to halfway houses for a much larger percent of their total sentence. As a result of the ruling, many inmates are now residing in transitional facilities for only three to six weeks. Privately run halfway houses have recently testified that the new opinion may lead to the closing of facilities around the

country due to the inability to fill beds that had before been filled and paid for by the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBOP).

Opportunities

Some state legislatures are moving to formalize discharge planning and/or develop transitional facilities and pre-release facilities. In 2001 in the State of Florida, for instance, revised statutes created a new Bureau of Transition Services within the Florida Department of Corrections (FDOC) and required that by January 1, 2002, the FDOC designate 400 beds in non-secure community-based facilities for transition assistance for inmates who are nearing their date of release. FDOC must provide substance abuse transition housing programs that also emphasize job placement and gainful employment for program participants. Six months prior to release, inmates must undergo a pre-release assessment with a transition-assistance specialist who must, if applicable, help the inmate make arrangements with a transitional facility. A December 1, 2002, statute requires inmates to complete a 100-hour comprehensive transition course that covers job readiness and life-management skills in order to become eligible for release.

The Pennsylvania Department of Corrections is pilot testing a new pre-release program—Community Orientation and Reintegration (COR)—that acts as a bridge between institutional and community corrections programs and parole. The COR program is divided into two phases. Phase I is a two-week component that involves working with inmates one month prior to release from a State Correctional Institution (SCI). Phase I focuses primarily on refreshing skills and reviewing information that inmates presumably learned through prior in-prison programming. Phase II is a four-week component intended to help facilitate the return of the soon-to-be-released inmate to his or her family, as well as to help with reintegration into the community. Phase II focuses on establishing positive linkages within the community and with family, and by securing employment to provide financial security upon release from prison.

In addition, in recent years, both the Rhode Island Department of Corrections and the Tennessee Department of Corrections implemented reentry transition planning services that include linking prison releasees to transitional housing through pre-release and post-release case management (Rodriguez and Brown 2003). Rhode Island's COMPASS program (Challenging Offenders to Maintain Positive Associations and Social Stability) will place 200 participants each year in the program and Tennessee's Bridges program has the capacity to serve roughly 300 people in the two-year program.

Another innovative transition program includes Project Greenlight—a pilot eight-week reentry program that took place in New York's Queensboro Correctional Facility (minimum security facility). The program, in operation between February 2002 and February 2003, was a partnership effort between the Vera Institute of Justice and the New York State Division of Parole.⁶ Project Greenlight's goal was to

⁶ The Vera Institute of Justice's work on Project Greenlight was funded by a contract from the New York State Division of Parole for \$889,000 for work from October 2001 to May 2003. This work included the last planning stages for the project, the cost of Vera personnel (five full time, one part time) and office supplies and

address a comprehensive range of reentry issues through collaboration between corrections and parole staff, as well as community-based organizations and inmates' families.

Project Greenlight served 348 men over the year. A full-time community coordinator, working as part of prison staff, would spend approximately half his time providing housing assistance. This included conducting housing intake interviews, developing relationships with transitional housing organizations, identifying existing housing resources, and matching participants to available openings. Looking at outcomes, Project Greenlight secured housing referrals for 63 percent of the 51 men who requested assistance and otherwise would have been homeless upon release (Rodriguez and Brown 2003).

New funding to state and local jurisdictions through the multiagency federal reentry effort—Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI)—provides new and expanded opportunities to correctional systems committed to strengthening housing options for returning prisoners. SVORI is providing millions of dollars for reentry services to over 60 jurisdictions around the country. With one of their two SVORI grants, Alabama is specifically targeting efforts to strengthen housing. The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs is working with the Alabama Department of Corrections, University of Alabama at Birmingham's Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime (UAB TASC), and two community organizations to target (over three years) 160 female offenders ages 25 to 35 who are considered at high risk for recidivism. Aid to Inmate Mothers will provide services while the women are incarcerated and Aletheia House will provide the majority of transitional community-based reentry services. All transitional housing clients will initially live in a 28-unit transitional housing facility operated by Aletheia House. After four months, women with children will be able to apply to transfer to another facility to live with their children.⁷ Women without children will move to "Next Step" restrictive transitional housing, which involves transitional housing in single-family three-bedroom homes. Women can also enter a long-term housing program that consists of independent scattered-site housing.

In Massachusetts, SVORI funding will be used for broad reentry efforts, but some of the funding will be used to continue and expand housing-related reentry services implemented with U.S. DOJ VOI/TIS funding received by the Massachusetts Department of Correction (MDOC). MDOC has trained housing specialists to work with case managers in each of the 18 Department of Correction facilities to secure housing for those inmates nearing release. MDOC has also contracted with the South Middlesex Opportunity Counsel and HomeStart to locate

supplies for participants during the year the pilot project operated, the cost of a subcontract with the employment agency Grant Associates for a part-time job developer, and, after the pilot phase, the drafting and editing of articles about certain portions of the programming and to pay for the printing of these articles. The work was also supported by smaller grants (around \$48,000 a year) from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. In addition to the contract, Parole assigned two parole officers full time to the project for the year it operated. The New York State Department of Correctional Services assigned two corrections counselors full time and one program assistant part time.

⁷ The Aletheia House Family Transitional Housing Program includes 30 single-family homes where mothers and children can be reunited. The program receives a portion of its funding from HUD.

housing and stabilization services for inmates nearing release. HomeStart will provide one housing specialist to serve the Boston area and the South Middlesex Opportunity Counsel will offer placements in its own properties in other communities. The South Middlesex Opportunity Counsel owns over 800 units of affordable housing in 14 communities. MDOC estimates that the new housing programming can serve roughly 400 offenders per year.

Some Questions Remaining

- Why do so few pre-release facilities exist? What types of housing services are being utilized at pre-release facilities? What are the costs and benefits associated with these facilities compared to direct release?
- Why do so few halfway houses exist? What are the costs and benefits associated with halfway houses?
- For states and jurisdictions that utilize halfway houses, what are the best practices of Departments of Corrections across the country for prioritizing funding for transitional facilities?
- Almost all halfway houses exclude violent offenders. Can halfway houses be used successfully for violent offenders? What innovative options are available for returning violent offenders nearing prison release?
- Are there funding streams similar to the VOI/TIS program available for the development or building of transitional facilities?
- How intractable are NIMBY issues for siting of halfway houses? What can we learn from other jurisdictions that have success in building and operating these facilities? How can opposition be overcome?
- What impact will the new DOJ ruling have on FBOP halfway houses?
- Why does so little research exist on the effectiveness of halfway houses in reducing recidivism? Expanding what we know about the effectiveness of halfway houses may help overcome NIMBY issues.
- Are there any DOCs using innovative methods to assist inmate transitions to supportive housing?

2. Transitional (Service-Enriched) Housing (Non-Corrections Based and Non-HUD Funded)

In addition to halfway houses run by corrections agencies, there is a wide variety of housing programs that are funded by private foundations, charitable giving, and a mix of grants or subsidies from state and federal governments. These residential facilities, most of which have some form of treatment focus, are generally run by nonprofit or faith-based organizations and do not have contracts with correctional agencies. Residents in the facilities often have to pay a fee to live there. The fee is usually based on a sliding scale of ability to pay and may increase as the resident progresses through program phases.

The Ridge House in Reno, Nevada, is one example of a nonprofit organization that provides residential and case management services to men and women released from prison. Other examples include Woman at the Well House Ministries (WWHM) in San Antonio, Texas, and Aletheia House in Birmingham, Alabama. These programs have one or more facilities that specially target returning prisoners for their available beds. WWHM is supported almost entirely by charitable giving; Ridge House and Aletheia House receive support from a wide variety of sources, including state government grants.

Little is known about the effectiveness of these programs, though some are beginning to be evaluated. After a positive initial assessment, DOJ has funded an evaluation of Ridge House in Reno, Nevada, which will begin in early 2004. In addition, The Department of Justice is sponsoring the evaluation of the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI). Although only some of the grantees incorporate transitional housing programs as part of their initiative, the evaluation should uncover some best practices with regard to housing. Similarly, a DOL-sponsored national evaluation will soon begin of the Youth Offender Demonstration Program (YODP), a labor-focused reentry program for youth. Some YODP sites incorporate linkages to nonprofit-run housing programs as part of the model.

Barriers

Not all communities can successfully develop and implement these types of housing programs. Many of these programs form as the result of community coalitions or partnerships where government and community agencies have long histories of working together. These programs are likely to develop in communities that are ready to tackle the issue of crime and reentry, or in communities that have strong, well-funded community-based or faith-based organizations. Like corrections-run halfway houses, these programs must overcome NIMBY, but they may have an easier time because they are run by nonprofits, and hence, are viewed by residents as having the interests of the community at heart.

In addition, the limited availability of funding is a barrier for many communities. Often, creativity and dedication are needed to piece a variety of funding sources together to sustain a residential program. Community organizations and partnerships that implement these programs must be committed to the mission of serving returning prisoners and seek to institutionalize these programs over time.

Opportunities

In addition to new opportunities through SVORI funding for development of community-based transitional housing programs targeting returning prisoners by nonprofit organizations, there has been movement by states to create funding streams dedicated for the development and operation of transitional service-enriched housing that targets people living with mental illness and/or substance use issues. If flexible, such funding streams may be used to target ex-offenders who are living with mental illness or chemical addiction. These funds are usually administered by state mental health, substance abuse, or public health agencies, and may require sponsors to obtain a formal license to operate funded housing.

One example of a mental health funding stream is the New York State Office of Mental Health's (OMH) "SRO Housing for Adults with Serious and Persistent

Mental Illness Who Can Be Characterized as Having High Service Needs” Program (“High Services Needs”). The program was created to target mentally ill persons, not necessarily homeless, but in need of service-enriched housing. Individuals incarcerated in jails and prisons are eligible for the program. This funding stream is relatively new, however, and it remains unclear whether or not it has been effectively used to develop supportive housing for the criminally involved mentally ill (Cho, Gary, Ball, and Ladov 2002).

In addition to New York, California amended legislation in 1999 through Assembly Bills 23/2034 to target mentally ill, criminally involved individuals for housing support. These acts appropriated \$10,000,000 to fund housing and treatment for homeless individuals with a diagnosed mental illness who are involved with the criminal justice system. Clients are referred to “AB 2034” programs from jails, shelters, hospitals, or can walk into an AB 2034 center. The centers provide housing (supervised group housing, or independent housing vouchers, depending on the level of independence the individual is capable of), health care, mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, and skills training.⁸ The agencies participating in the AB 2034 program are required to locate housing and provide transportation to wherever the client will be living upon release. In Los Angeles, most AB 2034 clients enter the program from jail. Jail staff identify prospective clients and refer them to an intake coordinator. Eligible clients are then tracked by a case manager and a discharge plan is developed. The program also funds housing specialists who recruit property owners and work with property managers to resolve disputes and intervene if an eviction is imminent. For clients who will be utilizing Section 8 vouchers, AB 2034 funds can also be used to pay rent until Section 8 housing vouchers are received and to place a deposit on a housing unit so the property owner will have the funds available to make necessary repairs to bring the building up to Section 8 standards.

Some Questions Remaining

- What do we know about best practices of these programs? Few have been evaluated. How do we transfer best practices of these programs and facilities to program developers in other jurisdictions?
- How do these programs leverage funding? Is there a particular mix of funding that has been successful? Have these programs utilized HUD homeless assistance funding or other HUD programs?
- Does size matter? How large is too large for communities?

3. Federally Subsidized and Administered Housing

Federally subsidized and administered housing is another option for very low income individuals and families. There are three main *federally subsidized* housing programs offered by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development Agency: (a) the Housing Choice Voucher Program (formerly called Section 8), (b) the Federal Public Housing Program, and (c) a variety of projects and programs that can be categorized

⁸ The full legislation is listed under California W.I.C. § 5806, 5814, 5814.5, 5802.

as *privately owned* federally subsidized housing stock. Combined, these three programs serve about one-third of all eligible renter households with incomes up to 80 percent of the area median.

To participate in the Housing Choice Voucher Program, families or individuals apply to their local public housing authorities (PHAs) or designated local Housing Voucher administrating agencies. The PHAs receive federal funds from HUD to administer the voucher program. The PHA determines eligibility for a housing voucher based on the total annual gross income and family size. In general, the family's income may not exceed 50 percent of the median income for the county or metropolitan area in which the family chooses to live. The vouchers are limited to U.S. citizens and specified categories of noncitizens who have eligible immigration status.

A family issued a housing voucher is responsible for finding a suitable housing unit of the family's choice where the owner agrees to rent under the program. A housing subsidy is then paid to the landlord directly by the PHA on behalf of the participating family. The subsidy generally pays the difference between 30 percent of a household's income and a locally defined payment standard.⁹

The Federal Public Housing program subsidizes rent for publicly owned housing units earmarked for low-income, eligible residents. It was established to provide decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Public housing comes in all sizes and types, from scattered-site single-family houses to high-rise apartments for elderly families. Families pay 30 percent of income, adjusted for certain criteria such as medical disabilities. PHAs have discretion in calculating deductions.

The third area of federally subsidized housing are those projects that are privately owned, but partially or wholly subsidized by the federal government. Project-based Section 8 developments fall into this category. A PHA can attach up to 20 percent of its voucher assistance to specific housing units if the owner agrees to either rehabilitate or construct the units, or the owner agrees to set aside a portion of the units in an existing development. Rehabilitated units must require at least \$1,000 of rehabilitation per unit to be subsidized, and all units must meet HUD housing quality standards.

There are no appropriations for this program and HUD does not allocate funding for project-based voucher assistance. Instead, funding for project-based vouchers comes from funds already obligated by HUD to a PHA under its annual contributions contract (ACC).

Because the housing resides in the private sector, this category of federally subsidized housing is a haphazard mix of different projects and programs that seems to have no centralized system accounting for existing housing, making it difficult for

⁹ Information retrieved on July 7, 2003, at http://www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/hcv/about/fact_sheet.cfm.

the public to access this market, much less determine the overall availability of housing in this category.

In 2002 almost five million low-income families rented homes using the federal public housing and housing voucher choice housing. Another 800,000 families live in housing made possible through other miscellaneous programs sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) (National Low Income Housing Coalition 2003).

In addition to the federally subsidized housing for the very poor, there are *federally administered* programs that assist in the provision and development of affordable housing. Two of these programs include the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program of 1988 and the HOME program of 1990 (O'Reagan and Quigly 2000).¹⁰

LIHTC is a tax credit to encourage development of low-income rental housing. State agencies review applications submitted by developers and providers of low-income housing and allocate housing tax credits according to allocation criteria that reflect their own housing policy goals, within federal guidelines. Projects may be developed for nonprofit organizations or for-profit organizations, but states must set aside 10 percent of the LIHTC funds they receive for use by nonprofit organizations. The property owner decides the population targeted for residence in the new properties, and most often, the majority of housing units are not rented to the very poor. The property owners maintain any waiting lists that exist.

HOME is a block grant with the broad objective of building flexible housing institutions for the provision of locally determined and appropriate housing. Its emphasis is on linkages and partnerships between for-profit and nonprofit organizations. To receive HOME funding, states and localities must submit a five-year comprehensive housing affordability strategy that includes partnerships and a 15 percent set-aside to housing community development organizations. This is a very decentralized program, with a key role for nonprofits in the administration of programs.¹¹

Barriers

The barriers for returning prisoners to federally subsidized and administered housing generally fall into two categories: (1) scarcity of housing stock, and (2) formal and informal regulations and prejudices that restrict tenancy.

The scarcity of federally subsidized housing creates barriers for all individuals seeking affordable housing. It has been estimated that only one-third of all individuals and families eligible for subsidized housing actually gain access to federally subsidized housing. Some housing advocates have suggested that given an individual's criminal history, it may not be feasible to expect that returning prisoners access this housing resource when thousands of law-abiding individuals are awaiting housing. Furthermore,

¹⁰ The LIHTC program is under the oversight of the IRS, while the HOME program is under the oversight of HUD.

¹¹ The federally administered HOME program—while important for supporting affordable housing production—does not generally pertain to assisting returning prisoners or ex-offenders.

residents themselves may not want individuals with criminal histories to be admitted to their communities. Fear of crime is pervasive in public housing. A survey of residents living in high-density developments found that over 40 percent reported being very or somewhat fearful of being victimized (Rohe et al. 1994).

Regardless of criminal histories, waitlists are typically long, with families with children getting first consideration for housing. Between 1996 and 1998, a family's average time on a waiting list for federal public housing rose from 22 months to 33 months, a 50 percent increase. In some large cities, the waiting period is substantially longer. In New York City, the wait is 8 years; in Oakland, California, it is 6 years; in Washington, D.C., and Cleveland, Ohio, it is 5 years. The waiting period for the Housing Choice Voucher Program is also substantial—10 years in Los Angeles and Newark, 7 years in Houston, and 5 years in Memphis and Chicago (U.S. HUD 1999).

