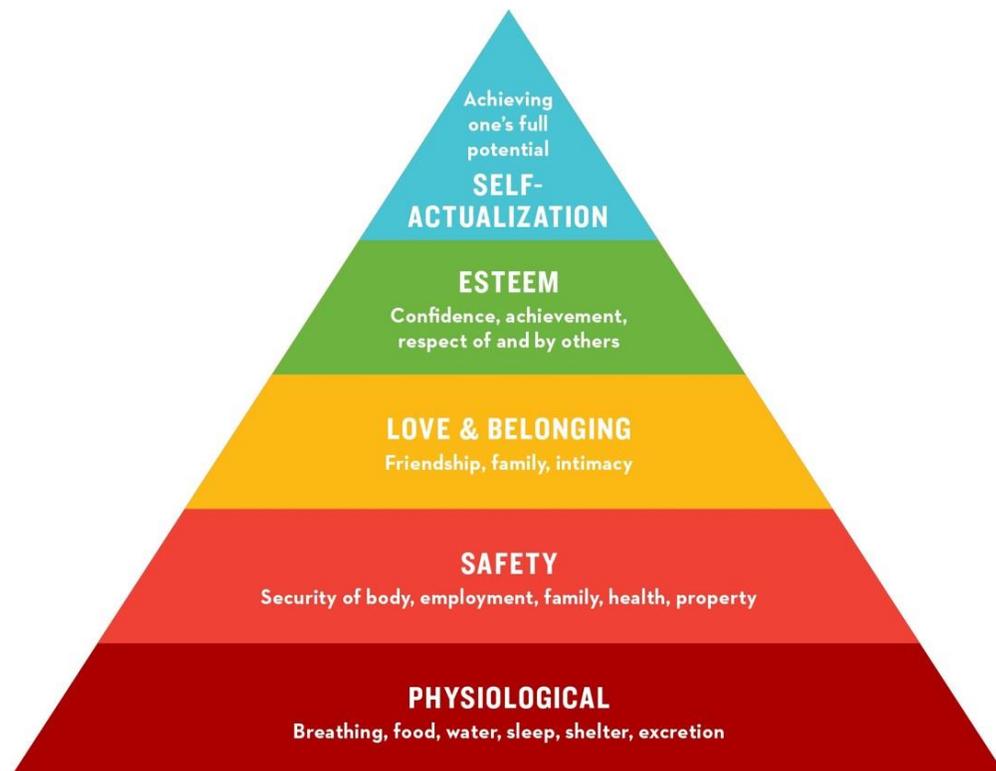


Introduction

Housing First/Permanent Supportive Housing

What is Housing First?¹

Whether you've studied business, medicine, psychology, or some other discipline, you've likely learned about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Maslow's Hierarchy, as demonstrated in this graphic, shows that people must satisfy basic physiological needs—like breathing, eating, drinking, excreting, sleeping, and having stable housing—before they can successfully attend to successively higher needs.



¹ Some material adapted from <https://endhomelessness.org/resource/housing-first/>

Since this theory's publication in 1943, it illuminated our understanding of human motivation, performance, and capability, immeasurably impacting psychology, psychiatry, health care, business, education, social work, and numerous other fields.

Unfortunately, traditional approaches to homelessness often fly in the face of what we know, expecting or requiring people who are experiencing the trauma of homelessness to accept offers of service or treatment without also offering a stable place to live. Not surprisingly, our traditional approaches are often unsuccessful. Housing First is an exception.

Housing First is a homelessness intervention that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can improve their quality of life. This pragmatic approach reflects the reality that people need basic necessities like food, sleep, and a stable place to live before attending to any secondary issues, such as getting a job, budgeting properly, or attending to substance use issues. Housing First also reflects evidence that allowing residents to exercise choice in housing selection and supportive service participation is key to making them more successful in remaining housed and improving their life.

How is Housing First different from other approaches?

Housing First does not require people experiencing homelessness to address all of their problems including behavioral health problems or to graduate through a series of services programs before they can access housing. Housing First does not mandate participation in services either before obtaining housing or in order to retain housing. The Housing First approach views housing as the foundation for life improvement and enables access to permanent housing without prerequisites or conditions beyond those of a typical renter. Supportive services are offered to help people with housing stability and individual well-being, but participation is not required: services are proven to be more effective when the recipient chooses to engage. Other approaches make such requirements for a person to obtain and retain housing; these approaches are far less effective.

What is permanent supportive housing?

