



Shared Housing: A Solution for Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness

July 12, 2016

Today's Webinar

- Please note that all lines are on mute.
- We will be taking questions at the end of the presentation. Please pose questions at any time in the Questions box.
- The webinar and slides will be posted following the presentation at endhomelessness.org.



The National Alliance to End Homelessness is a nonpartisan organization committed to preventing and ending homelessness in the United States.

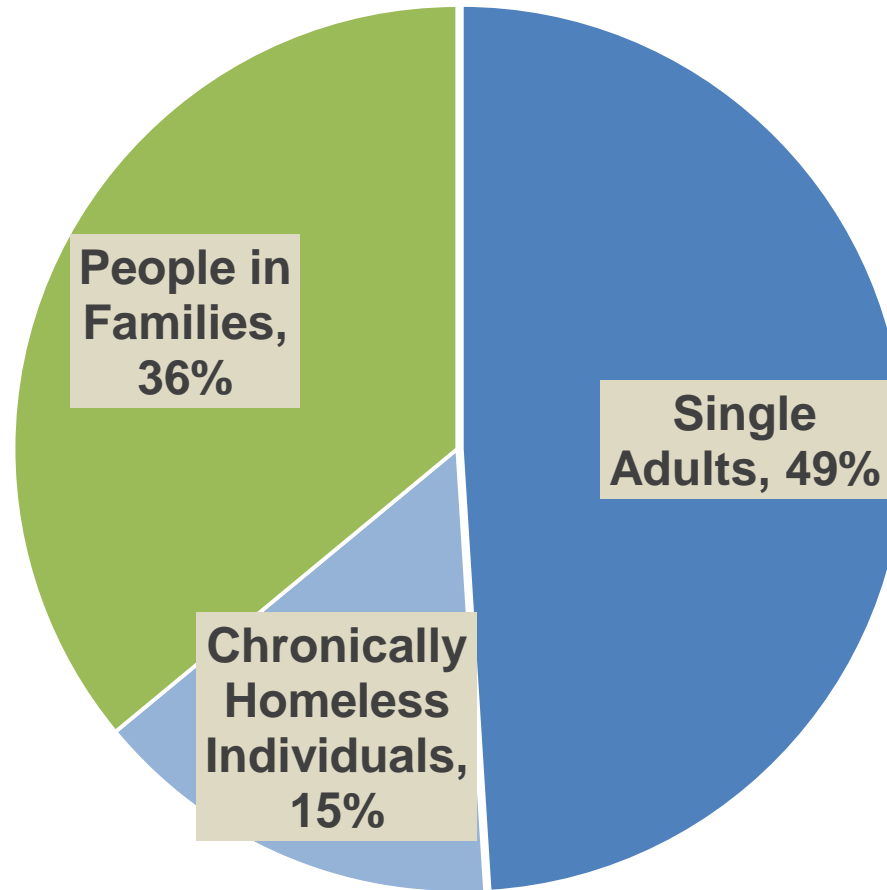
The Alliance works toward ending homelessness by improving homelessness policy, building on-the-ground capacity, and educating opinion leaders.

Agenda

- **Jayme Day**, National Alliance to End Homelessness
- **Jean-Michel Giraud**, Friendship Place
- **Cathy Zall**, New London Homeless Hospitality Center
- **Meghann Cotter**, Micah Ministries
- Q&A

What do we know about single adults experiencing homelessness?

Homeless Households: U.S. Point-In-Time Count 2015



Characteristics of Single Adults

- Male
- 30 – 50 years old
- Disproportionately African American
- Estimates of duration and number of episodes of homelessness vary
- Limited access to benefits
- Need more research!

Shared Housing: A Solution for Single Adults Experiencing Homelessness

- What is shared housing?
- How does it work?
- How can it help?

Shared Housing: What is needed?

