Taking Your Rapid Re-housing to the Next Level

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North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness Conference

Tuesday, May 21, 2019
The National Alliance to End Homelessness is the leading national voice on the issue of homelessness. The Alliance analyzes policy and develops pragmatic, effective policy solutions. The Alliance works collaboratively with the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to build state and local capacity, leading to stronger programs and policies that help communities achieve their goal of ending homelessness.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness identifies and evaluates hundreds of policy and program strategies and their impact on homelessness. The Alliance’s Center for Capacity Building helps communities replicate and customize the best of those strategies. The Center focuses on strategies that are cost effective, data driven, and can be implemented at a scale that can significantly reduce homelessness.
Who Is Here?

- RRH Program Front Line Staff
- RRH Program Manager/Director
- Executive Director
- SSVF-funded RRH
- HUD-funded RRH
- Other-funded RRH
- CoC/ System Leadership
- Funders
- HMIS/Data Analysts
- Other
What Is Your Experience with RRH?

- Expert in RRH
- Very familiar with RRH
- Somewhat familiar with RRH
- Just learning/starting an RRH program
- I don’t know anything about RRH
Agenda

• Morning
  • Review the Three Core Components of Rapid Re-Housing
  • Conversation: How are the Core Components working in NC?

• Lunch

• Afternoon
  • The Three Core Components In-Depth
    - Landlord Recruitment
    - Shared Housing
    - Structuring Financial Assistance
    - Case Closing
Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing Principles

- Homelessness is a housing problem
- Permanent housing is a right
- People should be returned to permanent housing quickly and connected to resources needed to stay there
- Issues can best be addressed once people are permanently housed
- Housing is critical regardless of barriers
### What RRH Does Do and Does Not Do

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rapid Re-Housing <strong>Does</strong></th>
<th>Rapid Re-Housing <strong>Does Not</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Reduce the length of time people experience homelessness</td>
<td>• Eliminate poverty</td>
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<td>• Minimize the negative impact of homelessness on their lives</td>
<td>• Assure people will have affordable housing (to pay 30% or less of their income to rent)</td>
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<td>• Assist people to access resources that can help with personal goals</td>
<td>• Protect people from the impact of life losses or challenging situations</td>
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<td>• Eliminate housing mobility</td>
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How is this working in North Carolina?
Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) ends homelessness for families and individuals.

**RRH HELPS**

**FIND HOUSING**
Help people quickly find housing within one month or less.

**PAY FOR HOUSING**
Help people pay for housing short term; longer-term help an option.

**STAY IN HOUSING**
Help access services so people can stay in housing.

The Core Components of Rapid Re-Housing help people find housing fast, pay for housing, and stay in housing.
Core Components

• Not linear
• Cannot work in Silos
• RRH Case Management is an integral part of housing identification and financial assistance
**FIND HOUSING**
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**FIND FAST HOUSING IDENTIFICATION**

**Build** relationships with landlords to have access to as many housing units as possible.

**Find** and secure housing as quickly as possible after a person or family becomes homeless.

**Limit** the time a family or individual spends homeless. Move people into housing within **30 days or less**.

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National Alliance to End Homelessness
“It takes a lot of advocacy for someone to get into the housing. Without a case manager, without an advocate, these people would still be out in the streets. And that’s just the reality of it.”

-Case Manager in Denton, TX

**FIND: Housing Identification**

**Philosophy**
- Everyone is ready to be housed immediately
- Households need assistance to locate housing
- Landlord recruitment is essential to successful rapid re-housing

**Practice**
- Actively recruits and retains landlords
- Provides support during housing search
- Identifies and mitigates barriers to entering housing
- Ensures “good fit” between landlord and client
- Assists client to realistically identify the “right” housing option
- Facilitates shared housing
How is this working in North Carolina?
**FIND HOUSING**
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Help access services so people can stay in housing.