Supportive housing is an evidence-based housing intervention that combines non-time-limited affordable housing assistance with wrap-around supportive services for people experiencing homelessness, as well as other people with disabilities.

Research has proven that supportive housing is a cost-effective solution to homelessness, particularly for people experiencing chronic homelessness.

Studies consistently show that supportive housing not only resolves homelessness and increases housing stability, but also improves health and lowers public costs by reducing the use of publicly-funded crisis services, including shelters, hospitals, psychiatric centers, jails, and prisons. For more information on these studies, please see the "Housing First Evidence" document.

The following is a non-exhaustive sampling of introductory sources that provide basic orientation to Housing First and Permanent Supportive Housing programs, including videos, news articles, and links to other resources.

Videos

The Daily Show video on Housing First.

<http://www.cc.com/video-clips/lntv3q/the-daily-show-with-jon-stewart-the-homeless-homed>

A video story of a resident of DESC's 1811 Eastlake.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wxoZ79hJrk>

Video of a formerly chronically homeless individual who benefited from HF/PSH.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SizHuR225Co&feature=youtu.be>

Interview with DESC Director Daniel Malone about 1811 Eastlake.

<https://invisiblepeople.tv/2015/07/its-not-wet-housing-its-just-housing/>

Recent News Articles

New York Times (June 2018)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/05/opinion/homelessness-built-for-zero.html>

- Overviews Housing First/Permanent Supportive Housing efforts of one national coalition through Community Solutions.
- “Over the past three years, nine communities in the United States have reached a rigorous standard known as “[functional zero](#)” for either veteran or chronic homelessness — a standard that indicates that homelessness is rare and much briefer than in the past for their populations — and 37 others have accomplished measurable reductions toward that goal.”

Wired (June 2018)

<https://www.wired.com/story/big-tech-isnt-the-problem-with-homelessness-its-all-of-us/>

- Looks homelessness on the West Coast and in particular the Bay Area.
- Touches on Permanent Supportive Housing and Housing First; concludes that more housing in cities and neighborhoods is needed.
- Briefly touches on some partnerships between large corporations and nonprofit providers, including Cisco and Kaiser Permanente.

Guardian (July 2017)

<https://www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2017/jul/12/housing-first-liverpool-homelessness-services-are-failing>

- Feature of one UK man's journey through homelessness and the value of Housing First and Supportive Housing models.

Famous, Paradigmatic Article About the Costs of Chronic Homelessness

New Yorker (Feb. 13, 2006) Million Dollar Murray by Malcolm Gladwell

<http://dpbh.nv.gov/uploadedFiles/A%20MillionDollarMurray.pdf>

Other Resources

Housing First Checklist (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH))

https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Housing_First_Checklist_FINAL.pdf

- Checklist of Housing First principles: (1) Are applicants allowed to enter the program without income? (2) Are applicants allowed to enter the program even if they are not “clean & sober” or if not treatment compliant? (3) Are applicants allowed to enter the program even if they have criminal justice system involvement? (4) Are services & treatment plans voluntary, so tenants cannot be evicted for not following-through?
- Core Elements of Housing First: (1) Does your community have a Coordinated Entry process in place? (2) Are crisis responders & outreach teams working with Coordinated Entry team to rapidly connect individuals and families to permanent housing? (3) Does your community have a data-driven approach? (4) Do housing providers accept referrals directly from Coordinated Entry process? (5) Do policy makers, funders and providers conduct joint planning to develop and align resources to increase availability of affordable Supportive Housing? (6) Do policies not hinder the Housing First approach? (7) Is training among providers, responders and coordinated entry teams coordinated?
- See also DESC's Principles and Standards of Housing First, detailing similar criteria and considerations: <https://www.desc.org/what-we-do/housing/housing-first/>

Primer on Housing First (USICH)

<https://www.usich.gov/solutions/housing/housing-first>

- A Housing First approach acknowledges the need for safety and stability of housing as the first step to better outcomes.
- Suggests a community-wide Housing First effort has (1) Street outreach providers, emergency shelters, and other parts of the crisis response system are working closely with housing providers to connect people to permanent housing quickly. (2) The community has a data-driven coordinated assessment system for matching people experiencing homelessness to the most appropriate housing and services based on their needs. (3) The community has a unified and streamlined process for applying for rapid re-housing, supportive housing, and/or other housing interventions. (4) Community leaders work collaboratively to ensure that a range of affordable and supportive housing options and models are available to meet local needs. (5) Policies and regulations related to supportive housing, social and health services, benefit and entitlement programs, and other essential services do not create needless barriers to housing. (6) Communities work to ensure that people are not evicted back into homelessness.