The current administration's housing budget for the 2005 fiscal year may exacerbate the scarcity of federally subsidized housing. The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) reports that data collected by HUD in April 2003 from state and local housing agencies that administer nearly all federal housing vouchers show that the administration's budget request for fiscal year 2004 is inadequate to fund all housing vouchers likely to be in use when the fiscal year starts in October 2003 (Sard and Fischer 2003).

There are also legislative barriers that could limit returning prisoners' chances of living in federally subsidized housing. HUD's One Strike policy gives PHAs power to deny admission or to terminate the lease of individuals with a history of use or abuse of drugs or alcohol, or of criminal behavior. The Clinton administration enacted this regulation in response to calls for action to combat high levels of crime and fear in public housing.

Each PHA has the discretion to determine admission policies. The same One Strike policy, upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court, encourages housing authorities to include in leases a provision that a tenant in public housing can be evicted if the tenant, any member of the tenant's household, or any guest engages in drug-related criminal activity on or off the premises (Fortune News 2002). Although applicants who are denied housing are allowed an official appeal to the PHA, many applicants are unaware of the right to appeal (Bradley et al. 2001).

Fortunately, the regulations in place are not automatic bans on applicants with criminal histories. In fact, the regulations also authorize the PHA to consider "evidence of rehabilitation," or, for applicants with histories of drug or alcohol use, whether the applicant "is participating in or has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program, or has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully" (24 CFR Sec. 960.203). In most cases, One Strike policies have been used to deny housing to individuals convicted of drug-related, violent, or sex offenses.

In 1997, HUD conducted a survey of the nation's PHAs to see whether the One Strike regulations were being used. Of the nation's 3,190 PHAs, slightly over half (56.9 percent) responded to the survey. About 75 percent said they were using the

One Strike initiatives in their communities.¹² In a six-month period before the One Strike policy took effect, these PHAs denied admission to 9,835 people because of their criminal or drug-related activities. In the six months after implementation, the level of rejections nearly doubled as 19,405 applications were rejected on One Strike grounds. That year, PHAs denied admission to a total of 45,079 individuals, meaning that the One Strike ban provided the basis for 43 percent of all rejections (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 1997).

The number of evictions from public housing also increased. In the six-month period before the One Strike policy took effect, the responding PHAs had carried out 2,698 evictions for criminal or drug-related activities. In the next six months, 3,794 were evicted on those grounds, a 40 percent increase. Several PHAs took advantage of the HUD survey to register their objections to the “one strike” policy, reporting that many law-abiding residents were being evicted because of the criminal behavior of their children or grandchildren (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 1997).

A substantial number of public housing residents have family members or significant others with a recent criminal history. As a result of policies restricting people with criminal histories from living in public housing units, families are faced with either allowing ex-offenders to live with them illegally, or sending them to a shelter or the streets. A 2002 study (Venkatesh 2002) of the Robert Taylor Homes (RTH) illustrates this issue. Robert Taylor Homes in Chicago, IL, is a public housing development that is undergoing phased demolition and revitalization by the Chicago Housing Authority under a HOPE VI grant. This project is part of a larger plan being implemented by the City of Chicago to transform and revitalize public housing throughout the city. As a result of these activities, public housing residents at RTH must relocate to other housing authority properties or to private-market units through a housing choice voucher until construction is completed and they are able to return to the revitalized RTH development.

Venkatesh (2002) found that a significant proportion of Robert Taylor Homes residents report or expect the return of an inmate from jail or prison. Of the residents, nearly half (43 percent) of the families expecting a household member to come out of prison in the next nine months reported they did not want the individual to live in their household again. However, these families did not plan to prevent the returning prisoner from residing in the apartment even though more than half (56 percent) predicted that the released inmate would once again be involved in some form of illegal activity.

In addition to the Venkatesh study, a recent Urban Institute study (Popkin, Cunningham, and Woodley 2003) found that returning prisoners may come to rely on public housing as their only option to avoid life on the street. The study examined the characteristics and needs of public housing residents living in the Ida B. Wells community, a large housing project being demolished to make way for a new, mixed-income community. At the time of the study (late 2002 and early 2003), Wells housing was largely boarded up and abandoned, home to a thriving drug market. The

¹² Out of the sample size, a total of 453 respondents had not implemented the policy.

study surveyed the population living at Wells during demolition, interviewed all squatters living in vacant units, hallways, and other areas, and conducted in-depth interviews with residents and squatters. Four percent of 294 squatters interviewed had returned to Wells from time spent in prison; another 5 percent left their former living arrangements after police raids. Problems with drug addiction forced another 8 percent out of their former homes. These squatters reported nowhere to go and no services available to help them. When asked where they will go when all buildings are demolished, 32 percent responded that they did not know, and roughly another 30 percent reported that they would go to another Chicago Housing Authority building.

Evidence suggests that returning prisoners may rely on public housing as a last resort before life on the street. Within Robert Taylor Homes, four in 10 families living there are expecting, within the next two years, a household member to leave prison to come live with them again. For these families, family reunification means a heightened risk of eviction for non-criminal family members. Given the high demand for scarce public housing, and eligibility criteria that ban many individuals with criminal histories, a former prisoner seeking admission to public housing may stand little chance of being admitted.

Opportunities

A few federal initiatives and programs attempt to assist the safe integration of ex-offenders into subsidized housing. The U.S. Department of Justice’s comprehensive crime reduction initiative—Weed and Seed—operates in some jurisdictions in conjunction with HUD and local PHAs. The program coordinates efforts by law enforcement to “weed” out the violent criminals and to “seed” the community with prevention and education efforts (for more information on Weed and Seed see <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows/>). Weed and Seed is currently working in a number of public housing projects to link returning prisoners, parolees, and probationers to social services. The intent is to help former prisoners remain in public housing.

Some Questions Remaining

- What are the implications of the One Strike policy? Where do those individuals restricted from public housing go? Has crime in public housing decreased with the use of One Strike?
- Does One Strike apply to the federally subsidized *privately owned* housing stock?
- Is subsidized housing a strong option for returning prisoners when waiting lists exist? In addition, some housing advocates suggest that because of its concentrating effect on poverty and crime, public housing may not be the ideal setting for people leaving incarceration. Housing Choice Vouchers may be a more viable source of housing assistance for those returning prisoners whose only challenge to community reintegration is lack of income. Perhaps PHAs should utilize different screening criteria with regard to public housing and Housing Choice Vouchers.
- Do innovative programs exist within PHAs that encourage returning prisoners to access services within subsidized housing?

- Nonprofits and Community Development Corporations (CDCs) play a considerable role in providing affordable housing with support from HUD. The Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and the HOME program encourage involvement of nonprofits. Are these programs used for affordable housing that could target the returning prisoner or ex-offender population?
- How could returning prisoners be connected with federally subsidized housing or supportive service provided through these programs? Outside of public housing options, are service providers that work with returning prisoners knowledgeable about these resources and able to access them—particularly those resources associated with the privately owned HUD-subsidized housing stock?

4. Homeless Assistance Supportive Housing, Other Service-Enhanced Housing, and Special Needs Housing Supported through U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Given the scarcity of corrections-run transitional facilities and the complex needs of returning prisoners, many returning prisoners end up entering the web of housing and homeless assistance and special needs programming supported through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Returning prisoners with nowhere to go upon release often end up in shelters, but shelters are simply short-term facilities that are most often not tasked with providing services to assist the search for permanent housing. The sections that follow describe a number of federally sponsored programs that assist individuals and families with their housing needs. These publicly funded housing programs provide support to disadvantaged populations.

Supportive housing is permanent housing that provides housing to lease holding tenants, and where social service provision and funding is an integral component of the housing operation. *Service-enhanced housing* includes transitional (i.e., fixed length of stay) or phased-permanent housing. Service-enhanced housing is transitional housing that is coupled with a variety of support services to assist clients in achieving self-sufficiency. In most cases, clients do not have occupancy agreements or leases. Phased-permanent refers to a new housing model where residents have month-to-month occupancy agreements (not leases), and therefore have some rights of tenancy. Phased-permanent is intended to be short term, with the goal of assisting residents to move on to more permanent forms of housing.

Most often, regardless of program length or permanency, supportive or service-enhanced housing programs offer a range of services aside from housing, including family counseling, case management, medical services, substance abuse counseling, socialization skills groups, anger management, vocational training, and assistance with obtaining vital documents such as Social Security cards and birth certificates. Though some jurisdictions have used these programs specifically to target returning prisoners or ex-offenders, the majority serve these populations simply because they are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

The McKinney Homeless Assistance Act

The first federal legislation to provide a range of supportive housing options and service-enhanced housing was the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987.

The Act includes three programs: (1) the Supportive Housing Program (SHP), (2) the Shelter Plus Care Program (S+C) and (3) Section 8 Mod Rehab (dedicated for moderate rehabilitation projects)—each intended to serve different needs. In order to be eligible for a McKinney program, individuals must fall under the classification of “homeless.”

The Act defines a homeless person as

1. an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; or
2. an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is (a) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill); (b) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or (c) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
3. Any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained pursuant to an Act of Congress or a State law is excluded from the definition of homeless individuals.

Essentially, returning prisoners cannot utilize these McKinney programs as their first housing option after release. Individuals must be homeless for a period of time before they are eligible for McKinney programs. However, there have been some recent modifications to the definition based on residence prior to incarceration.

The Supportive Housing Program (SHP) is a grant program that funds both permanent housing construction and subsidizes the cost of operating a building. SHP funds go directly to a project sponsor, not to individual tenants. The allocation may also be used to pay for services provided to tenants, but more often it goes to pay for maintenance and operating costs of a supportive housing project. There are four main programmatic areas for which HUD’s Supportive Housing Program funding can be used for housing:

- Transitional housing—one type of supportive housing used to facilitate the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing. Transitional housing is housing in which homeless persons live for up to 24 months and receive supportive services that enable them to live more independently. The housing may be in a facility or in individual units on a scattered-site basis. The supportive services may be provided by the organization managing the housing or coordinated by this organization and provided by other public or private agencies in the community.
- Permanent housing for persons with disabilities—long-term housing with supportive services for homeless persons with disabilities. The intent of the housing is to enable homeless people with disabilities to live as independently as possible in a permanent setting (single location or scattered-site housing units).
- Safe Havens—a targeted form of supportive housing for hard-to-reach single adults with severe mental illness who have been living on the streets and have been unwilling or unable to participate in supportive services. Safe Havens provide for basic needs such as showers, food, clothing, and shelter and as an entry point

for individuals with severe mental illness to help them transition to accept services and to move toward more permanent housing. There are no limits on length of stay. Although supportive services are available, clients are not required to participate to stay overnight.

- Innovative Supportive Housing enables an applicant to design a program that is outside the scope of the other components and must be able to demonstrate that the approach is a distinctly different one, and is a sensible model for others that can be replicated in other communities.

Shelter Plus Care (S+C) is a rental assistance program, whereby the allocation goes directly to the tenant, the sponsor of the program, or to a unit (single or scattered-site). For scattered units the allocation can work in two ways depending on the type of program: (1) the individual tenant signs a lease and the S+C allocation goes to the organization that manages the building; or (2) the lease can be in the tenant's name with the allocation going directly to that tenant.

Section 8 Mod Rehab provides rental assistance structured similar to Shelter Plus Care or Housing Vouchers, but was designed for projects that involve a moderate rehabilitation of existing buildings.

Sponsors of supportive or service-enhanced housing for homeless persons may apply for McKinney programs through their local Continuum of Care (CoC) planning process. In order to apply for McKinney funds, local jurisdictions (usually cities or counties) with nonprofits must undertake a Continuum of Care (CoC) planning process each year. HUD uses this process as its means of providing funding as it believes that local jurisdictions are best able to identify the specific needs of its community. These local Continuum of Care planning processes also determine funding priorities for use of McKinney funds each year, and in some recent local Continuum of Care plans, persons leaving correctional institutions have been included among jurisdictions' priority populations.

Congress has begun to take steps towards assisting prisoner reentry by drafting legislation to create support for the development of transitional housing and service-enhanced housing programs. Rep. Danny Davis (D-Ill.) introduced a bill (H.R. 2166) in May 2003 to provide for a temporary low-income housing credit aimed at developers to encourage the provision of housing, job training, and other essential services to ex-offenders through a structured living environment designed to assist the ex-offenders in becoming self-sufficient. The bill is known as the Public Safety Ex-Offender Self-Sufficiency Act of 2003.

Supportive Special Needs Funded Programs

Project sponsors may find that development funding is more easily accessible in streams targeted toward people with special needs or chronic health challenges. For example, mental health agencies in some states have been successful in developing post-release housing targeted to formerly incarcerated persons with mental illness. Additionally, federal and state government agencies administering HIV/AIDS housing funding have similarly recognized the need for post-release housing targeted

to ex-offenders living with HIV/AIDS. Often, these agencies define eligibility for housing funding based upon the disability or health profile of individuals, rather than on the individual's homelessness status. As a result, government funding may be more available for projects targeted towards ex-offenders living with mental illness, HIV/AIDS, or other chronic health challenges (Cho et al 2002).

Barriers

Funding for McKinney programs has suffered setbacks in recent years. In fiscal year 1996, funding for McKinney programs was cut by a total of 27 percent. Several McKinney programs saw their funding eliminated entirely.¹³ A current legislative proposal would consolidate the shelter and housing programs administered by HUD. If adopted, the proposal would distribute the bulk of the HUD Homeless Assistance funds through block grants to cities and states, limit the authorized funding level, and gradually decrease the amount of HUD money spent on supportive services.

Homeless advocates have been asking HUD for clarification as to whether or not persons leaving correctional institutions are considered homeless. Although HUD has been unclear as to when the change occurred, around February 2000, the definition has been changed to include persons who were in jail or prison for over 30 days, but who had no subsequent residence identified, or no support networks outside of prison, and was evicted from a prior residence. A lot of groups are able to use S+C because HUD has not made a clear statement about whether ex-offenders are eligible or not. As a result local HUD offices have been left to determine whether or not to fund programs that house ex-offenders.

Beyond the regulatory barriers that keep ex-offenders from considering subsidized housing as a viable option, NIMBY may create hurdles for community groups seeking to develop group homes or supportive housing that can house returning prisoners. Surveys show that community opposition is greatest when facilities are developed for substance abusers (National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty 1997). On the bright side, research also shows that small facilities can be successful in overcoming community opposition.

The main barrier for those in need of special needs housing is availability. Although states and the federal government have begun to enact legislation to assist special needs populations, still a substantial mismatch exists between the number of programs and the level of funding available for disabled people and the numbers of people returning to the community with special needs. The lack of a planning process that reestablishes Social Security and Medicaid benefits for special needs prisoners prior to their release from prison prevents them from accessing the services they need immediately upon release from prison or jail as a result of the wait time for eligibility. Having these benefits in place at the time of release could facilitate eligibility for housing programs that are privately operated and could allow them to access other necessary services within the social services continuum.

¹³ Information retrieved on July 29, 2003 from <http://nch.ari.net/mckinneyfacts.html>.

Opportunities

Some states and local jurisdictions are using McKinney program funds for programs that serve returning prisoners and ex-offenders. In 1995, the Maryland Housing Authority received over five million dollars in Shelter Plus Care monies to provide housing for five years for homeless, seriously mentally ill jail releasees. The rental assistance was also used for parolees who were homeless or in danger of parole revocation. At the end of the five-year period, MHA had provided housing to 366 adults and 224 children and reported a recidivism rate of only 6 percent (GAINS Center 1999).

In addition to using homeless housing funds, some organizations have been successful in using special needs funding. Federal Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) funding have been particularly useful in supporting housing for ex-offenders. Sources of funding through HOPWA include (1) a non-competitive allocation to states and eligible metropolitan areas that meet a threshold of 1,500 cumulative AIDS cases, and (2) HOPWA Special Projects of National Significance (SPNS) funds. The latter source is awarded competitively to government and nonprofit agencies that demonstrate innovation in terms of program concept or population served. New York City, Baltimore, and Seattle have used HOPWA funds to develop programming targeted to ex-offenders living with HIV/AIDS (Corporation for Supportive Housing 2002). In addition to HOPWA, Ryan White CARE Act Title I funds have been used in projects targeting ex-offenders living with HIV/AIDS. The federal government allocates funds to local planning councils who then determine how to allocate the monies. HOPWA funding may be used for capital operating expenses or services and Ryan White funds are restricted to direct services, or medical care and prescription drugs.

Some Questions Remaining

- Are programs funded through the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act viable options for returning prisoners? What is the utilization rate? How does it vary by jurisdiction?
- How can nonprofit organizations best utilize or be creative in utilizing blended funding streams that include homeless housing and special needs housing funds?
- How could HUD engage criminal justice systems (and vice versa) in discussions geared toward collaborative response to reducing homelessness of returning prisoners? What is needed for collaboration to occur?

