

# Reaching Functional Zero: How Milwaukee County Is Ending Chronic Homelessness



# Housing First

- ▶ Homelessness - a housing problem
- ▶ Housing is right to which all individuals are entitled
- ▶ Provide permanent, independent housing without prerequisites for treatment
- ▶ Offering (*but not insisting on*) other support
- ▶ Remove major obstacles to obtaining and maintaining housing for the chronically homeless population
- ▶ Opportunity to secure housing rather than having to “earn” it

# Where we began...

- ▶ Plan to end chronic homelessness within three years
- ▶ Point in Time
  - ▶ 195 Chronically Homeless Milwaukeeans
    - ▶ 140 Sheltered; 55 Unsheltered
    - ▶ Number turned out to be much higher with improved homeless outreach and data quality
- ▶ House the most difficult to house
  - ▶ Highest utilizers of public services
  - ▶ 100 individuals placed in 12 months
  - ▶ Over 300 in 3 years
    - ▶ Over 700 homeless individuals and families served in Housing Division since September 2015

# Major Themes of Approach

- ▶ How can we succeed?
  - ▶ Housing Subsidy
  - ▶ Case Management Services
  - ▶ Additional Supportive Housing Developments
  - ▶ Outreach & Staffing
  - ▶ Coordination of resources
  - ▶ Wide range of community partners

# Housing Division - Combined Areas of Service

- ▶ Outreach Services (Housing First)
- ▶ Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME and HOME Repair
- ▶ My Home CoC Rental Assistance
- ▶ Housing Intervention Services
- ▶ Section 8 Rental Assistance

# Housing Assistance Payment Subsidy

- ▶ City and County of Milwaukee Tenant-Based Rent Assistance through the HOME program
- ▶ Vouchers from the Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee Section 8 Program
- ▶ Increase in Milwaukee County's My Home funding through the Continuum of Care
- ▶ Repurposing of existing Milwaukee County Vouchers
  - ▶ Prioritization of chronically homeless on waiting list

# Case Management Services

- ▶ Traditional Case Management through Behavioral Health Division
  - ▶ Targeted Case Management
  - ▶ Community Support Programs
  - ▶ Combined Community Services
  - ▶ Tax levy funded case management
    - ▶ Allows flexibility for activities not funded by Medicaid

# Additional Supportive Housing Developments

- ▶ Thurgood Marshall Apartments
  - ▶ 24 units
  - ▶ Support staff
  - ▶ Homeless
  - ▶ Chronic alcoholism
  - ▶ Focus on decrease in public services
    - ▶ Emergency room visits
    - ▶ Detox





# Outreach & Staffing

- ▶ Housing Division Outreach
- ▶ Partnerships with Outreach Agencies including the Milwaukee Police Department
- ▶ Weekly meetings with MPD, District Attorney's Office, Downtown BID
- ▶ Staff
  - ▶ Outreach Services Manager
  - ▶ Three Housing Navigators
  - ▶ Program Evaluator

# Homeless Outreach Collaborative

- ▶ Housing Division leads community wide Outreach Collaborative
  - ▶ Non-profit outreach groups
  - ▶ Faith based providers
  - ▶ Police Department
  - ▶ District Attorney
  - ▶ Medical College
  - ▶ Local meal sites

# Criminal Justice partners

- ▶ Partnership with police department
  - ▶ Homeless Outreach Team
  - ▶ Notification to Housing Division before homeless individual is arrested/removed from downtown
  - ▶ Attend weekly meetings with Housing Division, District Attorney, Downtown BID
  - ▶ Attend monthly homeless outreach coordination meeting



# Criminal Justice partners

- ▶ MacArthur Post Booking Stabilization
  - ▶ Short term housing and case management referrals
  - ▶ Coordination with pretrial services, District Attorney, Public Defender
- ▶ Sheriff's Department calls Housing Division before interactions with homeless
  - ▶ Parks system
  - ▶ Transit
  - ▶ County formal resolution about removing homeless individuals

