

Supportive Housing

Trust
Alaska Mental Health
Trust Authority

Alaskan Seniors
Living Longer Growing Stronger
from the Alaska Commission on Aging

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GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON
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Housing and support services for Alaskans with mental health conditions and disabilities provide opportunities for people to live independently and productively in their communities.

Access to housing with support services improves lives, saves money, and reduces the likelihood that people with disabilities will experience homelessness or need more expensive care in emergency rooms, nursing homes, psychiatric hospitals, out-of-state institutions, or prisons.

Housing First Approach

This national approach offers housing for people experiencing homelessness without requiring sobriety or participation in a treatment program. The Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and community partners have supported Housing First projects in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and Juneau.

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Permanent Supportive Housing is long-term, community-based housing with ongoing rental assistance and optional supportive services for people experiencing both homelessness and mental health conditions, addiction, and/or multiple disabilities. PSH is an evidence-based housing intervention.

- Juneau’s Forget-Me-Not Manor, which in its first six months housed 32 residents with co-occurring disorders of active addiction or alcoholism and who experienced an average length of homelessness of ten years, lead to the following community outcomes:
 - Emergency room visits were reduced by 60%
 - Encounters with law enforcement (for any reason) were reduced by 70%
 - Ambulance usage was reduced by 52%¹
- After two years of being housed with optional services, 16% of residents reported zero days of alcohol use in the last 30 days and another 16% reported two or fewer days of drinking in the last 30 days.²

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)

RRH, optimally informed by a Housing First approach, rapidly connects people experiencing homelessness with short term financial assistance and case management that helps them access the services needed to maintain stable housing and meet other goals. RRH is an evidence-based practice that serves veterans, families, and individuals, and reduces the instances of future homelessness.

Key Points

- Obtaining safe housing is the most important first step for a person experiencing homelessness to work on treatment, recovery, employment, and other goals.
- Supportive housing can result in a reduction in alcohol use, improvements in self-perception of physical health, wellbeing, and safety, and an increase in the use of community-based services and employment.
- Evidence-based housing interventions save money across systems, reducing the use of police interventions, nights in jail, nights at sleep-off centers, ambulance rides, and emergency room visits.
- Community supports and housing are often complimentary; some people may only be able to live independently with certain supports.

¹ “Juneau Housing First 6 Month Pre/Post Service Usage and Indicators of Wellbeing Comparison,” Brocius and Erisman, 10/30/18.

² “Forget Me Not Manor: Tenant Alcohol Consumption at Two Years,” Brocius and Erisman, 2/17/20.