5. The Private Market

In addition to the housing options described above, returning prisoners can seek housing in the private market. The most likely option is the rental market. Some inmates may have owned housing before their incarceration and hence would return to their homes after release. But given the likelihood mortgage payments cannot be met while one is in prison, it is improbable that released prisoners return to owner-occupied homes. Most likely, released inmates not returning to live with loved ones or friends must search for housing upon release.

Barriers

Returning prisoners must overcome many barriers to access housing in the private market. These barriers include affordability, improper personal documentation, stigma of criminal history, and associated community objection due to public safety issues. Affordability is the most significant barrier. Most prisoners leave prison without enough money for a security deposit on an apartment. Most states provide a token amount of “gate money,” ranging from \$25 to \$200, hardly enough for a deposit in most cases. One-third of all states provide no gate money at all (Petersilia 2003). In addition, as stated earlier, without some type of income or income support, returning prisoners will not be able to access housing. Rental prices are high and availability is low.

Even if returning prisoners have financial assets, affordable housing would remain difficult to find. The dearth of affordable housing has been cited as a serious problem for cities, towns, and rural areas all across the nation (Daskal 1998; Roman 2003). The shortage of low-rent housing has reached record highs. The number of rental units affordable¹⁴ to poor families declined from 85 units for every 100 poor families in 1987 to 75 units for every 100 poor families in 1999. With regard to availability, the numbers are even lower. In 1999, there were 39 affordable and available units for every 100 poor renters (Sard and Waller 2002).

The problem is compounded as housing markets in many urban areas, such as the District of Columbia, San Diego, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, and Los Angeles, have been booming. The strong market has created housing prices that are out of reach for many residents, including even moderate- and middle-income households. Monthly rents have also skyrocketed. In some jurisdictions, fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment is over \$800. With a minimum wage earner able to afford no more than \$300 to \$350 per month, a low-income household with several wage-earning members could probably bear a monthly rent of roughly \$650. In many of these urban areas thousands of affordable subsidized rental-housing units have been lost due to expiring federal subsidies on the properties as well as demolition of public housing (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments 2001).

For returning prisoners, the problem of attaining affordable housing is particularly pronounced. Many releasees do not have a valid driver’s license, or identification documents such as a Social Security card that would assist in reestablishing their lives upon exit from prison. Other more informal barriers may also exist that make searching for housing in the private market difficult for prison and jail releasees. Landlords may view individuals with criminal records as a threat to safety. Criminal background checks are standard practice by many landlords, and in a tight market, the felon mostly likely will be second in line, at best. A survey of 196 property managers and owners in Seattle found that 67 percent inquire about criminal history on rental applications. Forty-three percent said they would be inclined to reject an applicant with a criminal conviction (Helfgott 1997).

With the large barriers facing returning prisoners seeking housing in the private market, we can presume that many returning prisoners end up living in very low

¹⁴ Affordable is defined as requiring the family to pay less than 30 percent of its income for housing costs.

quality private-market housing. We can also presume that, for many, living in poor quality housing exacerbates the challenges associated with staying away from drugs and crime, but little research exists to inform this issue. We could not find any studies that detail the challenges encountered in the private market, how returning prisoners make housing decisions as they face obstacles, and any ensuing ramifications of decisions made.

The challenges faced by sex offenders are particularly severe, due to a real or perceived threat of the risk they pose to the public (Minnesota Department of Corrections 2001). Not only does the return of a sex offender to the community attract media and public attention, community pressure is often applied to property managers or family members not to house a sex offender. In some jurisdictions around the country, town officials and residents are filing lawsuits to force the relocation of sex offenders.

Legally, sex offenders are subject to sex offender registration requirements. The federal government and 47 states have a version of a sex offender registry law that provides the public with information on the whereabouts of sex offenders (Center for Sex Offender Management 2001). There is very little research on the impact of these community notification policies. A National Institute of Justice–funded 1998 evaluation of Wisconsin’s experience examined the impact of community notification on residents, law enforcement agencies, probation and parole agents, and the sex offenders themselves. In face-to-face interviews with 30 convicted offenders who were subjects of community notification, 83 percent reported they were excluded from specific residences due to the community notification policies (Zevitz and Farkas 2000). But sex offenders have to live somewhere. Notification policies close doors to housing without opening up any others.

Opportunities

Creative incentives, such as tax credits, for property owners or managers may encourage inclusion of returning prisoners or ex-offenders. Some jurisdictions within California, for instance, receive state funds to assist hard-to-reach individuals with housing in the rental market. These funds, mandated by the legislature through a program called AB 2034 (described earlier) can be used for programs that utilize tenant advocates or case managers that assist landlords with any problems that arise related to the tenant. Quick and effective resolution to problems or violations of rental agreements may overcome any reluctance of property managers to rent to ex-offenders. Property managers need to benefit from taking risks in a tight housing market.

Corrections funding is also being used to assist inmates in finding housing in the rental market. Some Departments of Corrections have contracts with agencies to assist inmates with their housing searches as they near release. The Minnesota Department of Corrections, for instance, utilizes the EXCEL Program to provide housing-related services in six correctional facilities. These services include the provision of housing information packets, rental locations services, and follow-up contact with housing managers (Minnesota Department of Corrections 2001).

There are programs that can assist returning prisoners in building a savings account towards purchase of a home or to be used for rental assistance. These programs, such as the Individual Development Account (IDA) program, are dedicated savings accounts, similar in structure to Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), that can only be used for purchasing a first home, education or job training expenses, or small business start-up that will assist low-income people in saving to buy a home or apartment. IDAs are managed by community organizations and accounts are held at local financial institutions. Contributions for lower income participants are matched using both private and public sources.¹⁵ In Baltimore, Druid Heights Community Development Corporation is using IDAs to assist returning prisoners in leasing property. The IDA program is part of an array of services offered to returning prisoners participating in the transitional living program that is part of the Reentry Partnership.

Some Questions Remaining

- What are a returning prisoner's chances of securing safe and habitable housing within the private market? Do returning prisoners face obstacles that other consumers of private housing stock do not face?
- How many returning prisoners and ex-offenders are living in substandard housing? Assuming that many returning prisoners are living in poor conditions, how does this impact returning prisoners and the communities to which they return? We could find no research that informed this issue.
- What financial resources are available to prisoners upon their release? With regard to linking individuals to financial assets upon release, does jail practice differ from prison practice? Is it feasible to consider that gate money practices and related release practices be changed to assist an individual's search for housing?
- How pervasive are practices by real estate managers to deny applications of felony ex-offenders in the private rental market? Is there a general level of bias regardless of economic conditions? Does the level of bias vary with housing availability or other social or geographic factors?
- Where do sex offenders end up? Are notification policies negatively impacting community reintegration?

¹⁵ More information can be found at <http://www.cfed.org/main/indivAssets/background.htm> and Corporation for Enterprise Development at <http://www.cfed.org/main/indivAssets/BuildingTool.htm>

SECTION III. REENTRY ROUNDTABLE SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS

On October 30, 2003, the Urban Institute convened a national roundtable of experts, sponsored by the Fannie Mae Foundation, to chart a course for housing organizations and criminal justice organizations to work together to improve housing outcomes for the individuals leaving prison, their families, and the communities to which they return. The roundtable participants represented housing organizations, housing intermediaries, transitional and permanent housing providers, criminal justice practitioners, researchers, public housing managers, community leaders, and former prisoners. Prior to the roundtable, the participants had the opportunity to read the draft literature review and the draft scan of innovative practice so that the discussion was informed by the most comprehensive information available. Jeremy Travis, senior fellow at the Urban Institute, served as facilitator of the roundtable discussion. In addition to the participants at the table, 75 key individuals from federal and local government agencies, other foundations, research agencies, advocacy organizations, and national associations attended the roundtable as observers.

The key questions the roundtable sought to uncover included:

1. Within the many issues related to the housing dimensions of the reentry experience, which are the most pressing?
2. Where do the most promising opportunities lie for addressing the housing issues confronting returning prisoners?
3. What are the steps needed to make these opportunities become well-established realities in policy and practice?

The Pressing Priorities

The morning began with a discussion of the housing challenges and barriers facing returning prisoners with the goal of explicating the most pressing priorities for policy and practice. One panelist suggested that the priorities be organized into “hard targets” versus “soft targets.” Hard targets are those issues, policies, and practices that would be the most difficult to change. Soft targets are those that might be changed with much less effort. For the most part, throughout the morning, the other panelists couched their discussion using these phrases, with equal time spent discussing both the hard and soft targets. Although there was no universal agreement whether the stated priorities fell into the hard category or soft category, a general consensus emerged. Below we lay out the priorities first by hard target, followed by soft target priorities.

The Hard Target Priorities

Motivate the correctional system to be a force in creating the momentum for positive change

Panelists agreed that the criminal justice system could be a large force in creating the momentum for change. Many stated that it is unrealistic to expect housing systems to carry the burden for supporting improved housing options for returning

prisoners. Some saw corrections as the agency with the most power to leverage or effect change. Panelists suggested that analyses of costs and benefits of correctional housing programs could demonstrate to corrections systems that coordinated reentry programs would be of great benefit across systems (i.e., corrections, community corrections and homeless services system) and the community.

Change could also occur with a reevaluation of parole restrictions and requirements that make it difficult for parolees to secure housing with their families or near their jobs. Some parole restrictions have unintended consequences where the consequences may outweigh the intended benefits. For example, restrictions that stipulate a returning prisoner not associate with criminal peers may result in individuals living in halfway houses far from family and job opportunities.

Establish alternatives to shelters for returning prisoners

Similar to motivating the correctional system to seek change, three practitioner panelists set the stage early for the discussion by stressing the need for establishing alternatives to shelters for returning prisoners. The panelists felt that there may be an overreliance on the shelter system by criminal justice agencies. The corollary observation was that corrections and parole agencies know little about housing programs that could be available to returning prisoners. Corrections and other criminal justice officials should collaborate with local shelter boards to expand the understanding of the housing services and options available, and develop procedures stipulating how the systems can work together.

Other panelists emphasized that the need for effective pre-release planning that would identify housing needs and match services to fit needs. Many panelists also mentioned the importance of in-prison programming aimed at rehabilitation. The most-voiced priorities related to pre-release planning included:

- Begin to prepare for reentry at the time of sentencing. Reentry planning that begins at the time of sentencing should support transitional and post-release programming. Reentry planning should include identification and assessment of an individual's housing needs. In addition, procedures should include full support (e.g., an advocate available around the clock) for the 24-hour period following release.
- Establish and utilize pre-release facilities that would transfer soon-to-be-released inmates to facilities near their intended homes. Inmates could begin to search for a job, as well as reconnect with family and loved ones, and connect with any needed community supports. A number of panelists reiterated the importance of reconnecting returning prisoners to their family and children.
- Reestablish SSI and Medicaid eligibility, as well as identification paperwork before people leave prison/jail.
- Develop a "kinship" housing subsidy where the prison releasee would be provided with a subsidy that is given to his/her family to pay for subsidized housing. This would take corrections monies and apply it directly to housing upon release. This

could potentially reduce the burden for families that intend to help support their loved one upon release.

Encourage community understanding and support for returning prisoners

Panelists thought that encouraging community understanding and support for returning prisoners should be a priority. Some identified this as a hard target, while others thought that more community exposure to the issue would generate more support. Panelists suggested that the “not in my backyard” (NIMBY) opposition could be offset by transmitting information to the public and by showing the community that ex-offenders are making strong contributions to society. Suggestions included:

- Educate the community about the needs of returning prisoners and demonstrate that services are available and constructive in supporting ex-offenders.
- Engage the community from the beginning when a new program is being implemented. Through this approach, trust can be built.
- Provide communities with information that shows that locking up prisoners does not always make communities safer. Demonstrate that supportive housing programs can be successful for ex-offenders and benefit the community overall.
- Examine successful practices from harm reduction approach utilized in providing housing services to people with HIV/AIDS. The Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program is a successful partnership between government agencies, communities, and the residents the programs serve.

Reduce discrimination

One panelist suggested that Congress should be encouraged to enact legislation similar to Minnesota’s Criminal Offenders Rehabilitation Act. This act stipulates that ex-offenders cannot be discriminated against after one year following release from prison. The legislation could also stipulate that discrimination was unlawful except where the opportunity (e.g., a job, housing, etc.) was directly linked to the specific crime committed.

Another panelist suggested that progress could be made by examining the issues of housing, homelessness, and reentry through a race perspective. Racial disparities in sentencing do a great disservice to the American public and should be examined, dissected, and discussed.

The Soft Target Priorities

Synthesize knowledge on successful programs; share best practices

In general, the panelists agreed that, to date, little is known about model programs. Many panelists referred to the importance of documenting the successful strategies, programs, and partnerships that currently exist. The first step should be to look for successful models, and encourage programs and key leaders to document the impact of their programs, including the costs and benefits. As mentioned above,

many felt that the cost-benefit argument would be a strong foundation to demonstrate the success of programs. A few panelists reiterated this thought throughout the day, and stated that building an evaluation component into housing programs should be a priority for community agencies. Successful models can then be brought to scale. Understanding successes could lead to an understanding of the different types of interventions; how to match needs to services; what length of stay is appropriate for clients with different needs—basically, to determine *who* needs *what* intervention.

A panelist emphasized that there is great need for coupling employment services and sober living with housing services, and hence, the documentation of successful models that are comprehensive in nature would be of great use to communities, funders, and government agencies.

Encourage the support of the faith community

Many panelists mentioned that governments should seek to learn about how the faith community is serving returning prisoners. They cited anecdotal and emerging research evidence that the faith community is heavily involved in serving returning prisoners. Partnerships between criminal justice and housing agencies could benefit from the inclusion of congregations and other faith-based institutions.

Establish state and local regulations for safe and drug-free housing

Often, there are no regulations particular to establishing and running safe and drug-free housing facilities. A few panelists suggested that uniform quality standards and codes for existing housing facilities and programs would greatly benefit clients and communities.

Dispel the myths regarding restrictions to public housing and Section 8 housing

With regard to using public housing as an option for returning prisoners, many panelists felt there were too many myths surrounding ex-offender restrictions in public housing and Section 8 housing. Many jurisdictions use discretion in determining whether public housing and/or Section 8 housing may be a viable option for many returning prisoners. Documenting the ways that this discretion can be exercised to benefit the community, the returning prisoners, and the tenants could help overcome more rigid interpretations of the One Strike policy.

The Promising Opportunities

In the afternoon, the panelists switched focus to discuss the opportunities for new strategies and policy innovations. The panelists pinpointed opportunities that fell into three categories: (1) comprehensive, neighborhood-based strategies, (2) flexible funding streams, and (3) education and transmission of knowledge.

Comprehensive neighborhood-based strategies

Throughout the discussion, the word “partnership” was mentioned numerous times. The panelists felt that comprehensive reintegration services that involve the community are the most successful in serving returning prisoners. Many encouraged the participation of community agencies and residents. Some panelists suggested that the most successful programs are those that serve returning prisoners using a *customer* or *client* perspective, not a third party perspective. The *customer/client* perspective will

build trust among all parties involved. Utilizing the customer perspective could also help to determine the most needed supports and develop informal networks to link individuals to jobs and housing.

Other panelists suggested the use of intermediaries to bridge different systems so systems could begin to become less fragmented and more likely to collaborate. The panelists discussed how nongovernmental organizations could be strong intermediaries within partnerships. In addition, comprehensive programs that work directly with businesses and/or utilize the entrepreneurship model were identified as promising opportunities.

One panelist suggested that interagency alliances that have high-level political involvement would enable successful reentry models. HUD's initiative to develop ten-year plans to end homelessness has resulted in strong interagency collaborations within a number of states that could be used as a model to develop a national or statewide reentry plan. With regard to the HUD initiative, state efforts are trickling down to the local level. States and local governments could work together to develop a continuum for returning offenders. Successful programs could then be brought to scale. Another panelist added that the reverse can also happen—that a successful small-scale program receiving national attention can then be transferred and formalized into a state plan for replication by counties within the states. This strategy was successful in Baltimore, where the Reentry Partnership (REP) of the Enterprise Foundation is currently being brought to scale across the state of Maryland. Similarly, panelists suggested examining other tried-and-true program models like Oxford House¹⁶ to determine if these can be brought to scale.

Flexible Funding Streams

Some panelists suggested that housing programs that defy categorization are the most effective programs. These programs are utilizing either a variety of funding streams or are not mandated to utilize restrictive eligibility criteria. Often, blended funding provides the opportunity to be innovative and nonrestrictive in services and eligibility. Similarly, programs that are built on multisystem partnerships (e.g., corrections, homeless services system, community) provide flexibility in the types of clients served and the suite of services provided. In many cases, flexible funding streams provide the opportunities to utilize funds for housing subsidies, thereby making traditionally unaffordable housing affordable. Many panelists agreed that simply adding funding for services with a reentry system would not solve the unaffordable problem.

