



The Housing Status of Individuals Discharged from Behavioral Health Treatment Facilities

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Report prepared for the Washington State Department of Commerce, Community Services and Housing Division, Tedd Kelleher and Mary Schwartz

AS PART OF AN ONGOING COLLABORATION between the DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division (RDA) and the Department of Commerce (Commerce), we examined the housing status of individuals following discharge from behavioral health treatment facilities. Prior RDA research suggests that substance abuse and mental illness place individuals at increased risk for homelessness.¹ In addition, institutional discharge can be a particularly vulnerable time in terms of housing stability.² Commerce's Ten-Year Homeless Plan therefore aims to reduce the proportion of individuals experiencing homelessness following release from institutions.³

This report seeks to answer the following two questions:

1. How many individuals discharged from residential chemical dependency facilities and state mental hospitals experienced housing instability in the course of a 12-month follow-up period?
2. What percent of discharged clients with an identified housing need received assistance recorded in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)?⁴

Key Findings

We find that in the 12 months following a client's last discharge month in State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2010:

- Nearly half of the 9,909 clients discharged from residential chemical dependency (CD) treatment facilities had an indication of housing need, yet only 18 percent of those in need received housing assistance recorded in HMIS.
- Approximately 30 percent of the 1,792 clients discharged from state mental health hospitals had an indication of housing need, yet only 17 percent of those in need received housing assistance in HMIS.
- Housing need was identified through multiple service systems. Of particular note, 32 percent of residential CD treatment facility leavers and 39 percent of state mental hospital leavers had housing need identified through the chemical dependency and mental health systems, respectively.

Together, these findings suggest that Commerce's recent efforts to provide financial incentives to Consolidated Homeless Grantees who assist individuals being discharged from institutions has the potential to increase housing assistance penetration rates for vulnerable populations while also encouraging better system coordination at the local level.

¹ See, for example: Kohlenberg, K, et al. (2009), Alcohol and/or Drug Problems and Mental Illness are Key Risk Factors for Homelessness among Working-age Disabled DSHS Clients, <http://publications.rda.dshs.wa.gov/1388/> and Shah, MF, et al. (2010), Behavioral Health Risk among TANF Parents: Links to Homelessness, Child Abuse and Arrests, <http://publications.rda.dshs.wa.gov/1429/>.

² See, for example: Metraux, Stephan, Thomas Byrne, and Dennis Culhane (2010). "Institutional Discharges and Subsequent Shelter Use Among Unaccompanied Adults in New York City," *Journal of Community Psychology*, Vol. 38(1): 28-38.

³ Ten-Year Homeless Plan: 2008 Annual Report, <http://www.commerce.wa.gov/site/823/default.aspx> (see p. 23).

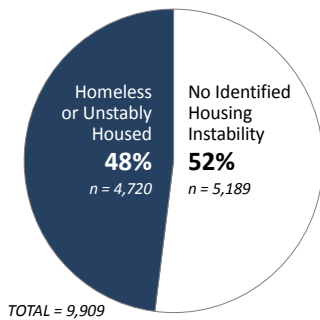
⁴ The measure of housing need used in this report combines indicators of homelessness and housing instability from five different administrative data sources and may identify some individuals who were not actually eligible for housing assistance.



RESIDENTIAL CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY TREATMENT | Housing Status of Leavers

► Almost half of residential CD treatment clients are homeless in the 12 months after discharge

Housing Status in 12-Month Follow-up Period



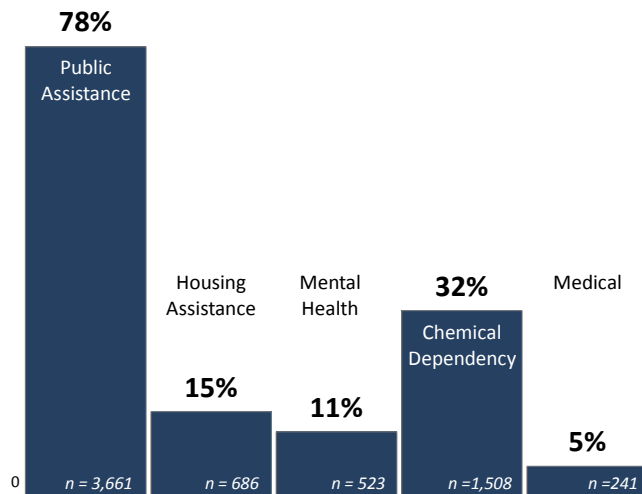
Housing need was identified using an indicator of homelessness and housing instability that combines data from five different information systems, including the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).⁵ In addition to capturing homelessness, this measure identifies individuals in unstable living arrangements (such as “couch surfers”), not all of whom are necessarily eligible for housing assistance. Among the 9,909 individuals discharged from a residential chemical dependency facility at some point in SFY 2010, almost half (n=4,720) were found to have an indication of housing need at some point in the 12-month follow-up period.