**HELP PAY RENT AND MOVE-IN ASSISTANCE**

- **Pay** for security deposits, move-in expenses...
- ... and/or rent and utilities.
- Length of assistance varies, but often **4 to 6 months**.
“Households getting housed quickly with a very light touch frees up staff and financial resources to be used on those who need more support.”

-Melanie Zamora, The Road Home
Salt Lake City, UT
Pay: Financial Assistance

Philosophy
• Individualized assistance helps house more people
• Clients are resilient and can figure it out
• Financial assistance is to pay for housing, not alleviate poverty
• NOT a one-size-fits-all

Practice
• Individualized assessment to determine the “right” individual financial assistance (only what’s necessary)
• Encourages client contribution from the start
• Focuses on the $$ amount that household needs to pay for rent
• Identifies all potential resources of $$ to pay towards rent
• Client assumes maintaining housing; identifies and pursues what is needed
How is this working in North Carolina?
Help people quickly find housing within one month or less.

Help people pay for housing short term; longer-term help an option.

Help access services so people can stay in housing.

Help stay

Rapid Re-Housing Case Management and Services

Connect families and individuals to services and supports in the community.

Help resolve issues that may threaten housing stability, including conflicts with landlords.

Child Care

Employment

Income Supports/Benefits

Health Care

Education

National Alliance to End Homelessness
“I tell my staff, ‘if you’re not talking about housing, you’re having the wrong conversation.’

-Deronda Metz, Salvation Army, Charlotte, NC
Stay: Rapid Re-Housing Case Management

**Philosophy**

- RRH case management should be **client-driven** and **voluntary**
- RRH case management should be **flexible in intensity**
- RRH case management uses a **strengths-based** approach to empower clients
- RRH case management reflects the short-term nature of the rapid re-housing assistance

**Practice**

- Acts as a “service broker” and “connector” to other supports – provides warm handoffs
- Assists to identify a support network
- Focuses all interaction on housing plan
- Engages household in problem solving and assuming rent
- Every conversation is housing focused, exit planning from day 1
How is this working in North Carolina?
National Performance Benchmarks and Program Standards

• Based on RRH Core Components
• Endorsed by VA, HUD, USICH

Utilize best practice standards for RRH core components across all community RRH providers:

• Housing Identification
• Financial Assistance
• Case Management and Services

Lunch Break
Afternoon Agenda

• FIND
  • LL Recruitment and Retention Best Practices
  • Shared Housing

• PAY
  • Determining the “right amount” of financial assistance

• STAY
  • Creating Connections and Case Closing
How Do You Build Landlord Partnerships?

- Good landlord outreach strategy
- Offer attractive incentives for landlord partners
- Know landlord concerns and needs and respond accordingly

Create a Win-Win for landlords and clients via tenant and landlord supports
Landlord Recruitment: Leave No Stone Unturned

- Listserv Postings
- Cold Calls/Online Search
- Networking with Current LLs
- Local Leadership Involvement
- Host a Landlord Event
Landlord Recruitment Brainstorm:

Take 5 minutes and come up with a list of ALL the places where you could potentially find landlords with units for rent.
BE SPECIFIC!!!

Pick 2 you will follow up with next week!
Four Things Landlords Want

- Property Care
- Good Neighbor
- On-Time Rent
- Long-term Renter
Incentives for a Landlords in Tough Markets

- Cut checks fast and on time
- Double damage deposit if/when needed for “risky” client
- Risk Mitigation Fund for damages caused by tenant
- Help with minor repairs
- Steady referral source of new tenants; no need to advertise
- Calls returned within one business day
- Staff teach “good tenant” skills
- If problems can’t be solved, assist tenant to move out without an eviction
- Part of a mission to end part of the team
- Annual recognition event, positive media exposure
Landlord Outreach Brochure

What is Rapid Re-Housing?

Benefits for Landlords?
- Landlords receive timely rent payments, including security deposits.
- Reduction of eviction costs.
- Decrease advertising costs.

FIND housing
- 25 people quickly find housing within one month or less
- Goal: to secure housing as quickly as possible so families/begin showing.