Documentation of Successes and Transfer of Knowledge to the Community

The panelists agreed that more opportunities would arise as successes are documented and publicized. In this view, success breeds interest, which breeds more success. Panelists suggested that funding agencies should mandate documentation of outcomes in a systematic method. Aggregation of data from programs and models would provide knowledge of successes and best practices. Evidence of successful

¹⁶ An Oxford House is a self-governing alcohol and drug-free house chartered by Oxford House Inc. The first Oxford House was founded in 1975 by the residents themselves.

programs could then be transferred to the community and assist in building community understanding and interest in the reentry process.

Next Steps

The day culminated with a synthesis of the earlier two sessions. The panelists were asked to put forth one or two ideas describing what they thought were the critical next steps for policy, practice, or research. The following is an inclusive list and does not represent group consensus.

Next Steps for Policy

- Encourage high-level political endorsement in reentry planning.
- Set goals and standards for discharge planning from correctional facilities. Create standards at both the state and national level. This can help change practice.
- Modify one strike housing regulations so discretion is not used to target ex-offenders with minor offenses, or offenses that occurred far in the past.
- Legislate reforms in corrections. Revise the “get tough” statutes and related policies to take into account the need for supervised release.
- Educate the community about the problems facing returning prisoners. Encourage input from the community. Community forums and informal discussions with community residents can establish trust and lead to appropriate types of services that fit particular needs of communities. Encourage the development of partnerships between government agencies and community organizations.
- Mandate specific performance measures and evaluation with government and private funding of programs.

Next Steps for Practice

- Encourage investment from private donors, and bring together partners. Partnership programs can bridge fragmented services systems. Private funders are good sources of funding to address systems change. When systems change is successful, replicate.
- Reentry partnerships should not only include government agencies, but also faith community and business community.
- Utilize nongovernmental organizations as intermediaries in reentry partnerships.
- Dispel myths about restrictions to public and Section 8 housing and provide incentives (e.g., rent vouchers or tax credits) to landlords who house returning prisoners or ex-offenders.
- Build evaluation into program implementation and maintenance.
- Develop tools and curriculum around training for multiple systems that are supporting common interest of serving returning prisoners. Train parole officers

to work with community organizations and to be knowledgeable about the services community organizations can provide. Parole officers should utilize graduated sanctions that incorporate supervision needs.

- Convene siting commissions or community boards that work together with government to determine the best sites for halfway houses and community reentry centers.

Next Steps for Research

- Catalog the policy obstacles and clarify what is myth. Disaggregate obstacles into categories: which are federal obstacles, state, local government, or community obstacles.
- Examine partnership successes and document successful strategies to implement and maintain strong partnerships. Research that utilized case studies of promising programs could provide insight on what works and why, and what could be replicated in other communities.
- Document funding streams. By understanding how the different systems fund housing-related services, communities can benefit. Document who is successful with the various funding streams.
- New studies could examine the nature and extent of housing services being utilized at pre-release facilities and halfway houses and identify promising models along a continuum of services. Similarly, research could quantify the costs and benefits associated with these facilities as compared to direct release.
- Research could also begin to focus on the promising practices for specialized populations. For instance, are there successful housing opportunities for violent offenders or sex offenders?

SECTION IV. SCAN OF PRACTICE

With the growing need for communities to provide services and support for returning prisoners, community-based organizations have begun to partner with federal, state, and local governments, law enforcement, social service agencies, and faith-based leaders to fill the gaps in housing and related supportive services. This section provides illustrative examples of housing programs operating around the country that serve returning prisoners and ex-offenders. Some of these programs specifically target returning prisoners in a transitional setting; others are supportive housing programs that serve a range of populations. Programs were selected by recommendations from program experts, and through previous written documents that featured specific aspects of housing programs and services. Inclusion of a program in our scan does not signify that the program has been deemed a success. Many of these programs have not been evaluated; many do not even collect outcome information. Inclusion of programs in this section merely serves to illustrate the range of programs available to serve returning prisoners and ex-offenders. However, as you will see from the discussion, many of the programs are innovative, or embody unique utilization of resources and development of partnerships that have come together to serve a hard-to-serve population.

We have organized the scan of practice by categories that include:

- Service-Enhanced Transitional and Permanent Housing
- Community Corrections Programs
- Faith-Based Programs
- Partnerships, Continuums, and Education and Training Models

Scan of Practice Programs by Category

1. Service-Enhanced Transitional and Permanent Housing

- Alliance Apartments (MN)
- Brittan House (WI)
- Dismas House (MA)
- Druid Heights Transitional Housing and Related Services, West Baltimore, Druid Heights Community Development Corporation (MD)
- The Fortune Society Academy (NY)
- The Mentally Ill Offender Community Transition Program (WA)
- Sarah Powell Huntington House (NY)
- Triangle Residential Options for Substance Abusers, Inc.: “TROSA” (NC)
- Warren Street Apartments (Fifth Avenue Commission, NY)

2. Community Corrections Facilities (Halfway Houses)

- Bridgeton Community Correctional Center (The Kintock Group, NJ)
- Independence House for MICAs (CO)
- The Multnomah County Transition Service Unit (OR)
- The Safer Foundation: Adult Transition Centers (IL)
- Shaw II (Washington, DC)

3. Faith-Based/Faith-Affiliated Housing Programs

- St. Andrew’s Court (IL)
- The Catherine Center (CA)
- The Ridge House (NV)

4. Partnerships, Continuums, and Education and Training Models

- NY/NY Housing (NY)
- Integrated Services for Homeless Adults with Serious Mental Illness (CA)

- Health, Housing and Integrated Services Network (CA)
- La Bodega de la Familia (NY)
- Pioneer Human Services (WA)
- Portland Housing Center (OR)

SERVICE-ENHANCED TRANSITIONAL AND PERMANENT HOUSING

Although programs vary by state and local jurisdiction, the service-enhanced housing programs featured in this report consist of models that provide housing along with supportive services as a transitional or permanent step for ex-offenders.

Although there are few permanent housing programs across the country that specifically house ex-offenders, some nonprofit providers have recognized the need for permanent housing units accessible to people that lack the necessary credentials that are typically necessary to secure permanent housing, such as rental histories, identification, and employment histories. Unlike transitional programs, permanent housing programs typically require residents to sign a tenancy agreement and although programs may have social service assistance on site, participation is not a requirement for eligibility.

Alliance Apartments (MN)

General Background and Goals

Alliance Apartments, operated by RS Eden, is based on an innovative supportive housing model embracing a service strategy that nurtures sobriety and a strong sense of community. The goal of the program is to help residents succeed, while promoting an atmosphere and attitude that acknowledges, supports, and reinforces a sober lifestyle.

Population Served

Alliance Apartments was developed to fulfill the need for homeless, single adult men and women who want to work, remain chemically free, and live in a drug-free community. Twenty-nine of the units are reserved for veterans. Eligibility criteria include 60 days of sobriety; current homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless; annual income below \$13,500; and willingness to sign a one-year lease that includes a “Sobriety/Productivity” addendum. Alliance Apartments are also utilized for returning prisoners and ex-offenders participating in RS Eden’s Correctional Case Management Aftercare Program.

Program Description

Alliance Apartments are located in the Elliot Park neighborhood of Minneapolis. The apartments house those who have completed a chemical dependency treatment program. RS Eden’s mission is to facilitate positive change in the areas of chemical dependency, family services, corrections and affordable housing. (In 1999, Eden Programs, Inc., and Reentry Services, Inc., (RSI) merged to form RS Eden). The Alliance Apartments, serving residents since 1997, were developed in conjunction with Corporation for Supportive Housing, and have three operating partners: Alliance of the Streets, Central Community Housing Trust, and Eden Programs.

The Alliance Apartments offers 124 apartments, of which 100 are permanent, affordable housing efficiency apartments. These 100 units have project-based, Section 8 subsidies connected to them. Each of the private efficiency apartments includes a kitchenette and complete bath. Office space, community rooms, library, and laundry facilities are located throughout the building for all residents to use. The remaining 24 efficiency apartments are transitional housing units where residents live in a supportive environment. Residents may stay for up to two years. These units are not subsidized.

Supportive services are available on-site at the Alliance Apartments to help residents address their needs and any underlying issues. Opportunities for work and/or community service are integrated within the housing component. The Alliance Apartments is a collaborative effort of many organizations: Alliance of the Streets, Central Community House Trust, RS Eden, The Gavzy Group, Transitional Housing for Veterans Council of Minnesota, Veterans Administration, Corporation for Supportive Housing, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, HUD, Family Housing Fund of St. Paul and Minneapolis, McKnight Foundation, MCDA, the City County Homeless Task Force Implementation Group, and the board of the Elliot Park Neighborhood Organization.

Number of Beds/Units

Alliance Apartments includes 124 units of affordable supportive housing in a rehabilitated four-story building.

Funding

Funding is provided through a mix of grants that includes the State of Minnesota Department of Human Services. A grant from the Chemical Dependency Program Division of the Department of Human Services is utilized to dedicate services to those returning from state correctional facilities in Minnesota, as well as ex-offenders on parole and probation. This grants pays for one case manager that coordinates and/or provides all program services.

Cost to Run Program

No information provided.

Cost to Client

No information provided.

Outcomes

Between July 2002 and June 2003, the apartments served 173 individuals. The program measures the number of move-outs and those that move out due to relapse (negative move-outs). Between 2002 and 2003 there were a total of 23 negative move-outs, translating to 37 percent of the move-outs and an overall success rate of 87 percent (of all individuals served).

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Brittan House (WI)

Background and Goals

Brittan House is a three-story downtown building in Beloit, Wisconsin, with 45 single room occupancy (SRO) efficiency apartments for homeless men. Neighborhood Housing Services manages the property, providing coordination with social service agencies to meet a wide range of resident needs. Brittan House is the result of a partnership between Heartland Properties and Neighborhood Housing Services, a local nonprofit organization.

Population Served

The Brittan House is a single room occupancy facility for homeless males located in Beloit. The Brittan House adopted HUD's One Strike program, which allows the property managers to be more selective in the review of rental applications. The vast majority of tenants have had some involvement in the criminal justice system; however, applicants who have committed crimes such as sexual assault, murder, or have numerous federal drug convictions are rejected. Applicants are also subject to criminal background checks and income verifications.

Program Description

The Brittan House, which opened in 1990, is a permanent housing facility for males only. The project is 99 percent Moderate Section 8 which means each resident must be income qualified. One unit (resident) is currently grandfathered and exempt from the income restriction. Qualified residents can stay in the facility as long as they like, provided that they continue to be income qualified. A recertification process is done annually on each tenant. The Brittan House is a "dry" facility and has adopted HUD's One Strike and You Are Out policy. Any infraction of the house rules may mean immediate eviction. Several residents have held residency since the facility first opened.

The project has two property managers, but because there are a high number of long-term residents, they have a tendency to "police" themselves. Residents must participate in a mandatory monthly tenant meeting. Those who are excused—generally those who are working—meet with one of the property managers for a personal report. In addition to the meeting, several times a year guest speakers come and talk about programs in the community that may be beneficial to the residents. The SRO staff partners include, but are not limited to, local substance abuse facilities, HIV agencies, local Social Security Administration offices, Veterans Affairs offices, and area disability agencies. The staff also work with local employers, temporary placement agencies, social service agencies, and local technical colleges. Staff also assist with employment applications, searches, and resumes.

Tenants who acquire a permanent job, GED, or higher education are allowed to remain in the facility for six months, despite the fact that they may surpass income requirements. Residents who fail during this six-month period can remain in the facility without fear of being evicted or having to start the process over again. Residents who receive disability and remain income qualified can remain as long as needed. Programs and assistance are offered, but are not mandatory. Tenants set their own course—some ask for help and others do not.

Number of Beds

The Brittan House has 45 units for permanent housing and two emergency units.

Funding

The Brittan House is a self-sufficient program. It does not operate on any grants or contributions. The only assistance received is through the Moderate Section 8 rental assistance program. The voucher assistance program provides residents with needed support, enabling them to afford to pay rent. Because Brittan House is almost always at capacity, the project makes money which is then funneled back into the program for upkeep and management expenses. The Brittan House has continually operated in the black since it opened its door in 1990. As a result, the project has been able to maintain a replacement reserve account equal to at least \$1,500 per unit (but usually much higher) and a residual reserve account. These accounts have allowed the organization to pay against debt as well as any capital expenditures encountered.

Cost to Client

Under the Moderate Section 8 agreement, tenants pay a portion of their rents, which range from \$25 to \$356 per month. The majority of residents pay \$25. These tenants have no regular source of income, but may be working in temporary jobs. Those that pay more than the minimum rent generally have some type of consistent income from pensions, disability, Social Security, or veterans programs.

Outcomes

Although the facility and the services that are provided have not been rigorously evaluated, the program has received high praise from local city government, probation and parole staff, Wisconsin prison system officials, churches, and other support organizations. Needs assessments have indicated that there continues to be a need for permanent housing in the community.

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Dismas House (MA)

General Background and Goals

Dismas House is a supportive residential community that serves former prisoners. The Dismas model is loosely based on the social rehabilitation model for prisoner reintegration. The model also involves a firm commitment to democratic decisionmaking among all members of the house. Founded in 1988 to aid returning prisoners, Dismas House's mission is to reconcile former prisoners to society, and society to former prisoners, through the development of a supportive community.

Population Served

Both male and female released prisoners are eligible for participation (sex offenders are excluded). The point of access for Dismas services is a network of in-prison case managers, library resources, social workers, and prison ministers. Also, Dismas occasionally accepts persons off the streets who have been through the prison system. Staff persons interview potential residents throughout the Massachusetts prison system, with about 40 to 50 selected for residence per year out of the 1,000 that apply.

Program Description

Dismas House is a service-enriched transitional housing program. Services available to the residents include clothing vouchers; transportation and job assistance; health care linkages to free clinics and insurance for the poor; resolution of outstanding civil and legal issues; family reunification opportunities; substance abuse services; vouchers for schooling and vocational programs; and finally, apartment search assistance and aftercare services for three years after residency. Dismas House works with many local service agencies to provide these services.

Students and former prisoners living together in a family setting and active involvement of volunteers from the broader community characterize the supportive community model. The average length of stay at Dismas House is six months. Dismas House also has programs in Indiana, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Tennessee, and Vermont.

Dismas House regularly collaborates with Worcester Interfaith—a multi-issue, multiracial community organization composed primarily of religious congregations that work together to improve the quality of life in neighborhoods.

Funding

Dismas House Massachusetts receives funding from a variety of sources, including charitable donations from individuals and churches, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and MassHousing. In addition, Dismas House utilizes many volunteers.

Cost to Run Program

No information available.

Cost to Client

No information available.

Outcomes

Currently, no data are available. New tracking software is being installed to maintain and track data on program participants more effectively.

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Druid Heights Ex-Offender Housing and Comprehensive Assistance Program

General Background and Goals

Druid Heights Ex-Offender Housing and Comprehensive Assistance Program is one of many programs run by the Druid Heights Community Development Corporation (DHCDC), a nonprofit organization that was formed in 1975. Along with general housing, employment, and counseling assistance, the organization engages in the construction and/or renovation of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households. Since 2001, DHCDC has operated a housing facility specifically for ex-offenders. The goals of the housing program are to reduce recidivism and to bridge the return of men from prison life to community life.

Population Served

The transitional housing program serves men returning from Maryland state prisons who are residents of the Druid Heights community in Baltimore.

Program Description

Through a partnership with the Maryland Department of Corrections (MDDOC), inmates are referred to the facility while they are still incarcerated. After release, inmates are placed in the facility in the community. The facility is considered an integral part of the Maryland Reentry Partnership (REP), and is just one program within a continuum of care for clients. Residents concurrently participate in REP, through which they receive a number of health and human services. Case management and housing are provided directly through DHCDC. A number of other services, however, are provided through partnerships with numerous community organizations, including the Druid Heights Counseling and Treatment Center, Genesis Jobs, STRIVE (job training and placement), and the Baltimore Men's Health Clinic. The length of stay at the facility depends on the readiness of each individual; however the average is about six months.

Number of Beds

The facility has a capacity to house nine residents.

Funding

Sources of funding include the federal government's Going Home (SVORI) Grant and the Enterprise Foundation.

Cost to Run Program/Cost to Client

No information available.

Outcomes

There is no evaluation information available for residents participating in the transitional housing program. However, the larger REP program tracks client outcomes, which would include some outcome information on those who have utilized the housing program.

Contact Information

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The Fortune Society Academy: “The Castle” (NY)

General Background and Goals

The Fortune Society is a nonprofit organization in New York City that has provided services to ex-offenders for over 14 years. Recognizing that too many ex-offenders were ending up back in prisons or jails because they were unable to secure safe and affordable housing, the organization opened its own housing facility in April of 2002 called the Fortune Society Academy. Known as “The Castle,” the facility was designed specifically for offenders coming out of prisons or jails. The overarching goal of the program is to provide newly released prisoners with safe and affordable housing that is coupled with services. The Academy aims to provide residents with the support they need to live productive and responsible lives.