# Criminal Justice partners

- ▶ Homeless Court pilot
  - ▶ Municipal judge works directly with Housing Division Housing First Staff
  - ▶ Staff can contact judge directly to lift warrants for Housing First participants
  - ▶ Staff follows up with judge in six months to give an update on progress
- ▶ Warrant Withdrawal Wednesday
  - ▶ One day each year warrants can be lifted
  - ▶ Housing Division staff have booth to offer housing and services

# Additional Collaboration

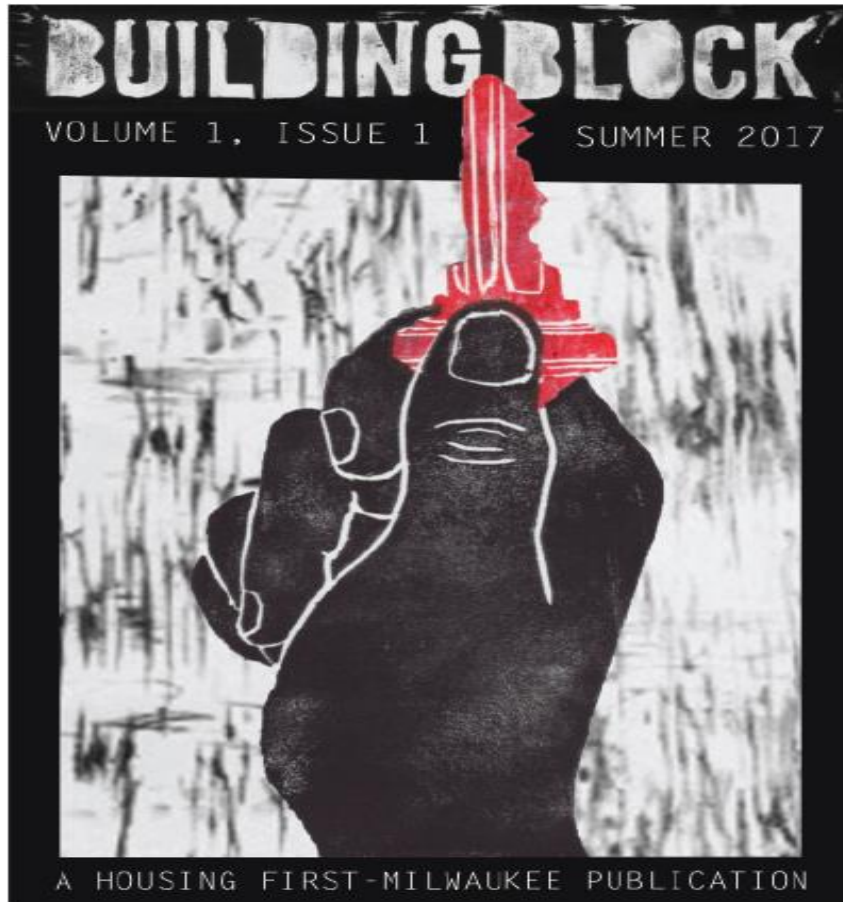
- ▶ Weekly Coordinated Entry meetings
  - ▶ Housing placement meetings with providers
  - ▶ Agencies advocate for clients needing housing
  - ▶ Discussions on housing prioritization/housing first process
  - ▶ Shelters heavily involved in process
  - ▶ Leads to policy changes for Coordinated Entry
- ▶ Unmet Needs Group
  - ▶ Discussions on specific circumstances and populations that require brainstorming

# Resident Advisory Council



- Housing First participants that help set policy
- Produce quarterly newsletter
- Plan all social events for staff and residents

