

OVERVIEW: Whole Person Care provides intensive care coordination, housing, and other critical services to high-risk homeless individuals who need support from multiple government and community partners.

CHALLENGE: Placer County has a relatively high rate of chronic homelessness and these individuals can often be the most resistant to treatment. People experiencing chronic homelessness often also experience serious health problems, mental health issues, substance disorders, and other challenges. These residents need assistance from a variety of agencies and programs which can be difficult to navigate. People end up bouncing from one provider to another, falling through the cracks, and not receiving appropriate services. Not only does this harm the individual, but it is costly — as repeated, avoidable incidents of emergency department use or incarceration represent a significant strain on local resources. Studies have repeatedly shown that it costs the system much less to house people experiencing homelessness than to fund the many other services that would be necessary if they were on the street.

INNOVATIVE SOLUTION: Placer County was one of 18 counties initially approved by the state of California to implement a five-year Whole Person Care pilot. Each Whole Person Care program is unique and Placer's was custom-designed to provide intensive case management to people experiencing chronic homelessness through four different service bundles:

- *Engagement:* Focuses on building a positive relationship with the members so that they will be open to receiving additional services. WPC staff use a client-focused, strength-based model to meet members "where they're at."
- *Complex Comprehensive Care Coordination:* A comprehensive assessment is completed and a treatment plan is developed collaboratively with members so that members can focus on goals that are most meaningful to them.
- *Housing:* Members receive training to help them be good tenants, support in locating and applying for housing, and other assistance such as first/last month's rent. Recognizing Placer's challenging housing environment, with high rents and low availability, WPC has also been integral in Health and Human Services' efforts to purchase new housing and set up supportive housing programs.
- *Medical Respite:* An eight-bed facility dedicated to WPC members that provides them with a place to stay post-hospital discharge, so that they can adequately heal and avoid returning to the hospital.

One important goal of the program is to increase collaborative partnerships across multiple agencies. WPC has been able to form strong partnerships, complete MOUs and implement contracts with various entities including: local hospitals, mental health providers, law enforcement, managed health care plans, housing agencies, homeless shelters, and others.

Data and information sharing have been essential to collaboration as we all can make sure that everyone is on the same page to provide the most effective treatment for each individual. A great example of improved communication is the PreManage health information exchange system that gives case managers real-time notification when WPC members go into the emergency room and allows the WPC team, hospitals, and partner agencies the opportunity to share critical, real-time information with each other to improve the care for WPC members.

ORIGINALITY: Placer County is a leader among agencies participating in Whole Person Care. As seen in the attached press, the program is a model for others to follow. Unique elements of Placer's program include:

- A diverse multi-disciplinary team including staff from nurses to law enforcement liaisons, highlighting our system integration model.
- The array of data sources we draw from to better coordinate linkages to other services, including AVATAR (Mental Health Data System), HMIS (Homeless Data System), CE (Probation Data Systems), EPIC (Hospital Data System), PreManage (ED Visit Notification) and MEDS (Eligibility Data System).
- Strong community partnership which has led to \$1 million in grant funding from the Sutter Health Foundation used to purchase permanent supportive housing for WPC members.

It is through the collaboration and relationships built that we are able to offer innovative approaches to helping develop long-term programmatic sustainability early in pilot implementation.

RESULTS: Data from the first year of services highlight some of the program's initial successes:

- All WPC members received an assessment and 98 percent received a treatment plan within 30 days of enrollment.
- In 96 percent of cases, WPC staff met with members within seven days of an emergency room visit.
- Even prior to medical respite opening, WPC members had a 27 percent all-case readmission rate within 30 days for hospital stays, whereas the readmission rate for a typical sample of homeless individuals is around 50 percent.
- WPC staff have helped place over 65 people (mostly experiencing chronic homelessness) in permanent housing.

The collaborations, data sharing and analysis, and Whole Person Care's client-centered focus on treatment has allowed us to help individuals who are commonly considered the most difficult to serve.

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SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS: Sacramento Bee article and USB stick with [video](#) attached.