- **Determine how to target the program**
- **Determine how to match people**
- **Find housing** - Landlord engagement, working with owners
- **Find funding**

SHARED HOUSING



**“CREATING SHARED HOUSEHOLDS
FOR SINGLE ADULTS”**

**JEAN-MICHEL GIRAUD
PRESIDENT/CEO
FRIENDSHIP PLACE**

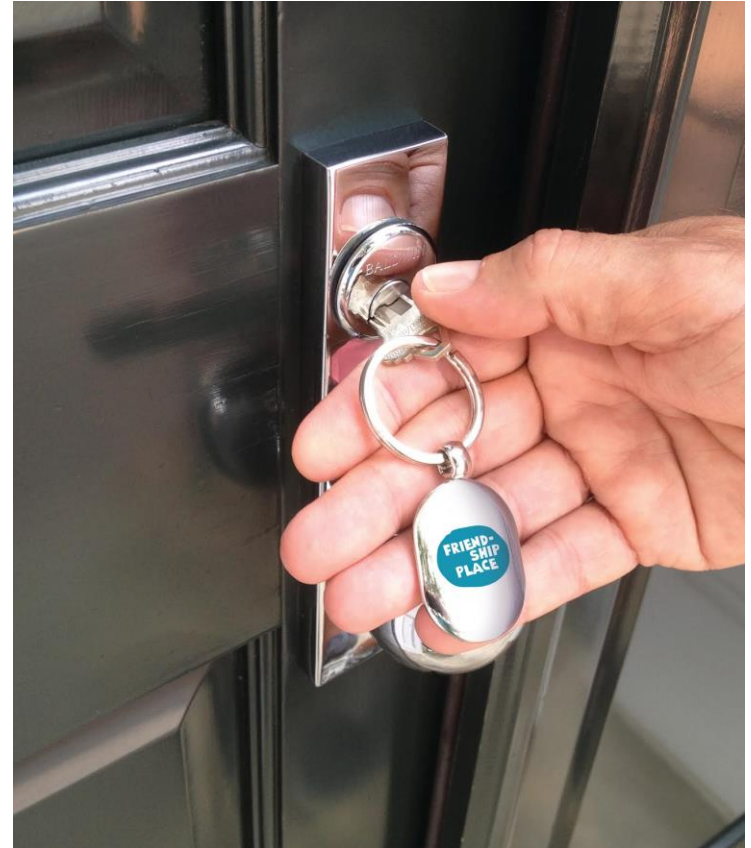
**PRESENTED AT THE “SHARED HOUSING FOR
SINGLE ADULTS EXPERIENCING
HOMELESSNESS” WEBINAR**



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Friendship Place Mission & Vision

- **MISSION:** To empower people experiencing or at risk of homelessness to attain stable housing and rebuild their lives.
- **VISION:** A community and a nation where every person has a place to call home.



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Our Programs & Services



- Street Outreach
- Drop-In
- Medical & Psychiatric Care
- Case Management
- Transitional Shelters
- Youth and Young Adult Services

- Rapid Rehousing
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Veterans Services
- Job Placement
- Community Education & Advocacy

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Shared Housing: An Introduction



- More affordable and flexible
- Easier application process, faster lease-ups & move-ins
- More sustainable
- Built-in support from peers: natural resource
- Common experience with homelessness
- Families of choice
- Financially appealing to landlords
- Landlord response is positive, more lenient
- Solves housing issues for a few people at a time
- Should be used more for shelter exits
- Step up to individual living situation
- Possible short-term leases

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The Shared Household Is...

- the sharing of living space that single adults freely agree to for economic reasons and social support:
- people agree to fulfill responsibilities,
- each housemate may continue to participate or leave,
- the sharing arrangement is based on leases, which may start and end at different times.
- ***Service cycles are also different.***



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Whose house is it?