► Housing need among residential CD treatment leavers is identified in multiple systems

Among the 4,720 discharged residential chemical dependency treatment clients who experienced housing need in the 12-month follow-up period, 78 percent had homelessness or housing instability identified through the Automated Client Eligibility System (ACES), the information system used by DSHS caseworkers to determine eligibility for public assistance.

Notably, almost one-third of these homeless or unstably housed leavers had an indication of housing need recorded in chemical dependency records. Moreover, 12 percent (571) were identified as homeless or unstably housed in both the public assistance and chemical dependency information systems.

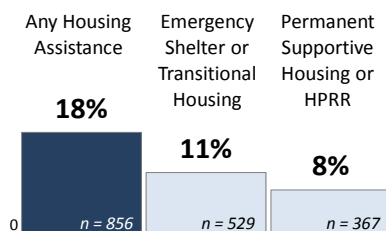
Service Systems in which Housing Need is Identified Among Leavers with Housing Need (n = 4,720)



NOTE: the sum of the percents in these bars exceeds 100 because clients can appear in more than one category.

► The housing assistance penetration rate is 18 percent among residential CD treatment leavers

Housing Assistance Penetration Rates Among Leavers with Housing Need (n = 4,720)



Of the 4,720 residential CD treatment leavers with housing need identified in the 12-month follow-up period, 18 percent received housing assistance recorded in HMIS. “Any housing assistance” was defined to include receipt of Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing (HPRR), or Permanent Supportive Housing.⁶ We found that 11 percent of those with housing need received short, medium, or long term housing assistance in a *temporary* housing situation (Emergency Shelter or Transitional Housing), while 8 percent received short, medium, or long term housing assistance in a *permanent* housing situation (HPRR or Permanent Supportive Housing).

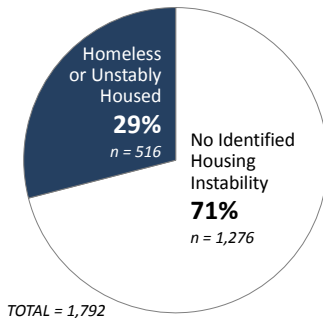
⁵ See Shah, MF, et al. (2012). Identifying Homeless and Unstably Housed DSHS Clients in Multiple Service Systems, Olympia, WA: Research and Data Analysis Division, <http://publications.rda.dshs.wa.gov/1457/>.

⁶ Note that discharged individuals with housing needs may have received housing assistance that is not captured in HMIS, such as housing provided through local Public Housing Authorities.

STATE MENTAL HEALTH HOSPITALS | Housing Status of Leavers

▶ About 30 percent of state mental hospital clients are homeless in the 12 months after discharge

Housing Status in 12-Month Follow-up Period

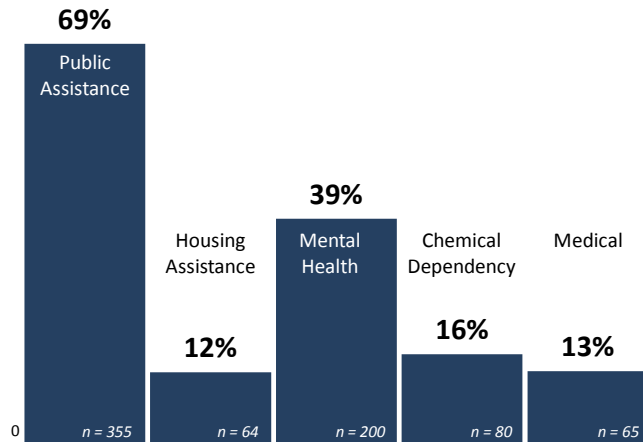


Among the 1,792 individuals discharged from a state mental hospital at some point in SFY 2010, almost 30 percent (516) were found to have an indication of housing need at some point in the 12-month follow-up period.

