The Washington Families Fund
High Needs Family Program:
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Debra J. Rog, Ph.D.
Kathryn Henderson, Ph.D.
Kathryn Stevens, MA.

Preliminary Evaluation Findings
HOW ARE WE CONNECTING THE DOTS?
State of Washington – Health Care Reform Initiatives

- HealthPlanFinder
- Apple Health Expansion
- HealthPath Washington
- Health Homes

- 2013 – Establishing Accountability Measures for Service Coordination Organizations (HB1519)
- 2014 – Adult Behavioral Health Task Force (SB 5732)

- 2013-2014 – WA State Health Care Innovation Plan
- Accountable Communities for Health (ACHs)

CONNECTING AND LEVERAGE POINTS: Advocacy, Policy, Practice, Evaluation

Individual Level:
- Knowledge
- Coverage
- Access

System Level:
- Recognition of Housing as a Social Determinant of Health

Shared Accountability for Outcomes including **Housing Stability**
- Permanent Housing & Services as avenue to Improve Health Outcomes

Integration of Health Care, Behavioral Health, Housing and Community Social Services System to Improve Population Health
WASHINGTON FAMILIES FUND

Administered by Building Changes
  - 25+ funding partners, including:
    - Gates Foundation
    - State of Washington

Funds over 45 programs around Washington State

Two Services+Housing Programs
  - Moderate Needs Family Housing
  - High Needs Family Housing
HIGH NEEDS FAMILY PROGRAM GOALS

*Increase access to services*

*Increase housing and family stability*

*Create cost effective solutions*
HIGH NEEDS FAMILY PROGRAM

Housing
- Housing First approach
  - Primary focus on housing stability
  - Tenancy not dependent on service engagement
  - Scattered-site or single-site

Services
- Wide array of services available, but not required
  - On-site services
  - Cross-provider coordination
  - Strengths-based case management
  - Harm reduction approach to substance use
FAMILY ELIGIBILITY

Family Definition
- At least one adult age 18 or older
- At least one child under age 18

Multiple Episodes of Homelessness

Income Less Than 20% Area Median Income (AMI)

Service Needs and Housing Barriers
- serious and persistent mental illness
- chemical dependency
- domestic violence or other trauma
- HIV/AIDS or other chronic illness
- child protective service involvement
- criminal history
UNDERSTANDING THE FAMILIES SERVED

Family Characteristics

Housing Barriers

Assets
FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS*

RESPONDENT BACKGROUND
- 90% female
- Average age 32 years

FAMILY COMPOSITION
- 13% with another adult
- Average of 2.3 children under age 18 (67% with child under age 6)
- 42% have at least one child away

HOMELESS HISTORY
- 91% homeless at least once in last 2 years, median of 2 times

INCOME
- Average monthly income of $512, primarily from TANF
- 14% with no income
FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS*

HOUSING BARRIERS

- 73% have 3 or more barriers
- 61% have 1 or more mental health indicators
- 22% positive ‘screen’ for substance abuse
- 23% report physical or sexual abuse in past 6 months; 88% lifetime abuse
- 50% report a chronic medical condition; 20% report an unmet medical need; 57% report an unmet dental need
- 21% have a child living away due to CPS involvement; 10% in foster care
- 34% report past felony conviction
OVERALL TAKE-AWAYS THUS FAR

Families who stay in housing for at least a year improve on:

- Residential stability
- Employment
- Income
- Family reunification
- Substance abuse
- Current trauma
- Healthcare access
- Dental needs
EARLY TAKE AWAYS

• Access to behavioral health outpatient services is increased for HNF families compared to comparable families in both public housing and emergency shelter.

• Use of the ER actually increases for families in the HNF compared to both comparison samples.

• Families who stay longer in the HNF program appear to have more access than those who exit before 12 months.
Where to from here
Please see the following links for more information about the evaluation.