- Clarify expectations and review service modalities with housemates and landlords.
- Avoid the perception from the beginning that you are “running” the house or a “facility.”
- *This is a good time investment. It saves you from being pulled into conflicts later on.*
- **Staff understands Fair Housing Laws, lease agreements and community Landlord-Tenant mediation.**



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This Is Not a *Group* Home

- Not a program
- Not licensed
- Needs to blend in as “neighbor.”
- Think of stigmatization, privacy & confidentiality.
- People here do not have to be monitored by neighbors and other community members.



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Household Engagement by Staff



- Based on the rehabilitation relationship
- Not a legal relationship
- Ethical and competent
- Progress oriented
- Facilitative and supportive
- Builds on strengths
- Uses a person-centered approach
- Empowering, **not** enabling
- Stays within boundaries

A blue circular logo with a white border. Inside the circle, the words "FRIENDSHIP PLACE" are written in white, bold, uppercase letters. "FRIENDSHIP" is on the top line and "PLACE" is on the bottom line.

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Setting Up the Household

- Members choose housemates (not staff)
- Compatibility factors
- Trauma issues
- Former and current street ties
- Substance use
- Sharing space and food
- Families of choice
- Group and individual support from staff for newcomers
- ***Staff educates participants on tenant rights, completes a habitability standard inspection and ensures each tenant has a lease.***



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More on Household Engagement



- Evenly engage all members of the household
- Everybody has a voice
- Watch for uneven dynamics
- Time element: different service cycles – some household members actively receiving services, others have been discharged
- We do not belong between landlord and tenant – we are not on the lease – but can advise participants.
- Do people feel comfortable reporting issues?

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Engaging and Supporting Landlords



- Make sure the agreement between landlord and tenant and each tenant is clear on:
 - Responsibilities
 - Expectations
 - Reporting
 - Schedule
 - Visits
- Make sure all housemates understand roles and responsibilities
- Develop clear communication channels
- Possible impact of long-term planning on the household
- Agreement with landlord and housemates on recruitment of housemates
- ***Staff attend community landlord groups and neighborhood liaison meetings, engage congregations, use web resources and streamline processes for landlords when possible.***

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Community Perception



- This is a household just like any other (clear messaging on this)
- Neighbors among neighbors
- Not a “facility”
- The organization is not directly responsible for the site or what happens there
- **But** supportive counseling and community relations are used to resolve issues during the service cycle and sometimes afterwards

A blue, irregularly shaped circular logo with the text "FRIENDSHIP PLACE" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The logo is positioned in the bottom right corner of the slide.

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Post-Discharge Status



- Clear message to landlords and housemates that services will end
- Post-discharge: tenants need to work out internal issues and agree on house rules – shared responsibilities
- Landlords need to interact with household members as responsible parties – not revert to solving through staff intervention whenever possible

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Thank You // Questions?



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Shared Housing



**NEW
LONDON**

**Homeless
Hospitality Center**



**NEW
LONDON**

Homeless Hospitality Center

- Coordinated Access Entry Point
- Emergency Shelter
- Daytime Drop-In Center
- Social respite
- Rapid Rehousing
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- VA Grant Per Diem Bridge Housing



The Challenge?

- Many of our guests have very low income.
- We don't have the resources for long term rental subsidies.
- Achieving shorter shelter length of stay requires housing options for very low income individuals.

Why agency run shared housing?

- People can arrange their own roommate situation.
- BUT, major barriers:
 - If one roommate leaves, the one remaining is on the hook for the whole rent.
 - Landlord resistance to renting to several people with very low income.
 - Existing “shared housing” (i.e. boarding houses, sober houses etc.) are often of very low quality.
- Agency building ownership (or holding master lease) assures housing quality and transfers vacancy risk to agency.

Basic Features

- Two-Three tenants per apartment.
- Each with own room
- Rent includes everything—utilities, cable, internet
- Allow tenants to pay weekly
- Month to month lease with standard lease provisions
- No security deposit
- Rent to “higher risk” guests
- No special services but access to HHC supports
- No formal “room mate” matching process.

