



People living with HIV/AIDS and Experiencing Homelessness

TRUST CLINIC, OAKLAND
MEGGIE WOODS, MD AAHIVS
TORI PENA



Housing is a Human Right

Housing is MEDICINE



The Housing Crisis in Alameda County

- Affordable housing in the Bay Area is scarce to non-existent
- In Alameda County, there is a shortage of 60,000 units
- Last estimate of people experiencing homelessness in Alameda County was 8,000 (2019)
- Large need for greater investment in permanent supportive housing (i.e. Nova apartments)

People living with HIV (PLWH) are deeply affected by the housing crisis

- ▶ 5% of people experiencing homelessness are living with HIV/AIDS, compared to 0.4% of the general population
- ▶ Being homeless at HIV diagnosis incurs a **27 fold** increase in death compared to individuals who were housed at time of their HIV diagnosis

Homelessness is a major challenge to Ending the Epidemic of HIV/AIDS

Experiencing homelessness is a risk factor for:

- ▶ Poor medication adherence
- ▶ Unsuppressed viral load
- ▶ Exchanging sex for money, drugs, housing
- ▶ Poor retention in care
- ▶ Death

Housing PLWH is critical to ending the epidemic

When people obtain housing, they are able to focus on their health

- ▶ Viral load suppression improves
- ▶ Medication adherence improves
- ▶ Engagement in care improves
- ▶ All of which contributes to reduced HIV transmission and mortality

Engaging PLWH who are experiencing homelessness

Historically difficult to engage and retain population due to multiple intersecting barriers:

- ▶ individual level (i.e. substance use, mental illness, distrust of medical system)
- ▶ structural level (i.e. racism, homophobia, classism)

Patient Priorities for clinical care:

- ▶ strong relationship with provider & clinic
- ▶ drop-in care model

References

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Case 1: Operation Safer Ground and PSH Target List

- ▶ Patient became street homeless after concerns about neighbors harassing him and threatening violence
- ▶ Patient had been connected with LifeLong since 2012 and connected to the TRUST Clinic in 2019
- ▶ Patient declined referrals to shelters, such as Community Cabins citing concerns about his personal safety living near other people
- ▶ When Operation Safer Ground first opened, TRUST ran a list of eligible patients 7/31/2020 and this patient was included on this list due to his many health conditions, including HIV
- ▶ Patient was outreached by our Health and Wellness Coach at the time for patients interest. Patient expressed interest and was referred to the program 8/6/2020.
- ▶ Patient was accepted into OSG 8/11/2020 and was transported 8/17/2020.
- ▶ Patient updated CES and continuously worked with a housing navigator to get document ready
- ▶ Patient received PSH target match to housing in Newark 3/2/21. Patient accepted this offer and moved in to permanent supportive housing 7/19/2021

Case 2: HOPWA

- ▶ Patient was homeless at Mosswood Park for many years with partner and was off HIV meds
- ▶ Patient was hospitalized for respiratory issues and then was discharged to a SNF
- ▶ Hospital referred patient to respite but declined because he did not want to be apart from partner
- ▶ Patient connected with TRUST Case management and applied to housing through Camino 23 10/2019. TRUST worked with patient to coordinate interview.
- ▶ Patient was accepted and moved in 12/2019 along with partner. Patient has let friends in crisis couch surf until they have stabilized
- ▶ Patient started taking ARVs more regularly and significantly reduced substance use
- ▶ Patient is still currently housed!