PAY for housing
- Help pay for housing while individuals move towards being self-sufficient.
- Goal: to build relationships with Landlords to have access to as many units as possible

STAY in housing
- Help maintain employment, budgeting, education, etc. for individual families to stay in home.
- Goal: to end the time individuals/families spend homeless.

Counts We Serve:
- Cobb
- Cherokee
- Bartow
- Walker
- Paulding
- Douglas

CM: Kendra Moore
770-790-3504
kendra.moores@mitchell.org
CM: Latoya Izlar
770-790-5041
latoya.izlar@mitchell.org
140 Cobb Pkwy
Marietta, GA 30062

Landlord Retention Strategies

• Follow through on your promises
• Return phone calls promptly
• Listen!!!
• Match the right tenant to the right landlord
• Recognition
  • “Thank You” notes
  • Appreciation events- with FOOD!
  • Write-ups in organizational materials
• Convey positive impact on community
Advice From a Housing Locator: Common Pitfalls to Avoid

• Giving the client a list of vacant units
• Sending the client with literature on the program to explain to landlords
• Explaining too much over phone/email before viewing the unit
• Taking too long to follow-up with financial requests
• Being negative/critical of the prospective tenant, program, or unit
• Accepting “no” too quickly
• Providing no guidance to clients on personal presentation at apartment viewing

-Samantha Stewart, Supportive Housing Works, CT 2016
Finding and Keeping Landlords in a Difficult Market

- Developing and maintaining landlord relationships must be someone’s full time job
- Housing search is proactive and continuous
- Landlord incentives are well-designed to minimize landlord risk
- Program and staff ALWAYS do what they promise
- Calls from landlords are returned quickly
- Checks are cut quickly
Landlord Incentive Brainstorm:

Where are you currently seeing success at recruiting and/or retaining landlords?

Take 5 minutes and list all of the reasons why a landlord should rent to YOUR client: What support will you provide? How will working with you benefit the landlord’s business?

How will you communicate this to future landlord contacts?
**Shared Housing**

\[ \text{SHARED HOUSING} = \text{Two or more people who live in one permanent rental housing unit (NOT ‘doubling up’ or ‘couch surfing’), and share housing costs} \]

Types of populations served by Shared Housing:
- Diverse sub-populations: single adults, Veterans, single parents, families, youth, college students, live-in care assistants, and nannies

- No standardized or fidelity model, but emerging promising practices

- Shared housing can effectively meet needs of people with behavioral health issues who experience homelessness when operated with permanent supportive housing (PSH) best practices
Shared Housing Models

Home Providers can be home owner, private landlord, or agency landlord

- Apartment, Entire Building, Private Homes, with or without homeowner in residence rented to home seeker
- Home Provider & Home Seekers
  - Home Providers
    - Homeowner Rents Room
  - Home Seekers
    - Home Seekers matched by organization
    - Home Seekers choose match themselves
    - Home Seeker matched to Home Owner

Matching process and housing supports vary across organizations
Why Shared Housing?

**Cost Savings**
- Rent
- Utilities
- Household supplies

**Sharing in Household Responsibilities**
- Cleaning
- Maintenance
- Yardwork

**Socialization & Shared Personal Responsibilities**
- Emergencies!
- Babysitting/Childrearing (for families)
- Loneliness

Source: Northern Virginia Family Service
Shared Housing is an Option

1. **Landlord and Leasing Issues**
   - Identify landlords amenable to shared housing
   - One lease or several leases
   - What happens if one party bails, etc.