Population Served

Currently, the program serves adult men and women returning from both prisons and jails, with residents ranging from 18 years old to their mid-60s. Referrals for the program come from the clients themselves, family members, program staff, parole and probation officers, the shelter system, judges, and corrections officials. There are no program restrictions based upon charge or prior convictions. Fortune Academy staff base acceptance to the program on a client’s level of motivation to rebuild his/her life.

Program Description

The Academy provides housing and supportive services for ex-offenders in one building. The Academy operates on a phased model with all residents spending their initial time in the program in emergency housing. Residents may remain in this status anywhere from a few days up to a few weeks. During this stabilization period, staff assess each resident’s motivation and determine which housing type is most appropriate. This type of entry also allows The Academy to meet HUD’s criteria for homelessness, which requires a stay in a shelter prior to becoming eligible for permanent or transitional housing services.

Once appropriate, residents are phased into more permanent housing. The typical length of stay in permanent housing is between 6 and 18 months. Residents sign leases and occupancy agreements and abide by tenant restrictions to remain eligible for the program. The Academy also works with clients to identify scattered-site housing options if appropriate, then assists with negotiation of leases, provision of transitional payments, and payment of electric bills, utilities, and other necessities that residents could not otherwise afford.

The program is based on a model that allows administrators to shape entry criteria based on learning what works, rather than being bound by funding sources. The staff of the Academy itself attributes its preliminary “success” to the loose set of entry criteria that provides for a range of services for residents, providing a high level of support with high expectations.¹⁷ In order to remain at the Academy, residents must work 35 hour per week or must participate in an equivalent number of hours in services. Residents who work are required to participate in social and constructive services for a minimum of 10 hours per

¹⁷ Personal communication with Joanne Page on July 7, 2003.

week. Because the majority of staff are ex-offenders or are in recovery, staff understand first hand the challenges residents face, and are on site to support residents in efforts to rebuild their lives.

Building trust in the community has been an enormously important component to establishing a presence in the community. In order to keep the community engaged, the Academy has a community advisory board that meets with program staff to discuss community-based issues and program issues.

Number of Beds

There are 41 phased permanent housing units, 27 single- and double-occupancy units, and six residential units with 18 beds.

Funding

Funding for the program comes from three separate HUD funding sources, including the Supportive Housing Program (SHP), Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS funding (HOPWA), and the Shelter Plus Care program. Other funders include The New York State Office of Substance Abuse and Alcohol Services (OASAS), contract-based funds for emergency shelters, private foundation funds, and private donor money through a capital campaign. The project also received funding from the Historical Preservation Tax Credit and Low Income Housing Tax Credit programs.

Fortune Society administrators carefully selected a variety of funding streams that did not require restrictive criteria. Their intention was to cross-fund the program so not to rely too heavily on one source.

Cost to Run Program

No information provided.

Cost to Client

No information provided.

Outcomes

The Academy is currently being studied by the New York University Stern School of Business Management to evaluate early outcomes and document program implementation. Data will be available in summer 2004.

Contact Information

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The Mentally Ill Offender Community Transition Program (WA)

General Background and Goals

The Mentally Ill Offender Community Transition Program (MIO-CTP), authorized by statute, began in July 1998 as a five-year pilot program. The program was created to develop post-release mental health care and housing for up to 25 mentally ill offenders returning to the community from prison. The goal of the program is to reduce incarceration costs, increase public safety, and improve the client's chances of succeeding in the community.

King County Regional Support Network (RSN) developed, implemented, and administers the program under contract to the Mental Health Division (MHD) of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). King County RSN contracted with Seattle Mental Health and its subcontractors, Pioneer Human Services and Therapeutic Health Services, to provide services as required. An oversight committee, comprised of representatives from DSHS, DOC, and King County RSN, meets monthly to review project activities, discuss and resolve issues raised by program staff and provide project direction and oversight.

Population Served

Clients with mental illness are referred from four state correctional facilities and screened by the Department of Corrections for eligibility using mental health assessments. A selection committee makes final decision on admission.

Program Description

There are six main service components. These components include (1) pre-release planning, (2) intensive post-release case management, (3) residential support services, (4) community supervision by the DOC, (5) treatment for co-occurring disorders: mental health and substance abuse treatment, and (6) employment.

Pre-release planning is designed as a comprehensive planning period utilizing a specialized plan. The program also developed a system to improve participant access to entitlements. Participants apply for medical entitlements immediate after release. A job readiness curriculum was developed to provide strategies for obtaining employment. The program also developed a partnership with Interaction Transitions, a provider offering support services and transitional housing to sex offenders.

Post-release case management involves transitioning the client from prison to the supportive living facility, establishing and providing linkages to community services, engagement in structured programming, and the provision of crisis response as needed. The residential support services element provides a housing subsidy for clients of up to \$6,600 per participant per year. Seattle Mental Health contracts with Pioneer Human Services to provide transitional housing. The community supervision component involves the program team meeting regularly with participants to conduct risk assessments in order to establish the risk that participants pose to the community. A designated community corrections officer supervises all participants who are under correctional supervision. With regard to services, clients receive substance abuse treatment through individual or group counseling services, and

employment services through specialized attention from vocational staff. Clients can also pursue educational programs.

Number of Beds

The program has the capacity to serve up to 25 clients at any one time. Through a contract with Pioneer Human Services, there are a variety of housing facilities available for clients, depending on client risk to the community and level of service needs.

Funding

No information available.

Outcomes

The program received the 2000 Exemplary Service Award from the King County Mental Health, Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division in the Services Innovation category.

Between program implementation (August 1998) and July 31, 2002, 64 participants were enrolled. As of August 1, 2002, there were 21 active participants in the program. Nine participants out of 64 graduated the program and successfully transitioned to the community. An additional 13 were successful but transferred to other mental health programs with less intensive services.

The 21 active participants as of August 2002 were living in a variety of housing facilities or programs. Three were still incarcerated in the pre-release component of the program. Nine were in the high-supervision Berkeley House and three lived in specialized sex offender housing. Two were residing in congregate care facilities that were highly supervised and structured; one individual had been psychiatrically hospitalized and one was living in a facility that was deemed not adequately structured for the individual. Two were living in less structured environments—one participant was living in a low-supervision group living arrangement and one had moved to independent housing.

An evaluation, mandated by the legislation, is currently being conducted by the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Health and Rehabilitation Administration, Mental Health Division. The evaluation, known as the Mentally Ill Offender Community Transitions Study (CTS), is tracking a cohort of mentally ill individuals ($N = 333$) released from Washington correctional facilities in 1996 and 1997 as a comparison to those participating in MIO-CTP. The study will gather service utilization and criminal recidivism data over a three- to four-year period. For more information, see Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (2002).

Contact Information

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Sarah Powell Huntington House (NY)

General Background and Goals

Sarah Powell Huntington House (SPHH) is a transitional residence consisting of 28 apartments located in the Lower East side of Manhattan. The residence provides a safe, drug free environment with 24-hour supervision. SPHH was developed and is run by the Women's Prison Association and Home, Inc. (WPA). WPA is a nonprofit agency working to create opportunities for change in the lives of women prisoners, ex-prisoners, and their families. WPA provides programs through which women acquire the life skills necessary to end their involvement in the criminal justice system and to make positive, healthy choices for themselves and their families. WPA developed the idea for the program to overcome a serious catch-22 facing homeless women returning to the community from prison or jail. Without housing a mother cannot get custody of her children; without her children, she cannot get appropriate housing through the Emergency Assistance Unit of the NYC Department of Homeless Services.

The goal of SPHH is to assist women leaving jail or prison who seek to rebuild their lives in the community and strengthen their families. SPHH helps women achieve stability and self-sufficiency through comprehensive case management and a wide range of on-site services.

In the late 1980s, WPA purchased two buildings that would be joined to become SPHH from the city for two dollars. The New York State Homeless Housing Assistance Corporation (HHAC)¹⁸ provided WPA with a combined grant and loan to build/renovate the facility. The loan allows nonprofits to take title of the facility after 20 years (if the facility is used for public purpose for that time). WPA also raised funds through private donations toward the cost of getting ready for renovations and program operations. New York City made a commitment to cover operating costs. WPA began renovations in 1991 and the first clients entered the program in October of 1993.

Population Served

To be eligible for SPHH women must be homeless and have custody of their children or a good prospect of regaining custody of at least one child. The program accepts pregnant women as well. Many women are referred directly from criminal justice agencies such as the jail or state correctional facilities. Women are also referred from local shelters; all women must be approved by the New York City Department of Homeless Services.

Program Description

The typical Huntington House apartment includes a living room with dining area and adjacent kitchen, two bedrooms, and a bathroom. The self-contained residences allow clients to practice the skills of daily living while still in a supported environment.

¹⁸ In 1990, the NY State Legislature established HHAC as a public benefit corporation to issue the necessary bonds to finance the costs of developing projects under the state's Homeless Housing Assistance Program. Each year, HHAC selects categories of projects as priorities for funding to assist specific homeless populations based upon a determination of need.

Services include case management, substance abuse relapse prevention, HIV/AIDS educational services, peer support, independent living skills training, educational and vocational referrals, and permanent housing placement.

Women reside at SPHH for periods ranging between 6 to 18 months. The overall average length of stay for all clients (successful and unsuccessful) is 10 months. Women live in their own apartments, cleaning, shopping, and cooking for themselves. When a “single” woman enters Huntington House, she enters Tier I, where she remains until she regains custody of at least one child. When custody is awarded, the mother moves to Tier II where she will live with her child/children.

SPHH has a close relationship with the New York City Administration for Children's Services (ACS) and the many foster care agencies that deal with SPHH clients. SPHH staff work closely with residents to become advocates for themselves. SPHH staff work with ACS to ensure a smooth transition as families are reunited. The process includes multiple family court hearings, supervised visits with the children, then overnight visits in the mother's new apartment, trial discharge, and finally, the placement of the children in the permanent legal custody of their mother. Although reunification is a significant marker of success, it is not always the desired outcome for all parties. Sometimes, a mother decides that her child's/children's current arrangement (e.g., foster care, living with grandparents) may be the most appropriate for both the mother and the children.

Once in a Tier II unit, a family begins the process of finding permanent housing. This involves filling out applications, assembling required documentation, searching for apartments, and negotiating with landlords and the City. The majority of families who have transitioned in permanent housing have gone to private housing that accepts Section 8 vouchers. Many families have trouble getting into public housing because NYC has an automatic exclusion for felony offenders. People convicted of a felony are also automatically turned down for Section 8 vouchers, but SPHH staff have been successful on appeal in a number of cases. Nevertheless, some private landlords are unwilling to rent to former prisoners or, sometimes, even to potential tenants with rent subsidies. Some families have gone to subsidized permanent housing programs run by nonprofit organizations (such as Genesis House).

In addition to collaboration with ACS, SPHH works closely with New York State Division of Parole. Because parole officers are assigned by geographic location, two parole officers supervise parolees who reside at SPHH. These officers make regular visits to the apartments and sometimes attend SPHH case conferences.

SPHH has a Children's Center, which focuses on child development and education through day care and after-school programs, and through recreational activities. This component of the program has been enhanced over time to provide youth and family counseling as supports during the reunification period.

Number of Beds

SPHH has 28 apartments that accommodate 19 families and 18 “single” women.

Funding

Operational funding for the program comes mainly from contracts with the New York City Department of Homeless Services. Their funding comes from three sources: (a) federal funds that pass through the state to the city, (b) state funds and (c) city funds. SPHH's core staff are funded through the city. Core staff consist of a program director and program assistant, a social services director, two case managers, a recreation specialist, four child care staff, and a number of rotating coverage staff. SPHH also receives funds through other government vehicles and through private donations to cover enrichment services and activities, such as a youth counselor, clinical consultations, and assorted community activities for the children.

Cost to Run Program

For the 2003–2004 fiscal year, the contract amount to serve 19 families in SPHH was \$668,064 and for 18 singles it was \$362,709. Roughly, this translates into an annual cost of \$35,162 per year for a family or \$96 dollars per day; and an annual cost of \$20,151 per year for a single or \$55.21 per day.

Outcomes

WPA recently compiled data from their files to examine outcomes for clients who have resided in SPHH over the last 10 years. SPHH has served 328 women in 10 years. Fifty-one percent of clients achieved reunification with at least one child. Fifty-five percent of clients have been discharged to permanent housing. Of those clients who lived with their children at Huntington House, 80 percent were discharged to permanent housing. According to data provided to SPHH from the Department of Homeless Services, 77 percent of SPHH clients did not subsequently return to the shelter system.

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Triangle Residential Options for Substance Abusers, Inc.: “TROSAs” (NC)

General Background and Goals

Since 1994, Triangle Residential Options for Substance Abusers (TROSAs) has been providing individuals with addictions to alcohol and/or drugs the tools needed to change their lives and sustain their recovery from substance abuse. It is a highly structured operation run by current residents and staff, a majority of who are graduates of the program. TROSAs assists in changing lives and increasing law-abiding behavior by providing a self-supporting, two-year, residential, self-help community serving offenders and substance abusers at no cost to the individuals. The principles of social entrepreneurship, self-help, and individual empowerment guide the program’s approach to recovery.

Population Served

TROSAs serves women and men age 18 and over who are substance abusers. Ninety percent have a criminal record and about half come to TROSAs as an alternative to immediate incarceration or as a reentry option upon release from prison. Over 30 percent identify themselves as homeless when they arrive. TROSAs treats a variety of hard-to-serve individuals including some with chronic medical conditions and mental illness. Drawn from across the United States, about 80 percent of residents are from North Carolina. Most have struggled with addiction to drugs or alcohol for over 10 years and 70 percent have participated in other treatment programs. Some do not read and write, and nearly half left high school without graduating.

Program Description

A vast majority of prisoners have substance abuse problems that mostly go untreated during incarceration. TROSAs understands that reducing prisoner recidivism and homelessness depends upon helping people live sober, productive lives. At TROSAs, residents commit to a two-year drug- and alcohol-free stay, receiving food, clothing, job training, housing, therapy, health care, and other services. Beyond graduation from the program, residents have the opportunity to participate in an innovative aftercare program.

The staff and residents have created an environment in which everyone is responsible and accountable for each other. TROSAs community members share a set of core values that shape their relationships with each other and with the larger community. Honesty, accountability, empathy, compassion, self-discipline, a strong work ethic, and most importantly, a true concern for others guide residents and staff members through the process of changing their lives. Through feedback from staff and other residents, each person is motivated to learn and practice healthier, more productive behaviors and to develop high personal standards.

Perhaps the most meaningful feature of the TROSAs program involves its businesses/vocational training programs where residents receive real world on-the-job training and develop the professional skills, work ethic, and sense of responsibility that will help them survive after TROSAs. Current training programs include commercial and residential moving; masonry; painting; lawn care and lot clearing; catering; contract labor services; custom framing; and auto repair.

TROSA residents are generally responsible for all phases of the business programs including job planning, estimates, work scheduling, crew supervision, and resource allocation. TROSA also has an in-house construction department that renovates and maintains program buildings and develops housing for program residents and transitional housing for graduates. Residents provide a great deal of administrative and operational support to the program in areas such as transportation, vehicle maintenance, security, in-kind donation solicitation, food services, office support, and warehousing.

Over 25 percent of TROSA's incoming residents do not have a high school diploma or the equivalent. TROSA provides these residents with the opportunity to participate in literacy and GED classes offered by the Durham Literacy Council and Durham Technical Community College. Local college students also provide individualized tutoring for residents in these classes. In addition, TROSA encourages and pays for residents to enroll in evening college programs at the local community college and provides classes in Microsoft Word, Excel, and basic computer and typing skills to interested residents.

In addition to housing, job training, and educational opportunities, TROSA provides home visits, clothing, meals, counseling, and medical care free of charge. As residents increase their time and responsibilities, they are awarded more privileges and amenities.

As individuals approach their final three months as a resident of TROSA, they enter a phase in the program known as "workout." Leading up to workout, residents are taught a variety of skills that will help them as they seek employment and when they graduate the program. TROSA provides assistance during the job search process, and residents begin outside employment during this time. Paychecks are deposited in a savings account and given to the individuals upon graduation, allowing them funds to get started on their own.

TROSA is committed to providing opportunities for successful transition from the residential program into the larger community. TROSA has developed an innovative program that provides graduates with the support they need. Upon graduation, residents need such things as continued, stable, affordable housing; employment; a personal vehicle; and further education.

Graduates may enter TROSA Housing, which houses individuals with other clean and sober graduates. The housing is low-cost, furnished, and includes all utilities. When graduates move on to their own apartments, TROSA will even provide them with furnishings for their new home.

In recent years, TROSA has added a Scholars Program for graduates of the two-year program. Participants in the Scholars Program have all academic expenses covered by TROSA, as well as room and board, while attending school full time at a local college or vocational school. In exchange, these individuals agree to work at TROSA in some capacity to the extent possible based on their school schedule.

Graduates in good standing are welcome to TROSA for meals daily, as well as a variety of social events. Group meetings are held every other week to provide continued support to graduates moving forward. Regular attendance at group meetings or involvement in other TROSA activities is required for those who wish to benefit from the full range of aftercare services provided.

