

Pure Peer Power: Using Peer Advocates to Achieve Resident Success
By: Skid Row Housing Trust

Presentation Notes

The presentation can be accessed via Prezi online → [here](#)

1. Presenter introductions

- a. Stacey Hartnett, Health & Wellness Coordinator
- b. Anthony Haynes, Peer Advocate Manager
- c. Brent Smith, Peer Advocate
- d. Dennis King, Peer Advocate
- e. Pamela Marshall, Peer Advocate

2. Intro to Skid Row Housing Trust

- a. Founded in 1989 to serve LA's most vulnerable population
- b. The mission of Skid Row Housing Trust is to provide permanent supportive housing so that people who have experienced homelessness, prolonged extreme poverty, poor health, disabilities, mental illness, and/or addiction can lead safe, stable lives in wellness.
- c. Permanent supportive housing agency with 1,750+ units in Downtown Los Angeles and surrounding areas.
- d. SRHT owns the Property Management Company that manages all of the properties
- e. Resident Services Staff consist of 45 Resident Services Coordinators, 8 Program Managers, Health & Wellness Coordinator, Department Manager, Programs Development and Training Manager and a Department Director
- f. Other supportive services include: Space Management Team, Occupational Therapy Interns, MSW Interns and On-Site medical and mental health services
- g. Organizational models include: Housing First / Harm Reduction

3. Permanent supportive Housing and Downtown LA

- a. Skid Row Housing Trust operates in what some call the homeless capital of the country.
- b. Homeless State of Emergency – September 2015 by Mayor Garcetti
- c. SRHT uses a county wide Coordinated Entry System to house the most vulnerable of homeless people
- d. Section 8 housing shortages have cause a lot of people to not be able to move out of permanent supportive housing and are clogging the pipeline. There is also a lack of affordable housing that has caused a lot of people to become newly homeless in the last year

4. Intro to Peer Advocate Program (25mins)

- a. Meet the team
 - Anthony
 - Brent

- Pamela
 - Dennis
 - b. The Peer Advocates assist residents in any way that they need. The accompany residents to doctor's appointments, benefits meetings, and other appointments that they may need support in.
 - c. The Peers run groups together and individually.
 - These groups range from peer support groups, new residents support group, art and creative groups, and recovery based groups.
- 5. Why is the program successful?**
- a. For case managers working with some residents can be extremely difficult but the Peer Advocates provide a type of support where residents can feel more comfortable with them than their case manager.
 - b. Peer Advocate groups have an 80% retention rate from week to week for most groups.
 - c. Peer Advocates have moved out of PSH and they are also able to also assist residents in this transition as well
- 6. How to start a Peer Advocate Program**
- a. How they fit in the organization
 - Peer Advocates participate in all department functions as the case management staff. They record notes on each resident they work with and communicate with the residents case manager to prepare the best plan possible to assist each resident.
 - b. Recruitment & hiring
 - Residents who show that they are good members of the community and can assist other residents in a professional manner are tapped when there are openings on the Peer Advocate team.
 - Those residents are encouraged to apply and have to go through an interview with the current Peer Advocate team members and supervisor.
 - c. Training
 - On-site with Program Manager
 - Health Navigator Certification
 - CSH Speak Up!
 - Department wide training (hoarding, mental health first aid, working with LGBT clients, harm reduction, conference attendance)
 - d. Job Description & Responsibilities
 - Peer Advocates are paid positions and work 30-35 hours per week.
 - They have shared office space (with each other) in one of the PSH properties.
 - They are available by appointment and on call to assist with any appropriate resident issue.

7. Q & A

For more information about the Peer Advocate Program feel free to email Stacey at stacey@skidrow.org.