▶ Housing need among state mental hospital leavers is identified in multiple service systems

Among the 516 state mental hospital leavers with housing need identified in the 12-month follow-up period, nearly 70 percent had an indication of homelessness or housing instability recorded in ACES, the system used to determine eligibility for public assistance. In addition, almost 40 percent of these individuals had a housing need recorded in mental health service records. Moreover, 11 percent (55) were identified as homeless or unstably housed in both the public assistance and mental health information systems in the follow-up period.

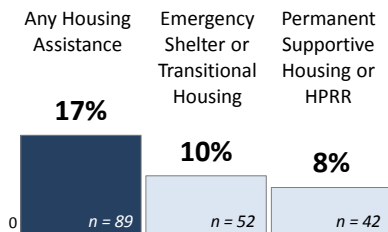
Service Systems in which Housing Need is Identified Among Leavers with Housing Need (n = 516)



NOTE: the sum of the percents in these bars exceeds 100 because clients can appear in more than one category.

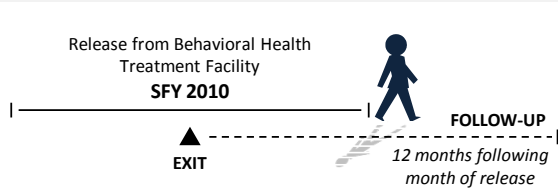
▶ The housing assistance penetration rate is 17 percent among state mental hospital leavers

Housing Assistance Penetration Rates Among Leavers with Housing Need (n = 516)



Of the 516 state mental hospital leavers with housing need identified in the 12-month follow-up period, 17 percent (89) received housing assistance recorded in HMIS. Distinguishing between types of housing assistance, we found that 10 percent of those in need received Emergency Shelter or Transitional Housing, while 8 percent received Permanent Supportive Housing or HPRR services in the follow-up period.

This report examines the housing status of individuals released from behavioral health treatment facilities in the 12 months following the last month of discharge in state fiscal year 2010.



We define the month of discharge as the last month in SFY 2010 with 1) zero payments made for residential chemical dependency treatment following a month with expenditures or 2) a month with zero days in a state mental health hospital following a month with at least 1 day spent in a state mental hospital. We do not distinguish between voluntary and involuntary discharges.

We removed 53 individuals from the study population who were discharged from both types of institutions in SFY 2010. We also excluded anyone who, within the 12-month follow-up period, was readmitted to the type of institution from which they had been discharged. There were 1,350 residential chemical dependency treatment leavers and 348 state mental hospital leavers who were excluded from the analysis due to re-admission in the follow-up period.

DEMOGRAPHICS	Residential Chemical Dependency Treatment		State Mental Hospitals	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
Age at Discharge				
<18	708	7%	n/a	n/a
18-25	2,391	24%	257	14%
26-35	2,609	26%	422	24%
36-44	2,115	21%	378	21%
46-55	1,691	17%	379	21%
56-65	373	4%	196	11%
65+	22	0%	160	9%
Gender				
Female	3,753	38%	552	31%
Male	6,154	62%	1,240	69%
Race Ethnicity⁷				
Missing Race	18	0%	6	0%
White Only, Non-Hispanic	6,292	64%	1,154	64%
Any Minority	3,599	36%	632	35%
Hispanic	1,016	10%	112	6%
African American	1,051	11%	284	16%
Asian/Pacific Islander	416	4%	141	8%
Native American	1,566	16%	169	9%

RESIDENCE	Residential Chemical Dependency Treatment		State Mental Hospitals	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
County				
King	1,963	20%	383	21%
Pierce	1,001	10%	373	21%
Spokane	928	9%	207	12%
All Other Counties	6,017	61%	829	46%

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⁷ Individuals with known race were categorized into one of two mutually exclusive groups: White Only, Non-Hispanic and Any Minority. Individuals in the Any Minority group were further categorized as Hispanic, African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, and/or Native American and may appear in more than one of these four categories.