Number of Beds

TROSA currently provides over 400 beds in approximately 44 units of affordable supportive housing. These include an eight-unit apartment building, four quadruplex apartment buildings, a 10,000 square foot school building, and several single- and multifamily houses across Durham. TROSA is currently developing a “campus of recovery” to provide housing for approximately 275 residents to help centralize its operations.

Funding

Revenue from TROSA’s businesses amounts to about half of the organization’s budget each year, producing a level of self-sufficiency for TROSA that is almost unheard of in the nonprofit sector. In addition, many private companies support TROSA through product donations such as food and clothing and financial support. TROSA is also supported by private donations.

Cost to Run Program

The TROSA program costs approximately \$20,000 per resident annually.

Cost to Client

The cost of the two-year TROSA residential program is free to the client.

Graduates of TROSA are eligible to receive free meals; safe, affordable, substance-free housing at an affordable price; vehicle purchase and maintenance at cost; and free participation in aftercare programming and support groups.

Outcomes

The average length of stay for a resident is approximately 370 days. Since 1994 TROSA has served and housed almost 2,500 individuals and graduated nearly 400 residents from the program. Upon completion of the program, all of TROSA graduates are employed, given the option of housing, and provided with a car or transportation to and from work.

Contact Information

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551 Warren Street Apartments (NY)

General Background and Goals

The goal of the Warren Street Apartments is to provide safe and affordable housing for low-income residents, including former offenders. The Fifth Avenue Committee, a nonprofit community-based organization in Brooklyn, New York, owns and operates the Warren Street Apartments.

Population Served

551 Warren Street Apartments serves homeless single adults with disabilities who are referred from the New York City shelter system. Within the Warren Street Apartments, 60 of the 68 residents earn less than 50 percent of area median income, and many need supportive services for special needs. The project rents 34 units, and they receive rent subsidies under the Shelter Plus Care program. Units are also set aside for senior citizens, local Emergency Housing placements, previously incarcerated adults who were enrolled in the Fifth Avenue Committee's Developing Justice program, and neighborhood priority placements.

Program Description

551 Warren Street is a multi-unit building that provides rental apartments and permanent housing with supportive services.

Number of Beds

The apartment building contains 67 efficiency apartments and a two-bedroom apartment for the superintendent.

Funding

To keep rents within reason, project costs were carefully monitored throughout construction. A combination of grants kept the project from incurring large debt, and foundation money paid for the commercial kitchen next to the community room. Attorneys were part of the nonprofit Lawyer's Alliance for New York, other professional services were pro bono, and volunteers conducted the rental application lottery.

Cost to Run Program

No information provided.

Cost to Client

No information provided.

Outcomes

Due to an average monthly apartment rent of \$325 in an area with market rates for comparable apartments of \$1,000 and more, the Fannie Mae Foundation recognized the Fifth Avenue Committee with a 2001 Maxwell Award of Excellence for affordable housing production.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS FACILITIES (HALFWAY HOUSES)

Community corrections facilities, typically called halfway houses or pre-release centers, are facilities that contract with federal, state, or local governments to house returning offenders during a portion of their sentence. The length of stay in a halfway house varies from about 30 to 120 days, depending on the jurisdiction; however, most programs provide returning offenders with supportive services, such as substance abuse counseling, mental health counseling or referrals, and education classes. Most halfway houses also have a work or school requirement. The major difference between halfway houses and other residential facilities that house ex-offenders is that residents of halfway houses are still under the jurisdiction of the criminal justice system—they are still technically prisoners although they are serving the remainder of their sentence in the community. Accordingly, if residents fail to comply with program rules, they can be remanded back to prison or jail to complete their sentence.

We have also included a description of the Multnomah Transition Services Unit (TSU)—though not community-based housing facilities—we felt it was important to share its mission. The TSU focuses on housing to serve the most difficult-to-place individuals.

Bridgeton Community Correctional Center (NJ) The Kintock Group

Background and Goals

The Bridgeton, NJ, community correctional center is a residential corrections program, operated by the Kintock Group, that helps prisoners gain employment and adapt to life with their families, neighborhoods, and workplaces.

The Kintock Group is a nonprofit organization that provides facilities, education, and training for ex-offenders. The Kintock Group acts as a community corrections provider and contracts with the State of Pennsylvania, the Federal Bureau of Prison, and the State of New Jersey in order to provide comprehensive services to over 3,200 clients.

Population Served

The program serves inmates from New Jersey's state correctional institutions who are within 18 months of parole.

Program Description

The facility provides both a work-release program and a substance abuse treatment program. All incoming residents undergo an extensive intake process to determine whether they start the substance abuse program or the work release program.

The substance abuse component includes participation in Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcohol Anonymous (AA) and lasts for 60 to 120 days. (Participants may be asked to leave the Kintock program if they do not complete the substance abuse

component within 120 days). If a resident successfully completes the substance abuse treatment program, he is evaluated to determine whether he is ready to begin the job readiness component of the program. Kintock participants continue in NA or AA while they are conducting their job searches.

Clients in the work release program must either take part in employment classes and work 40 hours per week, or attend school full time. The facility has an Employment Resource Center, which provides a wide range of employment services, from employment assessments and pre-employment workshops to placement and job retention support. The program also includes a series of family orientation sessions, once a month, that are designed to help residents, their families, and friends understand the program.

Generally, the Kintock Group organizes its services around a four-level model. Level 1, the orientation, usually lasts about a month. Residents and family members learn the rules of the program and participate in education classes, employment classes, and community service. At Level 2, residents continue to attend classes and, if the staff believes an individual is ready, they will let them begin their job searches. During this level, if a resident has a job, they must pay weekly maintenance fees and set up a bank account. They may also be given community time or travel time. At Level 3, residents may earn overnight trips, but they need to complete all other levels, and a certain amount of community service and class time. Once a resident reaches Level 4 s/he is allowed “double overnight furloughs,” provided that no major disciplinary actions have taken place.

Community service is an important aspect of the program. The Kintock Group attempts to engage the community by inviting community residents to participate on Kintock Group’s Community Advisory Boards.

Number of Beds

The facility houses 125 community release residents and employs a staff of 35.

Funding

The Kintock Group of Newark, Inc., invested a total of \$4 million in the project to build and equip the 29,000 square foot community release facility on 7.5 acres of partially wooded ground in the Urban Enterprise Zone of Bridgeton opposite South Woods State Prison. It is the first community corrections facility established in the southern New Jersey.

Financing for the project includes a \$500,000 loan from the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) at a rate of 5 percent for a term of five years. The loan, obtained through the NJEDA’s Fund for Community Development, supplements other financing for the project including a \$3.37 million tax exempt bond obtained from Summit Bank.

Cost to Run Program

No information available.

Cost to Client

No information available.

Outcomes

The Kintock Group is working with the New Jersey Department of Corrections and other agencies to develop a means of tracking employment outcomes of program participants once they leave the program. The Kintock Group also plans to conduct an evaluation to measure recidivism.

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Independence House (CO)

Background and Goals

Independence House is a transitional community correctional facility (halfway house) in Denver specifically designed to house those mentally ill inmates transitioning into the community from the Modified Therapeutic Communities (MTC) Program in the San Carlos Correctional Facility in Pueblo, Colorado.¹⁹ The main goal is to provide a full range of aftercare services to mentally ill, chemically dependent inmates to reduce relapse and recidivism.

The program is the result of a partnership between the Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC) and local community corrections. The Colorado DOC and the Community Corrections Board²⁰ recognized that, for the provision of services to the mentally ill, systems change was necessary. Essentially, all stakeholders were in agreement that change was needed to serve high-risk populations and that there must be flexibility and creative use of funding to achieve goals. Systems change elements include commitment to long-term supervision, a dedicated parole officer for MICA offenders, a committed program developer, joint meetings of stakeholders, and direct problem solving sessions.

Population Served

Independence House serves inmates with histories of mental illness and chemical abuse (MICA). Characteristics of inmates at the San Carlos MTC include: (a) almost all have serious substance abuse problem, (b) 75 percent do not have high school diploma, (c) 50 percent report physical or sexual abuse, (d) 20 percent were homeless prior to incarceration, (e) inmates average 14 arrests and an average of six years incarcerated, and (f) many have history of committing violent crimes.

Program Description

The Independence House program began to take its first transitioning MICA clients in February of 1997. The program developed gradually, as it took a year for the program to reach capacity. The program can be made part of parole requirements. The transition program is designed to run six months, but clients can remain longer depending on their progress. The program utilizes a graduated sanctions approach. This approach allows for parolees who return to prison on a violation to be transitioned back into the Independence House program.

Independence House is a structured aftercare program that helps ensure that clients are achieving self-sufficiency at the same time that they become accountable for their actions. Clients learn to become self-sufficient through basics skills development (meal preparation, banking, use of community resources, etc.). In addition, clients learn about medication and symptom self-management, and emotional and behavioral coping. The program is staffed by three counselors, trained in both mental health and substance abuse service provision. Staff direct program activities seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Mental health services are provided

¹⁹ Independence House for MICA offenders is one of three Independence House programs in the Denver area.

²⁰ Colorado utilizes a community corrections board system where the boards, made up of a diverse group of stakeholders, determine and approve the population that is appropriate for halfway house placements. Board members are appointed by locally elected officials.

by a local mental health center, and medication types and dosage are evaluated weekly. Programming efforts in the transition program have been bolstered by the in-prison therapeutic community program, creating a highly structured intensive program that can serve clients with special needs.

Although the program is located in a residential area, it has not had much community opposition. This may be because the program was long established as a halfway house in the community and the community board works with the community to resolve any issues that arise.

Number of Beds

There are approximately 20 beds available to serve male MICAs within a 15-apartment (60-bed) community corrections facility.

Funding

The program was developed as a four-year pilot program using seed funding from U.S. Department of Justice Edward Byrne Drug Control and System Improvement Formula Grant Program.²¹ Colorado's grant proposal specifically asked for funds to pay staff, per diem for residents, and a subsidy for the special services needed. These services include mental health services, vocational services, wraparound services, and medicines.

At the close of the pilot funding, funding was provided by the State Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice as part of the state's regular funding for community corrections. State funds now cover the majority of the programming for Independence House, with the exception of medications. Medications can run \$400 per month per person. Currently, the program receives funds through the Colorado DOC Parole/Community budget and medical budget for medications.

Costs

The cost of the MICA offender beds for Independence House (basic rate, services and subsidies) is roughly \$80–\$85/day. The Colorado DOC estimates that it costs \$180 per day to house someone in the specialized prison at the San Carlos Correctional Facility.

Outcomes

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) funded National Development and Research Institutes, Inc., (NDRI)²² to conduct a multiyear evaluation of the program as part of a larger evaluation of the in-prison MTC program in San Carlos. The evaluation involved tracking and comparing three groups of clients: (1) those in the in-prison MTC program that did *not* go to Independence House for aftercare (*MTC Only*); (2) those in the in-prison MTC that chose to go to Independence upon release to the community (*MTC + Aftercare*); and (3) those in another in-prison program with less rigorous mental health services and no aftercare (*MH Only*). The study examined criminal activity (new crimes only) and reincarceration 12 months

²¹ The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) administers this program, which is now called the State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Formula Grant Program.

²² Summary of the evaluation was received directly from Dr. Stanley Sacks, Director, Center for the Integration of Research and Practice, NDRI. For more information on the evaluation, contact Dr. Sacks at 212.845.4400.

after prison release. Data were collected from self-report surveys as well as official crime reports from the Colorado Department of Corrections. The evaluation found that the MTC + Aftercare group fared the best—the MTC + Aftercare group showed significantly lower reincarceration rates, rates of criminal activity, and rates of criminal activity related to alcohol and drug use than either the MTC Only or the MH group. These differences persisted after an examination of threats to validity that considered sex offenders status, initial motivation, duration of treatment, exposure to risk, and retrieval bias.

Contact Information

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The Multnomah County Transition Services Unit (OR)

General Background and Goals

The Multnomah County Department of Community Justice in Portland, Oregon, operates a Transition Services Unit (TSU) that centralizes the provision of housing, case management, and supplemental emergency services for inmates transitioning into Multnomah County. In operation since 2000, TSU's main goal is to ensure community safety by supporting reentry primarily through housing-related assistance. The unit oversees all of the department's housing resources.

Population Served

Offenders transitioning from prison or jail into Multnomah County are eligible for the services provided by the Transition Service Unit. Inmates are served from up to one year prior to release with planning and assessment. Services are provided to inmates for up to two years post-release. Targeted services are provided for individuals with acute or special needs. Special needs individuals include low functioning adults (70–85 IQ), the medically disabled (limited mobility), high-profile sex offenders, those diagnosed with mental illness and receiving medication, and repeat and serious offenders (incarcerated more than 10 years).

Program Description

Corrections counselors and probation and parole officers offer a range of services to transitioning offenders through TSU. These counselors and officers assist individuals by providing pre-release planning and referrals to appropriate services and treatment programs. While the focus is on housing and housing-related services, participants also receive referrals to non-housing-related programs and services.

Prior to release, inmates are assessed for housing, substance abuse, mental and physical health, and other needs. TSU works with inmates without special needs within 30 days of their release, and up to 120 days prior to release for those with special needs. TSU staff place offenders on housing waitlists, and if eligible, begin the process of applying for Social Security Insurance. The program also works in tandem with case managers and supervision officers. If TSU officials indicate that other release services are appropriate, they have the authority to contact the release board and/or parole or probation officer who will add conditions to release such as parenting classes or family counseling.

Once released, transitioning offenders can be placed in emergency, transitional, or long-term housing at locations throughout the city of Portland. On average, transitioning offenders spent 42 days in a contracted facility.

In addition, TSU has funds from the City of Portland Housing Authority to provide rental assistance to people with a diagnosed mental illness. Program administrators have identified a number of landlords in the private market that are willing to accept high-risk and hard-to-place individuals, such as sex offenders. TSU also has four houses in which they can place mothers who were recently reunited with their children, but are not ready to assume parenting responsibilities without external guidance. Case managers refer mothers to parenting classes during the pre-release phase and help them cope with reunification once they are released.

Number of Beds

TSU contracts with housing service providers around the city to provide 220 beds for emergency housing, transitional housing, and long-term housing for up to two years post release.

Funding

Multnomah County Department of Community Justice provides most funding. Funding for mentally ill individuals is provided by the City of Portland Housing Authority.

Cost to Run Program

No information available.

Cost to Client

No information available.

Outcomes

For the period covering August 1, 2001, through June 30, 2002, the overall percentage of successful exits from the program was 70 percent (411 clients). TSU defines a successful exit as the client successfully completing his or her pre-release plan goals. Examples include securing suitable housing upon discharge, remaining arrest-free during their stay at a TSU facility, and if necessary, forging connections with suitable employment. The Department of Community Justice also compared service referrals between a 2001 TSU offender cohort and a cohort of offenders in 1999 before the existence of TSU. The comparison found that the 2001 cohort received a much higher number of referrals to housing services as compared to the 1999 cohort (Pascual et al. 2003).

Contact Information

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Safer Foundation Adult Transition Centers (IL)

General Background and Goals

The Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) operates 13 Adult Transition Centers (ATCs) to provide selected inmates with structured supervision in a community setting. While IDOC administers 11 of these facilities, the Safer Foundation runs two facilities—Crossroads and North Lawndale. Safer began contracting with IDOC to run Crossroads in 1983. North Lawndale was opened in 2000. Both facilities are located in the Lawndale community on the near west side of Chicago. The goal of the ATCs, and Safer Foundation in general, is to “reduce recidivism by supporting, through a full spectrum of services, the efforts of former offenders to become productive, law-abiding members of the community.” The Foundation’s philosophy of service is to provide “an appropriate balance of client services and secured close supervision.” The Foundation believes that this balance assists offenders in the process of readjusting “to social and cultural values and the demands of daily life in a community setting” while also providing for the safety of the surrounding community.²³

Population Served

Both Crossroads and North Lawndale serve male inmates who are under the supervision of IDOC. Inmates must be in the last two years of their sentence and be in minimum-security status to apply for placement at an ATC. IDOC determines which inmates qualify to serve time in an ATC, and to which Center an inmate is referred. IDOC makes this determination based on time remaining to be served, the nature of the crime for which the inmate was sentenced, and whether an inmate represents a threat to the safety of the community. Residents are generally placed in or near their home community to allow for an easier readjustment. Clients who fail to fulfill program requirements are returned to prison.

Program Description

ATCs provide Illinois inmates with the opportunity to gradually transition back to community while remaining in custody. While inmates reside in Safer ATC’s, they are subject to a structured daily regimen. Clients are provided with a range of services, including case management, cognitive therapies, substance abuse treatment, and mental health and family support services. During their stay, clients are required to participate in outside employment, education, life skills, and/or community service for a minimum of 35 hours per week. Individuals are also responsible for daily in-house assignments.