Ending Chronic Homelessness (USICH)

https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Ending_Chronic_Homelessness_in_2017.pdf

- Defines need: 85,000 Americans with disabling health conditions spend each night sleeping on streets, in shelters or other places not meant for human habitation.
- Identifies solution: Supportive Housing. Supportive Housing has been shown repeatedly to help people permanently stay out of homelessness, improve health conditions and, by reducing their use of crisis services, lower public costs.
- Sketches out strategy: (1) Create more supportive housing by redirecting existing housing resources; (2) Leverage Medicaid & behavioral health systems to provide supportive services; (3) Improve targeting Supportive Housing units to people experiencing chronic homelessness; (4) Implement best practices like Housing First, Assertive Outreach & Engagement.

Primer on Housing First (Homeless Hub- Canadian Resource)

<http://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/housing-accommodation-and-supports/housing-first>

- Housing First defined: Housing is not contingent upon readiness or compliance (such as sobriety). Rather, it is a rights-based intervention rooted in the philosophy that all people deserve housing, and that adequate housing is a precondition of recovery.
- Five Core Principles of Housing First: (1) Immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements; (2) Consumer choice & self determination; (3) Recovery orientation; (4) Individualized and client-driven supports; and (5) Social & community integration.

Supportive Housing Helps Vulnerable People (Center on Budget & Policy Priorities)

<https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/supportive-housing-helps-vulnerable-people-live-and-thrive-in-the-community>

- Policymakers can create additional Supportive Housing by (1) Providing additional rental assistance & other housing resources; (2) Reinvesting savings created by Supportive Housing that reduces use of health services and corrections, to increase the supply of rental assistance; (3) Making greater use of Medicaid services for Supportive Housing; (4) Targeting Supportive Housing only on those who need it.
- Essential Characteristics of Supportive Housing: (1) Permanence & affordability (no more than 30% of total income should be spent on rent); (2) Principle services are housing oriented, multi-disciplinary (physical health, mental health, substance abuse programs, social work for utilizing other public services such as applying for Social Security benefits or disability), and voluntary; (3) Integration- Individuals and families live independently in apartments or single-family homes in residential

neighborhoods; should have access to public transportation, grocery stores, parks and other regular neighborhood amenities; (4) Emphasis on choice; (5) Low barriers to entry.

Housing First Fact Sheet (National Alliance to End Homelessness)

<http://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/housing-first-fact-sheet.pdf>

- Housing First is guided by the belief that people need basic necessities like food and a place to live before attending to anything less critical, such as getting a job, budgeting properly, or attending to substance use issues.
- Housing First does not require people experiencing homelessness to address the all of their problems including behavioral health problems, or to graduate through a series of services programs before they can access housing. Housing First does not mandate participation in services either before obtaining housing or in order to retain housing.
- Client choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive service participation, and that exercising that choice is likely to make a client more successful in remaining housed and improving their life.

Primer on Homelessness & Supportive Housing (Source for Housing Solutions)

www.csh.org/toolkit/public-housing-agencies-toolkit/primer-on-homelessness-and-supportive-housing/supportive-housing/

- Models of Supportive Housing include (1) Single Site: Building or home that exclusively provides housing to the formerly homeless; (2) Integrated: Market-rate apartment complexes with a certain set of units committed to provide to the formerly homeless; (3) Scattered Site: Allows for the quick creation of housing options. Subsidies are provided to the homeless or the organization working with them to rent units from private landlords. Organizations/Sponsors helping the homeless may take on the lease this way to get those into units that might normally not pass a landlord screen; and (4) Long-Term Set-Asides: Dedicated units for the formerly homeless in buildings that might or might not be subsidized.

Daniel K. Malone, Susan E. Collins, Seema L. Clifasefi (2015), "Single-site housing first for chronically homeless people", Housing, Care and Support, Vol. 18 Iss 2 pp. 62 – 66,

<https://www.desc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/2015.12.single-site-HF-case-study-2015.Emerald-Insight.pdf>

- Technical review of DESC's 1811 Eastlake as an example to describe single-site HF, enumerating its underlying principles and providing a evidence for its replication.

Daniel Malone, "Opinion--Rx: Home", Northwest Public Health,

<http://www.northwestpublichealth.org/archives/s2014/rx-home>

- Daniel Malone explains some of the hows and whys behind PSH.