



•••• *Stable homes build strong communities.* ••••

A Proven Solution for Ending Homelessness

With targeted investments in evidence-based homeless service delivery models, Virginia has seen a 34% decrease in homelessness since 2010 and an effective end to veteran homelessness. Yet as of January 2018*, there were still over 5,500 Virginians experiencing homelessness.¹ Over 900 of those individuals were chronically homeless. Permanent Supportive Housing and wrap-around supportive services have been critical to the progress Virginia has made in addressing chronic homelessness. Many of those experiencing chronic homelessness struggle with substance abuse or serious mental illness and need support services along with affordable housing opportunities to remain stably housed.

¹ HUD 2018 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs: Homeless Populations and Subpopulations

What is Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)?

PSH is a model intended to house low-income persons who struggle with disabling chronic health and behavioral health conditions—such as mental illness, HIV/AIDS, and/or substance abuse—and who have been unable to access and maintain stable, permanent housing without some level of ongoing supportive services and rental assistance. PSH can either be built as dedicated housing units or leased out as scattered site in the private rental market which is the case with much of the PSH in Virginia.

Why Permanent Supportive Housing?

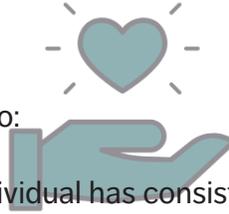
It Works In Virginia, 94%-96% of clients in PSH programs do not return to homelessness. Many of these clients had previously experienced homelessness for years.²

² Data from Virginia Supportive Housing and DBHDS – 2019

It Saves Money The target population often cycles between life on the street, hospital emergency rooms, and mental health facilities. The Department of Behavioral Health and Development Services (DBHDS) reported that there had been a 31% decrease in Medicaid fee-for-service payments for the clients that are housed through their PSH programs. After PSH move-in, their state hospital utilization was dramatically reduced resulting in a 92% reduction in state hospital bed days and a state hospital cost avoidance of \$2.9 million.

It Benefits the Community Unlike traditional shelters, PSH can look like any other type of housing in a community, often standing side-by-side unsubsidized units in a property. PSH can also spur community revitalization and increase property values, as dilapidated properties are renovated for PSH use.

What Are Supportive Services?



Supportive services include but are not limited to:

- **Housing support**, which ensures that an individual has consistent, safe housing with move-in services and landlord mediation;
- **Case management**, which includes care plans, assistance with benefits, crisis services, and referrals to community resources for health and behavioral health conditions;
- **Independent living skills** that focus on budgeting, using public transit, personal hygiene, nutrition, and medication management;
- **Community engagement and social support**, which reduce social isolation;
- **Employment, education, and vocation services** to increase employment; and
- **Transition services** that identifies housing with higher levels of care or less intensive services when appropriate.

What YOU Can Do in the General Assembly

Provide Funding for PSH through programs such as the Virginia Housing Trust Fund. Consistent funding is needed to support the development of additional PSH units and for ongoing supportive services. Medicaid expansion will provide health insurance coverage to more individuals who currently need and/or live in permanent supportive housing and expanding coverage to include housing supportive services to qualifying individuals could help facilitate the creation of additional PSH units.

997 PSH homes built using the VHTF since the VHTF was created in 2013

Support Additional Funding for PSH units through DBHDS. While the General Assembly approved DBHDS State PSH funding of approximately \$17 million for FY20 that will provide 1,250 households with PSH, DBHDS reports that an additional 5,000 PSH units are needed across the state for adults with serious mental illness.

Virginia Housing Alliance & VADHCD

Fully Fund Services as Part of the Medicaid 1115 Demonstration Waiver. With federal approval of the 1115 Demonstration Waiver, the Commonwealth of Virginia will offer supportive housing and supportive employment benefits to a targeted group of high-need Medicaid members. Housing and employment support services, such as assistance completing applications for housing or individualized job development and placement, will assist an individual with serious mental illness with obtaining and residing in an independent community setting as well as obtaining and maintaining employment. Eligible high-need members must meet needs-based criteria and a set of required risk factors to receive the supportive housing and supportive employment benefit.