# Resident Advisory Council

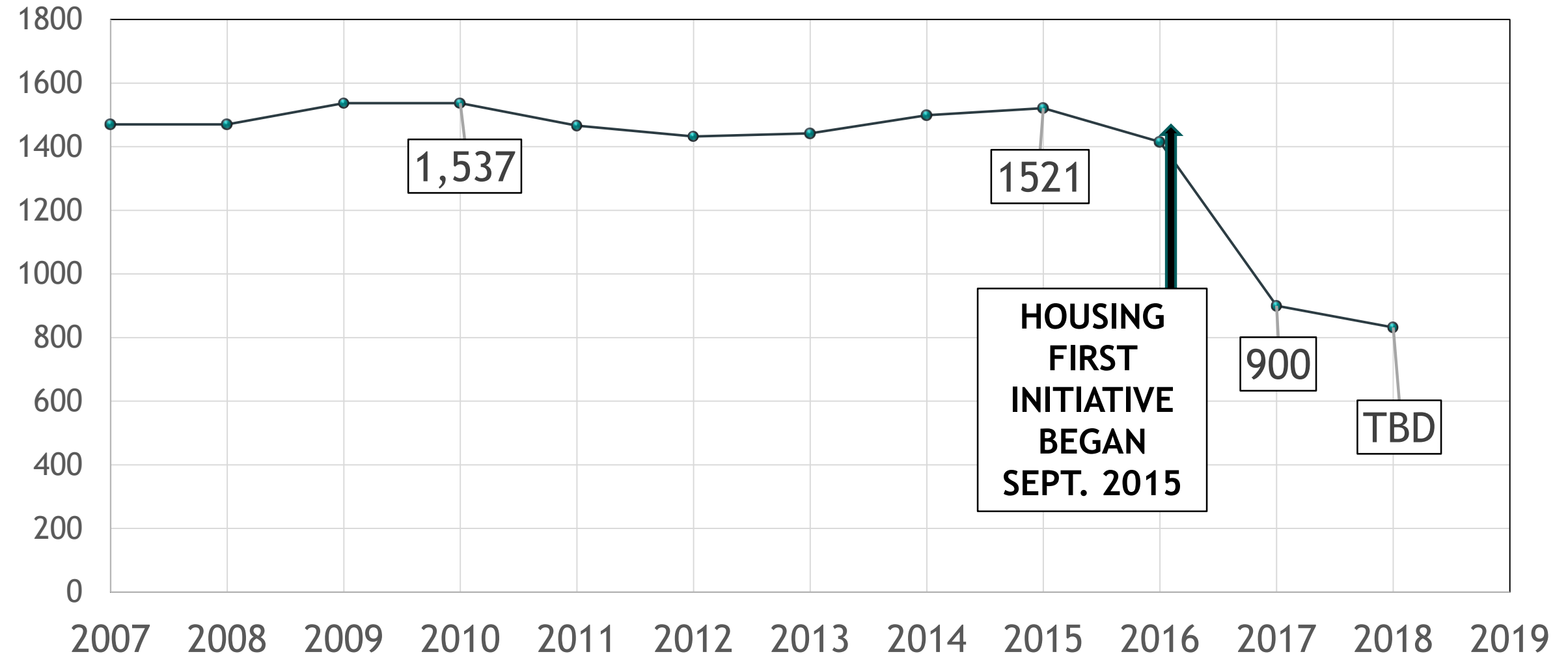


- Quarterly newsletter
- Articles by clients and staff
- Distributed to CoC and community groups