2. **Roommates and Matching**
   - Preparation with each party
   - Clarify responsibilities in advance
   - What is the “right” match

3. **RRH case management and shared housing**
   - Preparing for role case manager as mediator
   - Staff training on mediation
Shared Housing is an Option

Strategies for finding home providers and landlords:

- Search property management databases
- Call real estate and property management firms to set up appointments to ‘sell’ shared housing
- Respond to advertisements for available housing in local media
- Direct mailer campaigns
- Advertising rents above fair market rates to incentivize willingness of landlords to have separate leases with each tenant
- Tax breaks for landlords and homeowners who participate in shared housing programs
Shared Housing Advice

Wisdom from Meghann Cotter - Micah Ministries - Fredericksburg, VA

- Roommate situations are not uncommon
- Realized that most people on the street were already “living with” someone in their current circumstances.
- Who do they live with in the woods? Associate with in shelters? Are there at risk or imminently at risk people in the community they could be paired with?
- Honor client choice
- Invest time in understanding deal breakers
- Don’t knee-jerk a re-location after the first roommate conflict.
- Private landlords are the most flexible with shared housing.
“What do I want in a housemate?” Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What to Look for or Avoid</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Someone I like</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Someone who will not have many visitors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Someone who smokes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Someone who is clean and sober</td>
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<td>Someone with pets</td>
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<tr>
<td>A “night” person</td>
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</table>
Shared Housing Brainstorm:

What is ONE concrete step we can take in the next month to incorporate a shared housing strategy into our rapid re-housing program?
IT'S BREAK TIME!

BE BACK IN 15MIN
Rapid Re-housing Performance Benchmarks

1. Length of Stay
2. Permanent Housing Exits
3. Returns to Homelessness
4. Efficiency
What is the right amount of assistance?

Unacceptable rates of return to shelter?
➢ Recalculate case management and/or financial assistance, assist more intensively or longer, check-in more often, develop new partnerships

Few to no returns to homelessness?
➢ Try giving less support; maybe they don’t need as much
➢ Examine admissions criteria-- are you “creaming”?

Some succeed and some don't?
➢ Is there a pattern (household, staff, etc.) that can help you improve outcomes?
Principles

INDIVIDUALIZED

FLEXIBLE
Structuring Financial Assistance: Program-level Progressive Engagement

- Client always pays a share unless income is zero—then program pays 100%.

- In budgeting, assume that the household will likely be severely rent-burdened at exit.

- FLEXIBILITY IS IMPORTANT: Changes in income, expenses, stress overload, and executive function are inevitable.
Example- Budget Calculator
LA Family Housing- Los Angeles, CA

• Uses data to determine how much and for how long
  ✓ Removes the financial decision making from the social worker engaged with the family
  ✓ Based on participant needs, not program need/resource bank

• Highlights the importance of clinical intervention alongside financial assistance

• Family and Landlord are provided rental breakdown quarterly
  ✓ Allows for exit planning and future oriented thinking
  ✓ Can address anxieties and barriers within a targeted time frame
  ✓ No surprises!

• Only change rental subsidy amount when indicated by data
  ✓ Always use diversion practices first
Example- Budget Calculator
LA Family Housing- Los Angeles, CA

• Up to double security deposit

• Move-in assistance (i.e.: application fees, utility deposits, storage arrears, furniture, moving assistance)

• Rental assistance tool generates amount and length of financial assistance
  • i.e.: 2-24 months of scaled assistance (i.e.: first month 100%, second month 75%, third month 50%...) based on a participant’s need, income, and unit size
  • Rental assistance scale should follow the Progressive Engagement model
# Rental Assistance Calculator

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entry SPDAT</th>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Rent</th>
<th>Moonth SPDAT</th>
<th>Housing Option</th>
<th>Days in Month</th>
<th>Days Paid For</th>
<th>Taper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Month SPDAT</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>5 Month SPDAT</td>
<td>Housing Option</td>
<td>1 Bedroom or more</td>
<td>11 Month SPDAT</td>
<td>Days in Month</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income x SPDAT Scale</th>
<th>Client Portion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Month Assistance</td>
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<td>6 Month assistance</td>
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<td>9 Month Assistance</td>
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<td>12 Month Assistance</td>
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<td>24 Month Assistance</td>
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## Rental Assistance

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<tr>
<th>Month 1</th>
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## Client Portion

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</table>
• At move in: most landlords will take a letter of commitment showing what you expect for the next three months.
• Ask the client what they think they can pay.
• Always estimate the client’s share as the highest reasonable amount (it can change)
• Communicate changes to all involved at the earliest point possible.
• Signing on for a year isn’t a good idea for you, the client or the landlord.
Financial Assistance Brainstorm:

What is our data telling us about the relationship between financial assistance and housing outcomes?

