

# Housing First Housing Stabilization

SIXTH ANNUAL HOUSING INSTITUTE  
AT THE CALIFORNIA ENDOWMENT CENTER

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# Center for Urban Community Services

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CUCS offers a range of programs & services to more than 25,000 individuals and families in NYC.

- Permanent Housing
- Single Stop
- ACT Team
- Housing Consultation
- Transitional Housing
- Street Outreach
- PPOH
- Case Management Consultation

CUCS shares knowledge with several thousand direct care staff annually through Training & Consulting Services.

- Training
- Consultation



# Housing Innovations

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Housing Innovations (HI) is a consulting and training firm focusing on solutions to ending homelessness. Its principals have been providing consulting and training services on innovative housing and services strategies to organizations for over 30 years. HI's work is grounded in practice as all of the principals have direct experience developing and/or operating housing and services programs and implementing systems changes.

www. [housinginnovations.us](http://housinginnovations.us)

# Agenda

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- Housing First and Evidence Based Practices
- Housing Stabilization
- Components of the Practice
- Wrap up and Discussion

# Housing First

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Housing First is an approach that centers on providing homeless people with housing quickly and *then* providing services as needed.

- Housing is not contingent on compliance with services – instead, participants must comply with a standard lease agreement and are provided with the services and supports that are necessary to help them maintain their housing
- Services are then wrapped around the individual to promote housing stability and well-being

# Permanent Supportive Housing

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Permanent Supportive Housing is based on the philosophy that everyone should have the same rights and responsibilities of tenancy regardless of their support needs.

Core elements:

- Choice of housing;
- Functional separation of housing and services;
- Decent, safe, and affordable housing;
- Housing integration;
- Access to housing; and
- Flexible, voluntary, and recovery focused services.

# Critical Time Intervention

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- Critical Time Intervention (CTI) is a well-researched and cost effective Evidence Based Practice (EBP) proven to assist with transitions for people with a mental illness
- CTI is specialized intervention provided at a “critical time” [from institutional to community care]
- CTI connects people with formal and informal community supports in the critical period
- CTI is a time-limited intervention lasting 9 months, divided into 3 specific phases that focuses on a limited number of treatment areas that promote housing stability

# Housing Stabilization

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# Eric

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Eric is living on the street. He is not comfortable but he is not usually scared. He sleeps with others in a cluster. He usually runs errands for the other guys. They stick together when trouble starts. He knows what to expect.

Now this social worker keeps coming around. He talks about housing. He asks if he would like a place to stay, take a shower. He also asks about the voices. Eric thinks this might be a trick. This might be trouble.

# Access to Housing

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## Engagement

Risk Assessment: assess for any crisis situations

Educate person about Housing Options they may be eligible for

Provide direct services and assistance to link with resources as needed

- May include income, ID, and other concrete needs to access housing
- Addressing immediate needs
- May be linkages to needed care Housing Assessment

# Housing Stabilization Services

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## Assessment

- Understanding Housing Goals and Barriers

## Engagement on Common Goals

## Education

- Expectations of Tenancy, Lease and Housing Options
- Available Resources for Support

## Housing Access/Retention Plans

## Using Treatment as a Link to Self-Defined Goals

## Linkages and Coordination

## Evaluate Progress

# Expectations of Tenancy

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Paying Rent

Maintaining Apartment

Quiet Enjoyment

Occupancy

# Goal Based Assessment Strategies

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Explore what each person's choice means

- History (i.e. housing, employment, safety)
- How this individual/family became homeless: what worked what didn't
- How each person has managed in the past
  - Paying attention to the day to day
- Goals and Preferences: what does the individual/family want
- Financial Issues
- Implications of disabilities or service needs and how this relates to goal
- Resources: what resources are available to reach goals?

# Eric

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Eric is willing to talk to this social worker. He asks what Eric wants. He is interested in Eric's carvings. Eric would like a safe place to keep his stuff. He would like to eat something good.

What about his buddies? What about the sip he takes now and then? Eric says he will not take medication. He will not go back to the hospital.

# Assessment Domains

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1. Housing Stabilization and Lease Compliance
2. Income and Financial Management
3. Family & Other Relationships
4. Mental Health and Medical
5. Substance Use
6. Life Skills
7. Strengths and Potential for Change – how has person managed in the past?