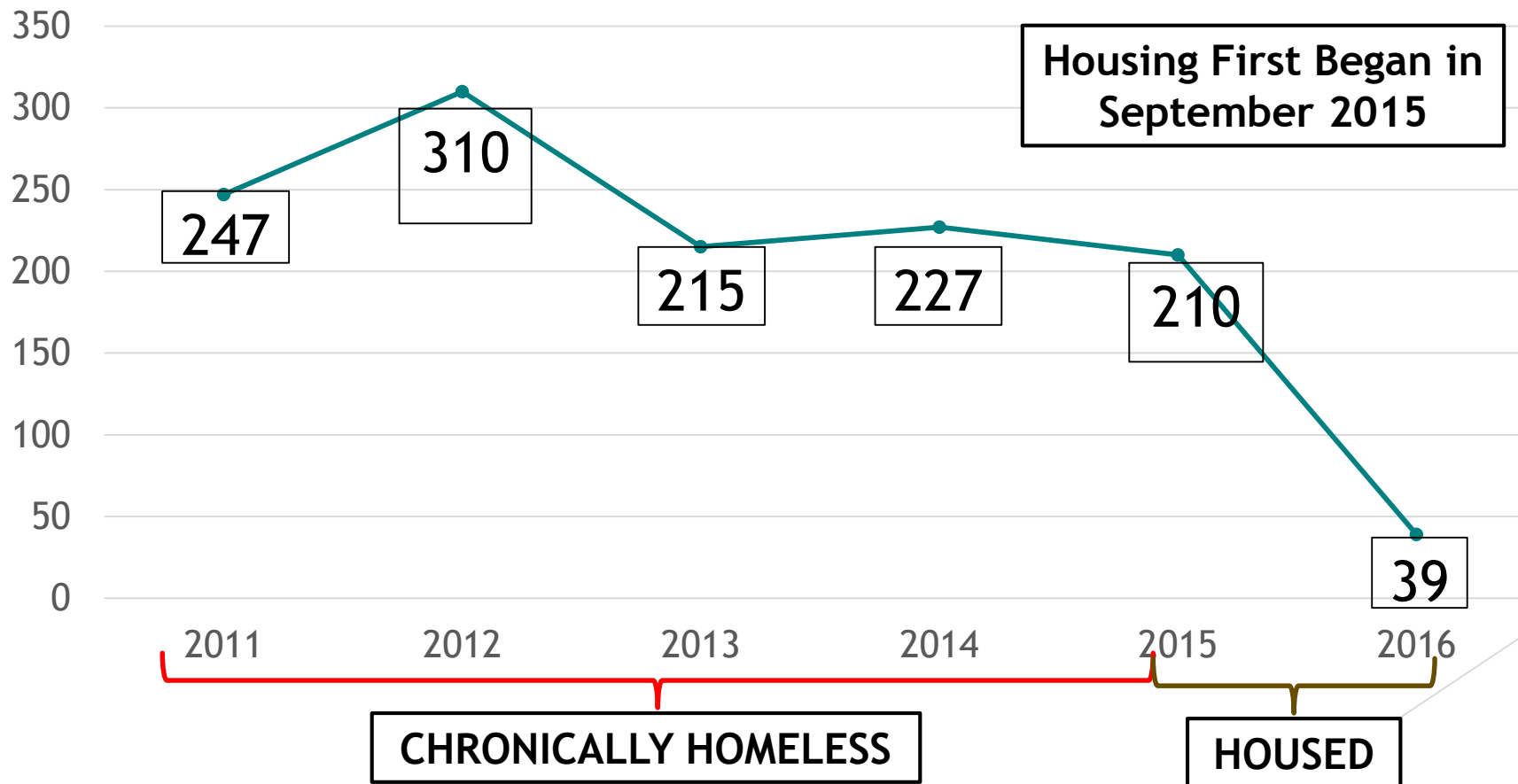




# Total Homeless Individuals in Milwaukee County



# Immediate Impact: Total Municipal Court Violations Each Year Among Housing First Residents



# Current Calculations (EDIT)

- ▶ 2017 Point in Time numbers show a 70% reduction in chronic homelessness from where we started. Anticipate reaching functional zero in 2018.
- ▶ Housing First Unit + Case Management = less than \$30 per day
- ▶ One year of Housing: \$6300 (average HAP portion)
- ▶ 97% Housing Retention rate
- ▶ All participants have accepted voluntary case management

Housing First residents utilized crisis mental health services significantly less during their first year in housing.

Compared to the previous year spent homeless, during their first 12 months in housing, Housing First resident utilized 539 fewer mental health crisis services resulting in a cost savings of more than \$714,600.

Top 4 Utilized Programs:

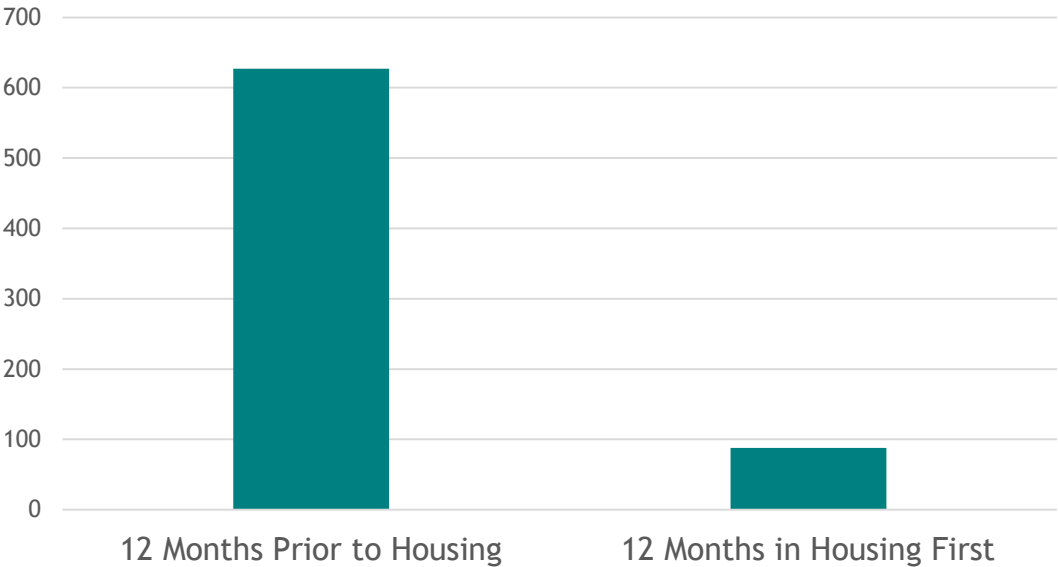
- Crisis Mobile
- Detox
- Psychiatric Crisis Services
- Inpatient Services

42 additional programs were utilized at lesser rates

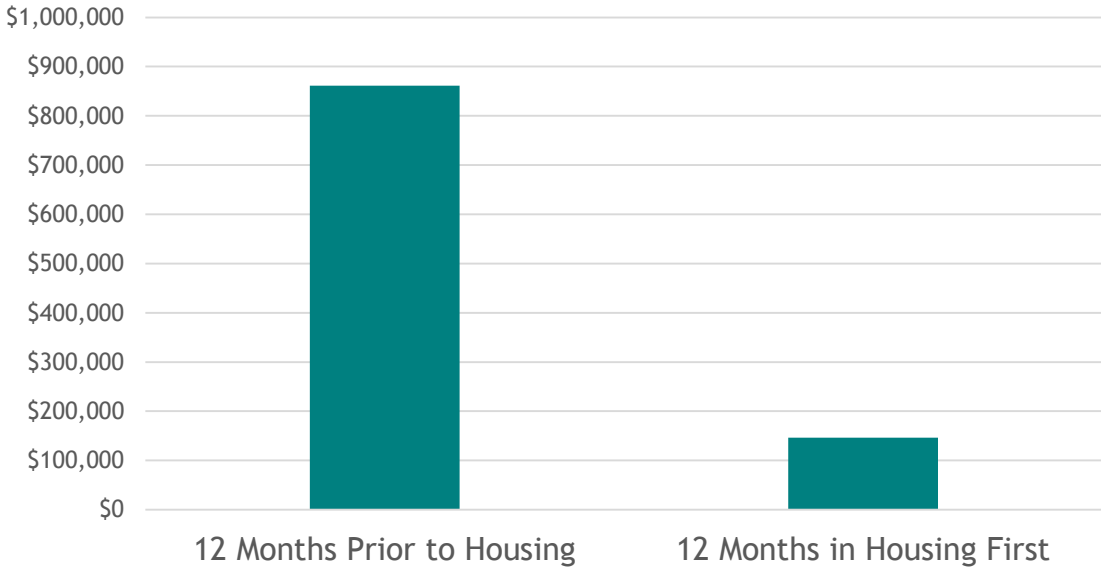
Previous Year: 627 episodes; \$860,985

Year in Housing: 88 episodes; \$146,347

Mental Health Crisis Services Utilization  
Top 4 Programs



Mental Health Crisis Services Costs  
Top 4 Programs



# Impact: The Justice System

- ▶ Overnight Jail: According to a two-year survey of homeless individuals, each person cost the taxpayers \$14,480 per year, simply for the nights they were in overnight jail.
- ▶ call for service (average cost): \$950.15 per call
- ▶ Court Security: \$43.30 per case
- ▶ Public Defender: \$718.86 per case
- ▶ District Attorney: \$718.86 per case
- ▶ Prison: A typical cost of a prison bed in a state or federal prison is \$20,000 per year.