What is one change we could make to improve our outcomes? How will we monitor whether it is working?
How NOT to Close a Case

“Non-Compliance”

Loss of Contact

No Progress Towards Goals

Wait for Certain Stability

“What will they do without me?”

Still have Eligibility
How to Close a Case

• Close the case when participant is no longer going to be imminently homeless
• Case management can continue after financial assistance ends
• Warm hand offs to mainstream and community-based services
Are We Making the Right Decision? - Use Your Data!

- **Exits to Permanent Housing**
  - What percentage of cases that you close are in permanent housing?
- **Length of Program Enrollment**
  - How long are you supporting households?
  - Are longer enrollments correlated to better housing outcomes?
- **Cost Per Exit**
  - How much money do you spend on each household?
  - Is spending more money correlated to better housing outcomes?
- **Returns to Homelessness**
  - What percentage of households return to homelessness following exit from your program?
Closing a Case Key Considerations

• **Clarity: Ending homelessness or ending poverty?**
  • What are you measuring to determine if someone is “ready”?
  • Transparency: outlined in Policies and Procedures, shared with staff AND clients

• **Exiting planning starts at entry**
  • Case plans goals are short term (can be completed within 30 – 90 days) and focused on housing

• **Case manager regularly review goal progress, discuss if exit timeline still works, and adjust**
  • Transparently discuss options and criteria for ending assistance

• **Resources are in the community**
  • Your program and supports can not and should not be the only supports
Support Map for ________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Friends</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: _________________________</td>
<td>Name: ______________________</td>
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<td>Contact Info: __________________</td>
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<td>Type of help: __________________</td>
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<td>Type of help: ________________</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Assistance Programs</td>
<td>Other Community Resources</td>
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<td>Name: ______________________</td>
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<td>Contact Info: __________________</td>
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<td>Name: ______________________</td>
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</table>
Case Closing Questions and Indicators

• **When** do you assess whether to close a case or continue providing assistance?

• **Who** is involved in the decision-making?

• **What** are the key indicators you assess to make this determination?
## When is it Time to Complete Services?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Indicators for closure</th>
<th>Indicators for continuation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOME</strong></td>
<td>--Housing subsidy secured</td>
<td>--Cannot pay rent for next month or two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Income from all sources is sufficient to pay rent</td>
<td>--No income sources available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--Can share housing using current income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEASE</strong></td>
<td>--In compliance, landlord satisfied</td>
<td>--Currently in violation of lease or subject or serious complaints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--LL willing to accept loss of programmatic support</td>
<td>--LL accepted client only if longer-term support provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LINKAGES</strong></td>
<td>--Other resources will provide needed assistance</td>
<td>--No other resources are willing/able to assist, and need is critical to housing stability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHOICE</strong></td>
<td>--Program participant wants to complete services</td>
<td>--Program participant wants (and needs) additional assistance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Core Components and Case Closing

FIND – Is this housing that the household wants and can afford after assistance ends?

PAY – Does the household understand their rental obligations and have a way to pay for it?

STAY – Is the household connected to the supports (formal and informal) that they need to maintain housing?
OrgCode Exit Planning Tool

### Exit Planning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client:</th>
<th>Version:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### About Us

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Name:</th>
<th>Head(s) of Household:</th>
<th>Address:</th>
<th>Health Insurance:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Emergency/Medical Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role/Relationship</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency</td>
<td></td>
<td>9-1-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Our Plan to Maintain Housing**

I will continue to pay our rent by making sure we do the following things:

- 
- 
- 

I will make sure that we don’t get kicked out of the apartment by doing/not doing the following things:

- 
- 
- 
Thank You!

Questions?

Ben Cattell Noll
bcattellnoll@naeh.org