

County of San Diego: 2020 CSAC Challenge Awards Executive Summary

Title: Stopping the Incarcerated Homeless Mentally Ill Cycle

Overview: C3 serves individuals who are homeless, have a serious mental illness and are exiting local jail. Participants receive immediate housing, service navigation and supportive services.

Challenge: People experiencing homelessness are far more likely to face incarceration compared to the general population, and formerly incarcerated individuals are far more likely to be homeless. During San Diego's Point In Time Count (PIT), a survey was conducting on individuals residing in local jail, and according to the 2020 PIT survey, one in four individuals surveyed reported they were experiencing homelessness at the time of their arrest. Homelessness and incarceration appear to increase the risk of each other. Homelessness and justice system involvement have been strongly linked with mental illness, and justice-involved individuals who are homeless and have a serious mental illness face tremendous barriers finding housing as they exit custody. The County of San Diego identified the need for increased in-reach, care coordination, and housing support to improve reentry services for people who have a serious mental illness and are exiting local jail with no home to return to.

Solution: The County developed the Community Care Coordination program (C3) to provide participants immediate housing upon their release from jail with peer-led care coordination and system navigation in the community to connect participants to permanent housing and supportive services. C3 was created through a collaboration led by the Health & Human Services Agency. The partnership includes: the Sheriff's Department, Office of the Public Defender, Probation Department, District Attorney's Office, and City Attorney's Office. The C3 target population includes two cohorts. The first is the Sheriff's Department "high utilizers," which refers to individuals with behavioral health needs that cycle in and out of custody frequently – and are often in and out so rapidly there is little opportunity to connect to housing and supportive services before they are released. The second cohort is from the Public Defender's Defense Transition Unit (DTU), which serves individuals who have a serious mental illness and are incarcerated in local jail. The C3 team works hand in hand with the Sheriff's Department and the Public Defender's Office

to quickly meet with referred individuals while they are in custody, begin building rapport, and create a housing plan so participants can be immediately housed upon release from custody. The C3 team continues to support participants for up to 12 months after they are released from custody to help maintain housing and ensure participants are connected to supportive services and the appropriate level of care.

Innovation: C3 serves individuals identified as the highest utilizers of the jail system. This hard-to-reach population frequently cycles in and out of custody and is typically excluded from in-reach programs due to the short amount of time they spend in custody. While they are identified as high need, this population tends to have few or no prior touches to behavioral health services in the community. The C3 program was designed to address this specific challenge. The C3 team consists of clinicians, peer support specialists, and a housing specialist, and is able to quickly meet with individuals while they are in custody to build rapport, provide care coordination, and create an immediate housing plan.

Results: The program launched on October 28, 2019 and as of June 30, 2020, has served 59 enrolled participants. Of those, 96% were placed in immediate housing upon release from jail; 21 of the 59 have been placed in permanent housing; 78% of participants have been connected to behavioral health services; and 76% have not returned to custody. Early results of C3 include reduced homelessness and justice involvement, which reduces trauma to the participant, increases stability, and brings cost savings.

Replicability: Other California Counties can easily replicate the C3 framework and implement their own C3 program for targeted populations. Locally, the C3 framework was recently used to create a new C3 for Veterans program, which will be implemented in October 2020, to serve veterans returning to the community from local jail.

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