Opportunity Knocks



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Shared by Three

- Kitchen
- Living Room
- Bathroom

Private Room

- Own lock
- We supply basic furniture
- We supply for each room:
 - Own TV with cable
 - Internet access
 - Mini-Fridge

Rent/person/month: \$400-\$500

FMR:

studio \$732

One bedroom: \$861



Affordable Development

Total Square Feet (excluding basement and porch)	4,075
Number of “units”	7
Purchase Price	109,000
Acquisition Costs	10,000
Initial Renovations	30,000
Total Initial Cost	149,000
Initial capital cost/square foot	\$ 36.56
Initial capital cost/unit	\$ 21,286
Phase II renovation funded with housing tax credit program	\$310,000
Rent/person/month (including all utilities)	\$400-\$500
(FMR: studio \$732 one bedroom \$861)	

Key Lessons

- Shared housing will not work for everyone—BUT
 - It is far better than long shelter stays.
 - It can serve as a stepping stone for those whose income increases.
- Pay close attention to zoning rules.
- Need to run in a compassionate but business like way.
 - Budget for evictions.
 - Enforce lease terms and pay attention to security.
 - Assure housing is superior to market.
 - Have a process to fill vacancies quickly.
- Supply TV and mini-fridge in every room to reduce friction.



Using Shared Housing to end Homelessness

Meghann Cotter

Background

- In 2005, Fredericksburg, VA had:
 - A 90 day emergency shelter
 - A transitional housing program for women with children
 - A lot of downtown churches taking care of the basic needs of the street homeless

Micah was formed after the biblical call of Micah 6:8 to combine efforts of the faith community in addressing the needs of the street homeless.

Background

- Micah started out as a basic needs organization and evolved to understand that all homeless people had the same primary need of housing
- Today, programs include:
 - Winter shelter: 37 beds
 - Post-hospital shelter: 8 beds
 - Day Center
 - Step Forward income program
 - Housing program (supportive/rapid re-housing)

Primary Dilemma

- 83 chronic homeless single adults in 2010
- Fair number who had income or could get income easily with some support
- Area's fair market rent for even a one bedroom was more than \$1000.
- The most basic minimum wage and disability income wasn't enough for one person to afford even the cheapest housing units.

Our solution

- Realized that most people on the street were already “living with” someone in their current circumstances.
- Started finding those people and pairing them up.
- Negotiated available units with private landlords who would overlook a lot of barriers and those who were unrelated.

What we have learned

- ◉ Honor client choice
- ◉ Invest time in understanding deal breakers
- ◉ Be flexible
- ◉ Be prepared to exchange roommates or re-locate people if it goes badly
- ◉ If the landlord will let you, separate leases
- ◉ Seek support (in-home care, skill building)

What we have learned

- ◉ Sometimes pairing a high barrier person in need and low-barrier caregiver helps
- ◉ Use roommate agreements thoroughly
- ◉ Private landlords are the most flexible with shared housing.
- ◉ Don't knee-jerk a re-location after the first roommate conflict.
- ◉ Identify the conflict and seek to mediate or resolve it (i.e. mini fridges, separation in the home, etc)

Outcomes

- In the last 12 months, Micah alone has housed 81 single adults. All of which are high barrier; many were chronically homeless.
- On average, less than 10% return to homelessness. Only 2 people last year.
- 2016 Point in Time: 16 chronic homeless remain.

Questions?

A recording of this webinar and presentation slides will be available at
www.endhomelessness.org

Shared Housing Resources

- Sample rental agreements
- National Shared Housing Resource Center (<http://nationalsharedhousing.org/>)
- HUD funding options for shared housing (see accompanying resource)

Sign up for our Rapid Re-Housing Newsletter
(www.endhomelessness.org)

Upcoming Events/Webinars:

- **August 18th at 1 pm (ET): [Lessons from Montgomery County, PA](#)**