# Getting to the Housing Plan

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Look at person's goal and **importance** of components

Ask for **examples** and **elaboration**

Link housing to identified goal

Look at **competencies** based on history and role

Look at barriers to the goal

- Assess barriers using **stages of change**
- Establish how negotiable some barriers are: such as felony background and subsidies
- Looks at **importance** to person of the behaviors associated with barriers: such as being able to have friends stay

# Getting to the Housing Plan

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Ensure a **common understanding**

Be aware of person's **schedule** and how it will work

Develop **several paths** to desired goal

Weigh **cost / benefits** of components of each

Develop **non crisis** based problem solving skills

Look back for **competencies** to build **confidence**

Look forward for **hope and inspiration**

Lay the foundation for **future planning**

# Eric

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Eric wants housing but it has to be near his buddies. People have been mean to him before and the buddies protect him. They are not always nice but they are there.

Eric knows about rent but has had problems in the past. He doesn't want people to steal his money. He will accept reminders but there will be no taking his money.

Eric says he always keeps things clean so this is no problem. Neighbors can be mean and he is worried about that. Sometimes the voices bother him at night and he hollers to keep them at bay. The neighbors in the SRO complained and they kicked him out.

He will not take those drugs they give him. He has had enough. He would like a girl friend. That is hard to do on the street.

# Focused Housing Stabilization Services Planning

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Limit the areas of  
intervention based  
on housing barriers  
assessment

Focus on the most  
pressing needs that  
impact housing

Relate all  
interventions to  
keeping housing +  
long term goals

Be aware this may  
not be a linear  
process

Be mindful about  
moving from crisis

# Housing Plan – Goals

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- Goals set as a team of tenant and worker
- **Focus on the issues that affect housing access and retention**
  - **Base on what caused previous episodes of housing instability**
- The Plan determines your interventions
- Steps to reach goal clearly defined and measurable
- Longer term needs require connections to other resources
  - Goals provide structure and purpose
  - Allows to move away from acute services
  - Provides a role for the worker and tenant

# Using Resources

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## **Identifying sustainable resources with clear expectations**

- Housing: landlord/property managers
- Financial: benefits and employment providers
- Health/Mental Health: treatment and support
- Substance Use: treatment and support
- Family and Relationships: support structure
- Life Skills: services for assistance/support

# Key Roles – Landlord and Service Provider

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Landlord has a key role in helping people understand their obligations and comply with them. (Assertive approach)

- Establish the **expectations** for the tenant

The social services staff provide and arrange for services needed to maintain housing and also function as advocates for the tenant.

- Assist the tenant to meet the **expectations of tenancy**

# Building Skills

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- Educating on rights and responsibilities
- **Modeling** for people to negotiate for services and enlisting the service's/support's help
- Trying it out and debrief
- Establishing regular check ins to see if it is working
- Review cost and benefits – **critical thinking**
- **Recognizing** strong partners and good skills
- Renegotiate the relationship as necessary
- Focus on longer term planning ( non crisis based)

# Eric

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Eric was not able to pay rent and the worker applied for a rep payee. Eric agreed his housing was important to him. He knew he would be evicted if he didn't pay rent. The worker will help him to get off of the rep payee.

Eric was hollering at night. He is lonely; especially when he cannot sleep. The doctor at the clinic talked about sleep meds. Not for the voices for sleep. He also wants a TV.

Eric has a girlfriend she visits mostly when he has money. The worker worried about her taking advantage of him. Eric disagrees. His goal is to have her stay longer.

# Eviction Prevention

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Educating everyone on rights and responsibilities of tenancy

Regular communication with the landlord to catch any lease violations early

Agreement with the tenant and landlord about working together

Resources to address lease violations ( back rent, clean up)

Knowledge of timelines for the eviction process

Policies on involvement

Eviction/Crisis planning to avoid eviction

# Changing Expectations

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## Moving from crisis to planning

- May be from immediate to 15 minutes from now

## Critical Thinking

- Using strategies and resources that work best for each person

## Structure and purpose

- Developing a structure and purpose to days that are different from when homeless

## Developing new or changed roles

- From homeless person to tenant, parent, worker, advocate

# Contact Information

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