Homelessness and Reentry

Achieving Housing Security for High Risk Ex-Offenders

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Introduction

• Contextualize housing and homelessness
• Complexity of housing situations for justice involved individuals
• Reentry Housing Pilot Program (RHPP) by WA State Department of Commerce
• Importance of housing to successful reintegration and termination from supervision
Street Level Boundary Spanners
Evidence Based Practice
Collaboration

The Importance of Having a Home

- Social and psychological refuge from external threats
- Consistency and control of day-to-day routines
- Place to build social networks and an identity of personal worth
- Foundational “launch pad” for employment, treatment engagement, community network, etc.
- Supervision compliance
Understanding Homelessness in a CJ Context

- Increases social stigma, exposure to antisocial peers, victimization by others
- “Shadow work” such as panhandling, scavenging, and street vending—criminalized in some jurisdictions
- Crimes such as theft, prostitution, and drug sales
- Places individuals in social contexts/situations that are highly correlated with treatment failure, violation of supervision, and recidivism

Safe, Secure, Affordable

Safe

- Physical conditions
  - Structurally sound, electricity, plumbing, water, heat, weather proof
- Physically safe from danger
  - Emotional abuse, physical violence, and intruders
Safe, Secure, Affordable

Secure

- Ability to live in the same place over time
  - Ownership—lease, rental agreement, or deed
  - Economic security
  - Relational vulnerability

Affordable

Meets the basic needs of occupant without undue financial stress

- Basic utilities, transportation, food, clothing, or living expenses
Continuum of Housing

Homelessness is often defined as “not having customary and regular access to a conventional dwelling” (Lee, et al., 2010).

What is housing?
Homelessness

- Fluid over the life course
- Minimum wage (women)
- Children (women)
- Deep poverty—race and ethnicity
- Domestic violence and sexual assault
- Traumatic experiences
- Mental illness (20% greater)
- Substance abuse (18% greater)
Homelessness and Justice Involvement

- Prison history 4-6 times greater homelessness than general population
- Geller and Curtis (2011) Men—
  - 2x greater housing instability
  - 4x greater homelessness
  - 69% greater odds of housing insecurity than non-incarcerated comparison group
Risk Factors

- Concentrated Disadvantage
- Concentrated Incarceration
- Unsafe, Vulnerable, Expensive, Family and friends—Asset or Burden?
- Mental health, Substance abuse, Poor health, Trauma/Abuse

Protective Factors

- Law, policy, spending, investment Priority?
- Affordable housing Rent protection Code enforcement City services
- Social Capital Collective Efficacy
- Safe, Secure, Affordable, Social support, Asset
- Education, Employment

Continuum of Justice Involved Housing

- Prison
- Work Release
- Halfway House
- Home Confinement
- Home
Clark 2016 Minnesota Findings

- “Landing Pads” (first address only) set tenor for reentry process
- Re-arrest highest for those released to emergency shelters (45%)
- Re-arrest lowest for work release (26%) and inpatient treatment centers (28%)
- Individual-level characteristics, including post-release housing placements, accounted for most of the variance in risk of re-arrest across neighborhoods
Obstacles to Housing for CJ Involved

- Lack of affordable housing
- CJ Policies that require viable address before release
- Civil Penalties
- Community concerns: NIMBY
- Program policies

WA Reentry Housing Pilot Project

- High risk or high need offenders
- Clark, King (Seattle), Spokane (Large Metro Areas)
- Housing for 12 months
- Collaborative team in counties with DOC Community Justice Centers
- Wrap around services
- Safety plan
- Offender’s agree to participate in treatment
- Started January 2008 and funding cut in June 2009
- Funded by WA State Department of Commerce
Target Population
- Total 75/active 50
- High Risk/High Need
- No viable release plan

Case Management Plan
- weekly team meeting
- team: SMH and CTC/CCO's
- ratio: 1:14
- Multi-System (Each Case Manager will know all of the clients)

Treatment Services
- mental health
- substance abuse
- life skills
- educational/vocational
- domestic violence
- sex offender

Accountability/Sanctions
- detention
- arrest
- Seattle day reporting Program (SDRP)
- King County Special Needs Unit (SNU)

Housing Providers
- Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI)
- GEM Property Management (private)
- Private Landlords

Treatment Providers (primary)
- DOC direct services
- SMH Direct Services

Treatment/Service Prov. (referral)
- A Second Chance (Employment Opportunities)
- DSHS

PARTNERSHIPS
CJ System
- DOC (CCO's, CTC, CJC)
- Law Enforcement
- King County Sheriff
- Seattle City PD
- U.S. Marshal
- FBI

Housing Providers
- LIHI
- GEM: open
- Private Landlords: 4 houses/12 rooms

Self Sufficiency Plan
- Offender 33% income
- RHPP 100% deposit

Safety Plan
- Neighborhood
- SMH: DOC rapidly meet, find a resolution and enact a plan.
- Team intervention, increased supervision, and police involvement
- Housing: SMH has a 24/7/365 crisis response team, access to CTC/CCO 24/7 for consultation, and 2 assigned Seattle PD liaisons.

Figure 1. RHPP Research Design

Program Design
- Support Services (CJC)
  - treatment
  - employment
  - education
  - welfare
- Community Supervision
  - services
  - type
  - intensity
  - place
- Offender Characteristics
  - risk
  - demographic
  - prison history
  - criminal history
  - treatment history
- RHP Group
- Offender Outcomes
  - violation
  - prison time
  - jail time
  - type of risk
  - employment
  - housing
  - etc.
- Comparison Group
- Housing Support
WHO IS MOST LIKELY TO FAIL

- Younger
- Male
- Non-white
- Homeless
PERIODS OF HOMELESSNESS

- Homeless 1+ Times
  - RHPP: 26.3
  - Comparison: 18.3

- Homeless Entire Period
  - RHPP: 15.4
  - Comparison: 8.7

HOUSING INSTABILITY

- # Moves Range:
  - RHPP: 1-7
  - Comparison: 1-8

- # Homeless Periods Range:
  - RHPP: 0-3
  - Comparison: 0-4
RHPP Bivariate Outcomes

Survival Plot - New Court Cases by Housing Type
PERIODS OF HOMELESSNESS

- 2 Times More Likely to Experience a New Conviction
- 3 Times More Likely to Experience a Revocation
- 2 Times More Likely to be Readmitted to Prison

Conclusion

- Housing matters: “landing pads” vs. “launch pads”
- Safe, Secure, and Affordable
- Wrap around services enhance positive outcomes for high risk and high need individuals
- Housing helps to prevent “cascading” events leading to catastrophic failure
- Cross agency collaboration matters: CCO's are dynamic street level boundary spanners