Number of Beds

The Crossroads ATC, which housed 60 individuals in 1983 when Safer took over operations, is now the largest ATC in Illinois, housing 350 male residents. The North Lawndale facility houses 200 male residents. Together, these two facilities comprise one-third of the capacity of all ATCs in Illinois.

²³ From the web site of the Safer Foundation. “Safer Foundation – A Road Back for Offenders,” <http://www.safer-fnd.org>, accessed October 20, 2003.

Funding

The ATCs are supported through contracts with the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Cost to Run Program

One ATC bed costs \$19,630 dollars per year to operate.

Cost to Client

Because time spent at an ATC is considered part of the time spent in state custody, and because the Safer Foundation does not believe in charging clients for services, all Safer ATC services are provided free of charge to clients.

Outcomes

The Safer Foundation is currently working with Loyola University in Chicago to determine recidivism rates specifically for ATC clients. Currently, recidivism rates are available for clients who have received services from the Safer Foundation. Statewide, 44 percent of individuals released from prison in 1998 had reoffended within three years. Safer clients who were placed in a job and who kept that job for 30 days or more were significantly less likely to recidivate. Only 17 percent of these individuals had reoffended—representing a 61 percent difference. Half of the individuals in this category were former ATC clients.

Contact Information

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Shaw II (Washington, DC)

Background and Goals

Shaw II is an adult halfway house program, operated by the Bureau of Rehabilitation, Inc., that has been providing contractual services to the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) since 1970. The main goal of the program is to reduce recidivism by reintegrating clients transitioning from prison.

Program Description

The facility is located in the Mt. Pleasant neighborhood in northwest D.C. Shaw II only accepts D.C. residents into the program. Currently, about 30 percent of residents resided in the area where the facility is located before their arrests. Most residents are finishing their sentences for drug-related crimes. The majority of these offenders have problems with substance abuse. The facility has two dedicated substance abuse clinicians that run an intensive substance abuse treatment component sponsored by the BOP, designed as a continuum of care for offenders with substance abuse issues. Residents with histories of substance abuse are required to attend group treatment sessions that address various issues such as managing anger, working through family problems, relapse prevention, and acceptance of individual shortcomings. The treatment program, which includes group and individual counseling, allows residents to attend work and participate in therapy sessions.

All residents participate in weekly sessions with outside presenters who come to speak about budgeting and bank account management, anger management, effective parenting, and physical health. The program supervises scheduled visits with family members at the facility, and allows members to return to their homes on weekend passes after they have been in the program for a period of time and they are employed and drug free. During these passes, program staff visit residents at their families' homes and may take a random drug screen to ensure they are following program rules.

All of the residents must find employment within 15 days of their stay at the facility and provide proof to program staff that they attend work regularly. The facility has partnerships with local employment assistance organizations, local businesses, and the D.C. Department of Employment Service to work with residents in finding a job that is suited to residents' skills and experience. Staff also assists in resume writing, interviewing skills, and making the introduction between residents and local employers looking to hire. Along with work, about 10 percent of the residents participate in G.E.D. preparation and other educational classes during their stay. The overall goal of the program is to ensure that all residents have gained employment upon their release and receive the educational opportunities they desire to better themselves.

Accountability and responsibility are the two major objectives of the program for its residents. This is enforced with random drug and alcohol screening, and job checks, where Shaw II staff visits residents' places of employment to make sure they are complying with their jobs. A BOP case manager is located on site, ensuring constant dialogue between residents, Shaw II staff, and case managers. Regular meetings between staff and BOP take place to monitor residents' progress.

Number of Beds

The program currently has 13 beds for male offenders who stay at the facility for an average of 60 to 120 days.

Funding

The federal government provides funds for Shaw II.

Cost to Run Program

No information available.

Cost to Client

No information available.

Outcomes

Although no formal evaluation has been conducted, program staff report that of the 56 residents served from July 2001 to 2002, 90 percent of Shaw II residents find gainful employment within 15 days of their stay, and over the past 10 years, only two residents have been returned to prison for failing to comply with the work requirement.

Contact Information

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FAITH-BASED HOUSING PROGRAMS

St. Andrew's Court (IL)

Background and Goals

St. Andrew's Court provides second-stage permanent housing and support services for 42 men who have come through the St. Leonard's House Program. St. Andrew's Court is operated by St. Leonard's Ministries (SLM), which provides housing and case management services for ex-offenders transitioning back into the community from prisons or jails.²⁴

Population Served

St. Andrew's Court targets men returning from prison.

Program Description

St. Andrew's Court is part of the larger program through St. Leonard's Ministries. SLM provides a full array of case-management services, from substance abuse recovery to money management. The Social Services Program helps each resident live successfully in an independent setting. The Adler School of Professional Psychology provides counseling and therapy in individual and group settings. A volunteer services coordinator at SLH provides recreational opportunities both on site and elsewhere. A neighboring Episcopal charity provides GED preparation and other educational opportunities. Initial counseling and information sessions are mandatory and free of charge to prospective renters, as are ongoing sessions on an as-needed basis. Each year, approximately 380 individuals between the ages of 18 and 65 are served through the organization, which has a staff of 45 and 15 volunteers.

To empower residents to take charge of their home, residents in St. Andrew's Court take part in a resident's council. A professional facilitator assists new residents in learning about the responsibilities of the council, and general community and floor meetings are for discussion. Each of the five floors elects a representative to the Residents' Council, which meets regularly and acts as a liaison with the administrator and director of social services.

Number of Beds

St. Andrew's Court has beds for 42 men.

Funding

The program receives private donations as well as a mix of grant funding and contracts from federal and state agencies.

Cost to Run Program

The program is estimated to cost \$18,000 to \$20,000 per client.

²⁴ St. Leonard's Ministries also has two other housing programs: St. Leonard's House (SLH), which accommodates 40 men, and Grace House (GH), which accommodates 16 women.

Outcomes

No outcome data available.

Contact Information

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The Catherine Center (CA)

General Background and Goals

The Catherine Center is a small transitional living program in southern San Francisco for women returning from California prisons and jails. The goal is to enable women to get in touch with their own gifts, talents, and abilities so they can learn to be self-supportive.

The recently renovated facility is owned by the St. Vincent de Paul Society of San Mateo, and the program was established in collaboration with the Sisters of Mercy, Burlingame Regional Community. The three-bedroom residence provides four to six women with a safe and caring community upon their release from jail or prison. The Catherine Center also assists women with a wide range of services from job mentoring to dance and art opportunities.

The idea for Catherine's Center took root in the late 1990s when Sister Marguerite Buchanan and Sister Suzanne Toolan began visiting a nearby prison to develop and maintain a weekly prayer session at San Quentin Prison in California. They also volunteered to develop prayer sessions in a woman's prison and the local jails. They recognized the need for transitional programming to assist women returning to the community from prison and jails. Because the Sisters of Mercy is affiliated with Mercy Housing, a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to developing, operating, and financing supportive housing, the organizations developed the idea to begin a small transitional housing program for women in San Francisco. The Sisters of Mercy partnered with the St. Vincent de Paul Society of San Mateo County to rehabilitate an apartment building. The St. Vincent de Paul Society had received a large donation to be used for housing development. These funds were used to rehabilitate and renovate the selected housing. Additional fundraisers were held to raise money for furniture and other household necessities. Renovations were completed in April 2003 and the first resident moved in by August that year.

Population Served

Catherine's Center targets women released from two prisons and the local jails in California. The Center seeks to accept only those women who are sincerely dedicated to changing their lives. The program is not limited to those of the Christian faith, but is open to all women who believe in a connection to a higher power.

Program Description

The center houses up to six women for six months to a year as they participate in programs that promote recovery assistance, life skills, creative expression, spirituality, education, and career planning. Residents do volunteer work at various St. Vincent de Paul facilities throughout the Bay Area, in addition to their normal routine of attending meetings, classes, and workshops. The program is modeled after the Crossroads residential program in Los Angeles. The Catherine Center utilizes a three-phase model where residents must progress through each phase before they will be transitioned to permanent housing. Phase I lasts roughly 30 to 45 days and involves a restricted activity schedule where staff accompany residents on all activities and outings. Phase II, which ranges from six months to one year, allows residents to leave the facility on their own and progress through various steps until they can reach

Phase III. Once in the short two-month Phase III, residents begin to seek permanent housing and make final preparations to leave the facility.

Residents come together every day at 9 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. for prayer. This prayer component is suitable for any denomination. Meditation is also part of daily activities. Other activities include career planning, spiritual planning, educational workshops, volunteer activities, and various forms of counseling.

In addition to three weekday staff, a program director, program manager, and program assistant, the Catherine Center relies heavily on volunteers. The program director indicated that the center utilizes a network of over 70 volunteer professionals.

Number of Beds

The Catherine Center is a six bed facility within three rooms in an apartment building.

Funding

The Catherine Center does not receive any government subsidy or funding from Mercy Housing. Each year, center staff and the Sisters of Mercy raise funds through various fundraisers for the operating expenses. The center is currently working with a volunteer senior fundraiser to develop a three-year fundraising program.

Cost to Run Program

Operating expenses are approximately \$250,000 per year.

Cost to Client

Clients do not pay a fee to reside at Catherine's Center. However, the program encourages clients to save approximately 75 percent of their employment income in a bank account that can be used to assist with finding permanent housing upon release.

Outcome Information

The program is very new—the center accepted its first resident in August 2003—and hence, outcome information is not yet available.

Contact Information

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The Ridge House (NV)

General Background and Goals

The Ridge House, Inc., is a nonprofit organization that runs four transitional living programs for male and female returning prisoners and ex-offenders. Ridge House offers substance abuse treatment and employability training to parolees in Reno, NV, as they transition from state prison to the community. The program is designed to reduce recidivism and relapse through the provision of treatment, employment, and life skills services.

Established in 1982 as an extension of the interdenominational prison-based Christian KAIROS ministry, the program has grown from one facility to four homes with the financial assistance of the City of Reno and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice.

Population Served

The program accepts most returning prisoners, with the exception of high-level sex offenders or extremely violent offenders. Parolees apply to Ridge House four months prior to their scheduled release. Prison-based case workers assist inmates with the application process and coordinate the program. Each applicant is then interviewed by Ridge House staff. The interview normally occurs before the inmate goes before the Parole Commission. If the applicant is accepted and they qualify for parole, a bed date is set (the date a bed will be available that is closest to prison release date). Due to the large numbers of applicants, and the limited number of beds, acceptance is made on a space available basis. The average length of stay at Ridge House is three months.

Program Description

The program provides residential and outpatient counseling, including vocational rehabilitation and substance abuse counseling, mental health treatment, computer classes, parenting classes, and classes in developing careers. Services are highly structured and use evidence-based models, infusing faith into much of the program's orientation. On intake each client is assessed to determine his/her needs. The primary counselor assists the clients in formulating a treatment plan outlining goals and problems. Clients meet with their counselor as often as necessary to facilitate their progress. Most clients have substance abuse issues, and all clinicians are Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselors. Mental Health evaluations and counseling are available on site for those clients with co-occurring disorders. Much of the counseling and education is designed to provide clients with the skills and motivation necessary to remain abstinent.

The services operate in a "family-style therapeutic manner," classified under three categories—stabilization, habilitation, and reentry. During the stabilization phase, clients must sign a contract at intake outlining milestones that residents must meet, such as finding employment within seven working days, paying for room and board, and contributing to household chores. During the habilitation phase, residents attend supportive service sessions and classes tailored to their specific needs. The Ridge House also provides reentry skills where upon release from the program, clients will

have addressed their substance abuse issues and are transferred to the Ridge House aftercare component.

Ridge House enjoys a strong relationship with the Nevada Division of Parole and Probation (NPP). In the last two years, NPP has dedicated a full-time parole officer to work exclusively with Ridge House parolees.

Number of Beds

Ridge House facilities have a capacity of 27 beds—21 for males and 6 for females.

Funding

Funding comes from private donations and a mix of grants. Funders include Bank of America, U.S. Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Bureau of Justice Assistance, The Children’s Trust, and Clarence Jones Family Trust.

Cost to Run Program

No information available.

Cost to Client

Clients pay rent based on a slide scale fee.

Outcomes

The Nevada Department of Corrections estimates that 68 percent of inmates released will return to prison within one year. For the 10 years that Ridge House has been accessing recidivism statistics from NDOC, the recidivism rate has averaged 24 percent.

An impact evaluation, conducted by the Urban Institute and funded by the National Institute of Justice, will begin in 2004.

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PARTNERSHIPS, CONTINUUMS, AND EDUCATION AND TRAINING MODELS THAT INCLUDE HOUSING SERVICES

The following programs are not housing facilities, but instead are partnership models that can assist returning prisoners with their housing needs. In some jurisdictions, state and local governments and nonprofit organizations have partnered together to provide a menu of services through one point of entry. These programs may also assist returning prisoners in accessing the services needed most immediately upon release from incarceration, such as support in getting identification and applying for housing assistance.

Integrated Services for Homeless Adults with Serious Mental Illness (CA)

General Background

Then-Governor Gray Davis of California provided \$55.6 million in the 2000–01 state budget to expand services for Adult System of Care programs directed particularly at serving homeless persons, parolees, and probationers with serious mental illness. Initial legislation provided for pilot programs in three counties that incorporated integrated service provision across a range of service providers and corrections officials. The recent broadening of statutory requirements, however, permitted implementation of programs in 32 counties and cities across California. These programs are often referred to as AB 2034 programs (named after the assembly bill/legislation).

The goal is to get mentally ill homeless individuals off the street and into permanent housing, into treatment and recovery, or to provide access to veterans' services that also provide for treatment and recovery.

Population Served

The program targets persons whose mental health needs have largely gone unmet: those persons whose illness leads them to being homeless or incarcerated, often repeatedly so, yet who otherwise either avoid contact with mental health services; those for whom appropriate services remain unavailable; or those who are without Medi-Cal benefits and/or do not meet Medi-Cal medical necessity.

Program Description

The programs are designed to provide comprehensive services to adults who have severe mental illness and who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, recently released from a county jail or the state prison, or others who are untreated, unstable, and at significant risk of incarceration or homelessness unless treatment is provided to them. State funds for this program provide for outreach programs and mental health services along with related medications, substance abuse services, supportive housing or other housing assistance, vocational rehabilitation, and other nonmedical programs necessary to stabilize this population.

Funding

Funding is made available through the state of California to the Department of Mental Health. In order to receive funds to develop an integrated services continuum, counties must demonstrate that they are ready as evidenced by a number

of “readiness criteria” developed with consultation by an advisory committee. Among others, the criteria include: a sufficient number of mentally ill homeless individuals in need of services, service capacity, joint outreach with law enforcement and county service providers, the ability to develop and provide permanent housing resources, relationships with landlords and supported housing services, the ability to develop jobs and related job resources, the ability to meet medical needs, and a 12 to 1 staffing ratio or less (Mayberg 2002).

Outcomes

Data was collected for three pilot programs beginning November 1, 1999, through January 31, 2001. This includes 12 months of data prior to client enrollment and 3 months after enrollment. Annualized outcomes show that the percentage of days hospitalized since enrollment dropped 78 percent; the number of days of incarceration since enrollment dropped 85 percent and the number of days spent homeless since enrollment dropped almost 70 percent. An annualized expenditure for the programs totals \$14.1 million, and the estimated savings from reduced inpatient hospital days and reduced incarcerations is roughly \$7.3 million (Mayberg 2002).²⁵

Contact Information

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²⁵ The report can be accessed at http://www.dmh.ca.gov/PGRE/docs/Homeless-Mentally-Ill-Leg_rpt.pdf.

NY/NY Housing (NY)

General Background and Goals

In response to what was perceived to have been a crisis in services for mentally ill homeless individuals in the City of New York, the State of New York and the City of New York formed what became known as the New York/New York (NY/NY) Agreement to House the Homeless Mentally Ill in 1990. Through this initiative, the state and city agreed to fund the development and maintenance of 3,600 community-based permanent housing units for mentally ill homeless. The NY/NY Program aims to ease demands on public shelter and psychiatric treatment services by providing housing and supportive services for the most difficult to serve among the homeless population (Culhane 2001).²⁶

Population Served

NY/NY Housing provides services to individuals who have been diagnosed with a severe mental illness and who have been recently homeless in shelters or on the streets. After going through an application and assessment with the NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA) to determine NY/NY housing eligibility, prospective tenants then apply through one of numerous nonprofit agencies that administer the actual units funded under the agreement. Thus, NY/NY eligibility, housing availability, agency eligibility guidelines, and tenant preference all factor into the placements provided under the agreement.

Participants, referred to as tenants, need not have had a recent experience with the criminal justice system. In a 2001 evaluation of the NY/NY program it was found that about 3 percent of the studied sample had been incarcerated at some point prior to receiving services.

Program Description

The NY/NY agreement provides two general models of housing and psychosocial services—supportive housing and community residence facilities. Supportive housing includes scattered-site housing with community-based service support, and single-room occupancy (SRO) housing, which is independent housing linked to services provided either on site or in the surrounding community. In general, services are provided separately from housing in the supportive housing model, and tenants choose their housing arrangements and mental health service plans.