# Impact: Local Homeless Shelter Organizations

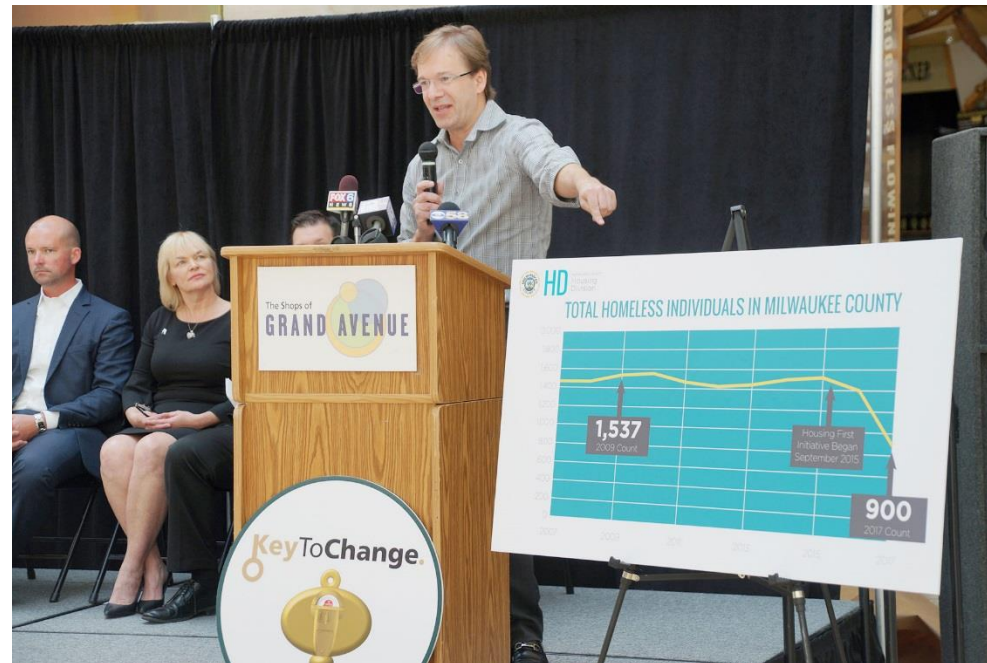
- ▶ Housing First residents' average time spent homeless is greater than 7 years. Some more than 20 years.
- ▶ In the 12 months prior to Housing First, the average time spent in shelter was greater than 180 days. Many slept in a shelter every night.
- ▶ Our residents experienced a 99% reduction in emergency shelter use.
- ▶ 77% of Housing First residents have experienced an increase in income, including employment.

# Role of Philanthropy - Milwaukee Examples

- ▶ Greater Milwaukee Foundation
  - ▶ Fiscal Agent for Homeless Endowment
    - ▶ All funds go to the Housing Division for rental subsidy, case management, or employment services
    - ▶ Agreement is written in a way that ensures a permanent funding source that is very limited in what it can be used for
    - ▶ Good source for sustainable funding
  - ▶ Funding of Housing First Case Management
  - ▶ Outreach vehicle for partner agency

# Role of Philanthropy - Milwaukee Examples

- ▶ Business contributions
  - ▶ David Hobbs Honda
  - ▶ Business contributions for Homeless Endowment
    - ▶ Interstate Parking
    - ▶ Cardinal Capital Development





# Key to Change with Downtown BID



- Proceeds go to the Housing Division to support outreach efforts
- BID acts as fiscal agent for the funds
- Advertising for larger effort

# Homeless Symposium for Business Leaders



- Event sponsored by the Downtown BID for local business leaders
- Collaboration between BID, Housing Division, and District Attorney's Office
- Discussed new plan and overall concerns on how to improve downtown

# Partnership With HMOs to Fund Supportive Housing

- ▶ Housing Division recently entered into an agreement with United Health Care
  - ▶ 10 highest HMO utilizers within the past twelve months will be identified
  - ▶ Housing Division will place these individuals into permanent housing using the Housing First approach
  - ▶ Efficacy of housing intervention will be tracked by UHC and Housing Division Program Evaluator
  - ▶ UHC will pay all related housing costs!
    - ▶ Constructed as a rapid rehousing program so individuals maintain their homeless status
- ▶ Additional HMOs have approached the Housing Division for similar partnerships

# Discussion

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