Community residence facilities integrate the provision of housing and services in community residences, long-term treatment facilities, and adult homes. The community residence model follows a more clinical approach than supporting housing. Participation in the provided services is mandated by the residence agreement (Center for Urban Community Services 1995; Lipton, Nutt, and Sabitini 2000).

²⁶ This initiative is also now referred to as NY/NY I, since a second initiative to provide additional units under a similar state/city-financed structure (NY/NY II) was passed in 1999.

Number of Beds

Under the NY/NY agreement, 3,615 units were funded. About 2,200 of these are supportive housing units, and the remaining 1,400 are in community residences. In 1999, a second initiative was passed (known as “NY/NY II”), in which the state and city agreed to develop 1,000 more units, and to fund the addition of 500 already-existing units to the stock of NY/NY agreement units.

Funding

Construction, operating, and social service costs for the NY/NY agreement have been jointly shared by the State of New York and the City of New York. Federal funding also contributes to this initiative. Additional funding may be provided by the nonprofit organizations that administer the housing and services, and tenants contribute to the costs of the housing that they receive.

Cost to Run Program

On average, the combined annual service and operating costs to the State and City of New York are about \$13,000 per unit. In addition, the city and state spent almost \$200 million on capital costs to develop and/or rehabilitate these units. When the debt services of these capital costs and federal tax credit revenue are included, the average cost per unit per year is \$18,190, or about \$66 million per year for the program as a whole.

Cost to Client

Most tenants are required to contribute to the costs of the housing and services. In most cases, tenants contribute about one-third of their income.

Outcomes

Researchers at the University of Pennsylvania conducted a large-scale evaluation of this program. Among other outcomes, they examined the experiences of program participants who had been involved in the criminal justice system and compared them to a matched sample who had not received NY/NY agreement services. They found that participants in the supportive housing program had 22 percent fewer criminal convictions than the matched sample. The difference was mostly in misdemeanor crimes, not felonies. The number of people incarcerated was 57 percent lower among those who had received services. The number of days was 73 percent lower for the NY/NY group. Supportive housing for this population resulted in a reduction in prison usage by 7.9 days per person placed in the program. The authors estimated that these positive results can be translated into savings in prison costs of nearly \$1.5 million over two years (Culhane et al. 2001).

Contact Information

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Health, Housing and Integrated Services Network (CA)

General Background and Goals

Health, Housing and Integrated Services Network is a network of services developed by the Corporation for Supportive Housing to provide high-quality health, social, and vocational services to tenants and to lay the groundwork for long-term sustainable funding for these critical services. The Network is the result of an 18-month planning process to design a nationally replicable model to integrate an array of health insurance, vocational, and social service funding with permanent housing for individuals with special needs, using a service delivery model that could be sustained in a funding environment increasingly driven by managed care considerations.

Population Served

The program targets people who experience long-term homelessness and those who repeatedly used emergency services in hospitals, treatment systems, and shelters. Although the program is not specifically targeted to returning prisoners, ex-offenders fall within the populations of people served by this program. Service providers from different sectors—primarily health care, HIV/AIDS, mental health, drug or alcohol treatment, vocational, and social services—work together as a team. These teams use a “client centered,” flexible approach that works closely with individuals, educating them about their health issues, teaching them to anticipate and prevent crises, building tenant relationships with one another, and offering links to employment and other programs in the community.

Program Description

Five years after implementation began, service teams were operating in more than 13 different sites with over 700 units of housing, and linked to more than 100 scattered-site apartments. CSH has provided training and technical assistance to support replication of the model at additional sites across the state, and in other regions of the country.

In the San Francisco Bay Area more than 25 nonprofit mental health, substance abuse, health care, HIV/AIDS, employment, and social service organizations and four county public health departments have joined with other government representatives, consumers, and advocates to develop and implement the Network. Taking the first steps towards establishing sustainable funding, the project has brought together policymakers, providers, and advocates in several forums on health care, welfare, and employment policy.

Outcomes

CSH collaborates with research partners at the San Francisco Department of Public Health, the University of California, and Vanderbilt University to gather and analyze data needed document the cost-effectiveness of the project.

According to CSH administrators, initial results of an outcome analysis showed that residents participating in Network services reduced their use of emergency room and hospital inpatient services by more than 50 percent. Use of residential mental health treatment and detoxification services also declined significantly. Additional analyses are still under way.

Contact Information

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La Bodega de la Familia (NY)

General Background and Goals

La Bodega de la Familia, or “the Family Grocery,” is the cornerstone of Family Justice, a national nonprofit that draws on the unique strengths of families to break cycles of criminal justice involvement. In 1996, the Vera Institute of Justice launched La Bodega de la Familia to test the proposition that engaging and supporting the families of substance users under community-based justice supervision can improve community-based drug treatment outcomes, reduce the use of arrest and incarceration in response to relapse, and reduce intrafamilial harms often associated with substance abuse and criminal justice involvement.

La Bodega de la Familia has three primary goals: (1) to improve the success of outpatient drug treatment and compliance with community supervision mandates; (2) to reduce the use of incarceration to punish relapse; and (3) to reduce the intrafamilial harms often associated with substance abuse and criminal justice involvement (e.g., domestic violence, truancy, eviction, and HIV/AIDS).

Population Served

La Bodega de la Familia is a storefront program on Manhattan’s Lower East Side, which addresses the needs of drug users under justice supervision and their families. The Bodega Model, La Bodega’s signature methodology, brings together the individuals under community supervision, family members, the supervision officers, and family case managers to identify and tap into the family’s strengths and resources to improve the likelihood of success in supervision and enhance overall family well-being. Roughly 90 percent of La Bodega participants reside in public housing.

Program Description

Guided by the family case management (FCM) process, residents can now take better advantage of community resources, work with the FCM team to improve the quality of their lives, and help their loved ones succeed under community supervision.

In 2000, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD’s) Department of Public and Indian Housing Affairs asked Family Justice to create a pilot program that would heighten awareness of the impact of criminal justice supervision on families living in public housing. In response, the Family Justice HOPE VI Project was launched.

Family Justice works with housing authority employees at all levels from top to bottom to adapt the lessons learned and tools developed at La Bodega to this unique context. HUD, housing authorities, and Family Justice staff all recognize that merely training line staff will do little to change the bureaucracies that are, of necessity, at the core of public housing authorities. Thus, Family Justice is conducting a multi-tier program of training and technical assistance to engage housing authority line staff (including case managers, relocation counselors, and job coaches), as well as managers, supervisors, and upper management, in modalities that are customized to their needs and resources.

The principles of FCM are applied to all the relationships that go into a successful HOPE VI project. In this way, housing authorities, communities, and families all recognize their shared responsibility for the project and learn to focus on assets rather than deficits. This work brings to life the principles of family systems as it applies to the extended “family” of community and its partners in government.

At the request of probation, parole, and police, La Bodega is also opening a satellite office in one of New York City Housing Authority’s (NYCHA’s) public housing sites, where more than 90 percent of La Bodega’s participating families live. The NYCHA satellite in Jacob Riis public housing, located on the ground floor of a designated senior building on Manhattan’s Lower East Side, will provide a wide range of services and programs to young and old alike.

In addition to offering FCM and a variety of support groups and referral services, satellite staff is also developing varied programming including school tutoring, art and music projects, and classes to develop English-language proficiency, computer literacy, and job readiness skills. One particular project is designed to facilitate understanding and intergenerational communication among generations by having each teach the other a useful skill: youth will help their elders learn computer and Internet skills; parents and elders will teach youth sewing skills.

The satellite is intended to give families residing in the public housing unit ready access to FCM and other community services and to help families tap their own strengths and resilience so they can better help themselves and their loved ones during the difficult community supervision process. With the help of La Bodega’s friends in the construction and business industries, renovations of the space are scheduled to be completed in time for a grand opening in winter 2004. NYHCA has leased space to Family Justice at a nominal rent.

Funding

La Bodega de La Familia receives funding from various government sources including the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, New York City Council (earmarked for Alternatives to Incarceration), the New York State Division of Parole, and the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services.

Outcomes

In May 2002, the Vera Institute of Justice released the findings of a year-long evaluation of La Bodega. Using standardized interview instruments, researchers interviewed a group of drug users and family members enrolled in the La Bodega program and a comparison group of users and family members who did not participate. For those receiving support from La Bodega, the results are promising: reduced drug use in all categories, especially cocaine and marijuana; fewer rearrests; improved treatment outcomes; and enhanced well-being for family members.

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Pioneer Human Services (WA)

General Background and Goals

Pioneer Human Services (PHS) is a large, entrepreneurial nonprofit organization based in Seattle, Washington, that provides opportunities for current and former prisoners, recovering addicts, and others to improve personal, economic, and social development. PHS offers education, employment, housing, and counseling services to clients in an effort to provide opportunities to learn basic skills and behaviors that will lead to successful integration and participation in society.

Population Served

PHS was created to serve returning prisoners, ex-offenders, and those recovering from drug addiction. Currently, PHS serves more than 6,500 clients a year and 2,500 on any given day by providing employment, training, counseling, community corrections and housing programs, and facilities.

Program Description

PHS provides clients with jobs, training, and social services to assist them in obtaining employment, avoiding substance abuse, and ultimately, to become self-sufficient, law-abiding members of society when they leave PHS. PHS provides a variety of employment and training services. The Food Operations program involves the operation of a retail food business, the Mezza Café, at three locations in Seattle and Bellevue. Over 750,000 meals are prepared and delivered to Pioneer programs and third-party customers annually. Pioneer Construction Services employs more than 60 individuals and engages in remodeling and construction projects, such as roofing and siding, for both PHS properties and third-party contracts. Pioneer Distributions services include Contract Services, which provides a number of assembly packaging and warehousing services for customers such as Hasbro and Nintendo. The program also offers Food Buying Services, which distributes food to over 400 food banks and nonprofit groups in 25 states. Pioneer Industries operates two manufacturing plants that specialize in producing cargo liners for Boeing and sheet metal fabrication and finished products for a variety of customers. This division manufactures over 8,000 parts for Boeing alone. A 12-month Basic Training Program offers classroom instruction and on-the-job training, which can be followed by certified apprenticeship programs. Pioneer Consulting Services consults with nonprofit agencies, foundations, and other agencies in the areas of social enterprise and measuring program outcomes.

Substance abuse treatment and counseling services are provided through Pioneer Counseling Services, which provides both outpatient and inpatient mental health and chemical dependency counseling. A secure crisis residential center, the Spruce St. Inn, serves runaway youth and their families. Pioneer Center North is an in-patient chemical dependency facility with a capacity of 153 beds, located in Skagit County. Pioneer Center East is a similar facility in Spokane with a capacity of 40 beds. PHS also provides school-based counseling to middle school students and families in various Seattle Public Schools.

Funding

Unlike other social service organizations, PHS is funded almost entirely by the profits generated from the various businesses it operates, as opposed to grants. The program has an annual operating budget of over \$54 million, 99 percent of which is earned income. PHS funds its programs and business through revenue-generating business operations as opposed to grants and charitable contributions. As a result, PHS is largely independent and free to establish its own mission and goals without pressure from other organizations. Yet, PHS does receive some government funds in that its work-release housing and other programs are funded by contracts with other government agencies. Revenue is generated from six main sources, including (1) the sale of goods and services, (2) government contracts, (3) tax breaks resulting from PHS's nonprofit status, (4) foundation grants and loans, (5) rental income, and (6) outside contributions.

Housing Components

There are several types of housing services available through PHS. Residential recovery services provide drug- and alcohol-free transitional housing and are available in Seattle and Tacoma, Washington. While both locations are designed for single resident occupancy, the Tacoma facility also provides family occupancy. Residents must be in recovery for drug or alcohol abuse, they must have an income of at least \$339 per month or funding assistance. Residents are required to be drug, alcohol, and methadone free for at least 30 days prior to applying for residency. Applicants will not be accepted if they have a prior criminal history of arson or sex offenses. Residents must remain drug and alcohol free and participate and accept services provided by PHS. Residents are allowed to participate in the program for up to 24 months. Accepted applicants must sign a service agreement that they must abide by throughout the duration of their stay. Acceptable payment forms include money orders, cashier's checks, or payroll deduction. Rooms cannot be reserved; signing up and providing acceptable payment are the only methods available to guarantee a room.

PHS also provides permanent economy housing, where landlord/tenant laws make housing available at low-end market rates. This type of housing is designed for single resident occupancy, however children and double occupancy are not prohibited. Residents must have an income of \$339 a month and provide proof of income. Residents must complete an application form as well as pay a nonrefundable application fee of \$60. Applications bearing false information or inaccurate information will be rejected. All applicants are given a credit, criminal history, and reference check; applicants with a history of sex offenses, arson, bad credit, or evictions may be rejected. Certain categories of sex offenders (Level 3) will not be accepted into the residency. Applicants considered high security risks, due to criminal involvement or bad credit, may be subjected to higher security deposits or may be rejected altogether. Applicants are required to sign a rental agreement, and must abide by the terms of a six-month lease agreement. Rent payments, deposits, and fees must be paid when the resident takes possession of the apartment. Acceptable payment forms include money orders, cashier's checks, or payroll deduction. PHS also provides family housing, designed for PHS employees, their significant others, and their children. Other applicants fill vacancies if no PHS employees are available.

In addition to transitional housing, PHS also operates seven correctional pre-release programs, including the Bishop Lewis House and Madison Recovery House, which serve males in work release under state jurisdictions. The Helen B. Ratliff House helps to transition state and county female offenders. Pioneer Fellowship House and Tacoma Comprehensive Sanctions Center focus on federal offenders. Selma R. Carson Home serves juveniles returning from state facilities. PHS also manages nine correctional programs for another nonprofit, including the state's juvenile boot camp.

Number of Beds

With regard to transition and permanent housing, approximately 650 units of low-income and alcohol- and drug-free housing are provided in 16 apartment buildings in Seattle and Tacoma. The St. Regis hotel provides 132 beds of residential recovery services, low-income, and overnight rooms to the public.

Outcomes

Outcome information is available for those clients participating in PHS work-release programs. Utilizing a sample of 382 PHS program participants matched to a sample of ex-felons at other work release facilities, the study found that exposure to PHS programs resulted in a lower recidivism rate and better employment outcomes. The results found that two years after leaving the program, 6.4 percent of PHS participants had been reincarcerated in state prison as compared to 15.4 percent of the comparison group. With respect to employment outcomes, the results of the evaluation found that PHS participants worked more hours and earned more money than the comparison group. Specifically, one year following release, PHS participants earned an average of \$2,544.40 and worked an average of 350 hours while the comparison group earned only \$2,244.65 and worked only 335 hours, on average. In 1998, two years after release, PHS participants earned \$3,517.83 and averaged 387 hours of work compared to just \$2,821.28 and 308 hours for the comparison group. The study found that many PHS participants chose to continue to work at PI following graduation. The comparison group members are required to reveal to their employers that they are on work release status; thus, these individuals are not thought of as permanent employees, and may intend to pursue other opportunities once their work release requirement is fulfilled.

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Portland Housing Center (OR)

General Background and Goals

Portland Housing Center (PHC) was created in 1991 when a group of business leaders and community members came together to develop a plan for increasing home ownership of low- and moderate-income people. The PHC is an educational resource center for renters, landlords, homebuyers, and homeowners. The goal of the program is to increase homeownership of low- and moderate-income people.

Population Served

The main client focus of the PHC was originally on lower-income homebuyers, people of color, single parents, and people who live or want to own a home in North, Northeast, and Southeast Portland. Over the years the organization has grown to provide services for all incomes and all stages of homeownership, including offenders soon to be released or those recently released from county jails.

Program Description

PHC has offers a variety of rental education programs developed to train instructors to teach tenants how to overcome a defective rental history. Notably, one agency teaches the course in a county jail, and another agency teaches offenders coming out of jail. The course is 12 hours over about 6 weeks, is interactive, and is intended to help the tenant get back into housing. The program is designed to educate people with a criminal history about how to talk to a landlord, explain how they have changed. If landlords accept an ex-offender into their unit, PHC extends a landlord guarantee whereby they guarantee one month's rent or repair costs if the tenant fails—rather like insurance.

PHC also utilizes the Ready to Rent curriculum. Ready to Rent is a rental education course created with the help of landlords, social service staff, professional trainers, and volunteers. Ready to Rent increases the number of motivated, responsible tenants applying for vacant units. This comprehensive education program provides housing readiness education to low-income people who have had past difficulties being successful tenants. The program consists of a “training for trainers” certification program, a trainer's guide, and a curriculum for students. The course is taught over 4–6 weeks. This in-depth training covers many important topics including determining your housing priorities; understanding and repairing your credit; your rights and responsibilities as a tenant; understanding the rental application and the screening process; how to communicate effectively with a landlord; and developing and following a workable household budget.

Funding

No data available.

Outcomes

No data available.

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