An Overview of the HUD-VASH Program

Housing and Urban Development – Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing
What is HUD-VASH?

- Permanent supportive housing program to house homeless Veterans
- A collaborative program between HUD and VA pairing a Housing Choice voucher with case management and supportive services
  - Goal of assisting homeless Veterans sustain housing stability and recovery from physical and mental health problems, substance use disorders, and functional concerns contributing to or resulting from homelessness
- HUD-VASH subscribes to the principles of the “Housing First” model of care.
  - Evidence based practice model that has demonstrated rapidly moving individuals into housing, and wrapping supportive services around them as needed
  - Proven to help homeless individuals exit from homelessness, remain stable in housing, and thus improving ability and motivation to engage in treatment strategies
HUD-VASH Goals

- Program goals include housing stability while promoting maximum Veteran recovery and independence in the community for the Veteran and the Veteran’s family.
- Key component of the program is case management
  - Services are designed to assist Veterans in obtaining and sustaining permanent housing and engage in needed treatment and other supportive services that improve the Veteran’s quality of life and end their homelessness
  - Veterans experience homelessness for a variety of reasons, case management is individually tailored to meet the needs and wants of each HUD-VASH client.
The top priority of HUD-VASH is chronically homeless Veterans.
Veterans are prioritized for entry into the program based on a hierarchy set forth by HUD that requires VA to house chronically homeless Veterans first.
Homeless populations who are particularly vulnerable, including women, Veterans with custody of children, Veterans 65 and older, and Veterans who served in Iraq or Afghanistan during Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom, or New Dawn.
Allocations

- Every year since 2008, HUD and VA have awarded HUD-VASH vouchers based on geographic need and public housing agency (PHA) administrative performance.
- Collaborative approach that relies on three sets of data: HUD’s point-in-time data submitted by Continuums of Care (CoCs), VAMC data on the number of contacts with homeless Veterans, and performance data from PHAs and VAMCs.
- After determining which areas of the country have the highest number of homeless Veterans, the VA Central Office identifies VA facilities in the corresponding communities.
- HUD then selects PHAs near to the identified VA facilities, taking into consideration the PHAs’ administrative performance, and sends the PHAs invitations to apply for the vouchers.
- There is at least one site in each of the 50 states, in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Guam.
Allocations (cont.)

- HUD has awarded funding for approximately 10,000 HUD-VASH vouchers each year in 2008-2010 and 2012-2015
- Congress appropriated $50 million in 2011 to serve approximately 7,000 voucher families
- $60 million was appropriated in 2016 to serve approximately 8,000 families
- HUD has held three competitions, in 2010, 2014, and 2015, to competitively award a total of over 2,600 project-based HUD-VASH vouchers
- Since 2008, a total of over 85,000 vouchers have been awarded
- There will be approximately 5,500 new HUD-VASH vouchers awarded in 2017 ($40 million)
Outcomes to Date

- From FY 2008 through August 31, 2017
  - Entered Case Management: 181,229
  - Veterans Housed: 126,853
  - Veterans who Currently Have HUD-VASH Vouchers: 83,075
    - Veterans Currently Housed in HUD-VASH: 76,834
    - Veterans Currently with a HUD-VASH voucher and Looking for Housing: 4,866
Who Does HUD-VASH Serve?

- Chronically homeless Veterans
- Most need or vulnerability
- Severe mental or physical health diagnoses, including substance use
- Need for ongoing case management to maintain housing
- Clinical program that comes with a housing voucher
Housing First Model of Care

- Housing as a basic human right
- Respect, warmth, and compassion for all Veterans
- A commitment to Veterans
- Scattered site housing
- Separation of housing and services
- Veteran choice and self-determination
- Recovery orientation
- Harm reduction
Stages of Case Management

- **Intensive**
  - Working to obtain clinical stability
  - Minimum of weekly home visits

- **Stabilization**
  - Working to address issues that are most likely to lead to housing instability
  - Minimum twice a month home visits

- **Maintanence**
  - Services ensure that needed treatment, support, and mentoring assistance continue after housing
  - Minimum once a month home visits
Stages of Case Management (cont.)

- Preparation for Discharge
  - Functioning at a very independent level
  - Sustained low acuity level
  - Case management can be provided in the home, community, or at the medical center
  - Contacts occur at least quarterly

- Graduation or Discharge
Supportive Services and Case Management

- Outreach
- Assess and admit to program
- Appropriate serves based on needs, acuity level, and preferences for care
- Housing Stability Plan
- Supporting and coordinating care across providers
- Assisting with the voucher process
- Assisting with the housing search and lease up process
- Assisting with obtaining income
- Helping developing structure and meaningful purpose
- Advocating on behalf of Veterans with landlords, PHAs, and community providers
- Promoting housing retention and stability
- Promoting a safe and respectful culture
Team Structure

- Vary across facilities with regard to structure, number, function, and size
- Smaller programs may have less diversity and may have to leverage services
- Encouraged to diversify membership as much as possible

- Physician or prescriber
- Psychiatrist
- Nurse Practitioner
- Physician’s Assistant
- Nurse—RN, LPN
- Social Worker
- Peer Support Specialist
- Psychologist
- SUD Specialist
- Recreational Therapist
- Occupational Therapist
- Employment Specialist
Types of Teams

• Acuity Based Teams
  ◦ Intensive
  ◦ Stabilization
  ◦ Maintenance
  ◦ Preparation for Discharge

• Functional Type Teams
  ◦ Outreach and Engagement
  ◦ Housing Search
  ◦ Early Stabilization
  ◦ Stabilization

• Geographic Teams
  ◦ Rural
  ◦ Urban/Suburban
Types of HUD-VASH Vouchers

- There are two different types of vouchers: Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) and Project-Based Vouchers (PBV).
- The majority of HUD-VASH vouchers are HCV, sometimes referred to as “tenant-based” vouchers:
  - They are assigned to the Veteran, help him/her afford rental housing in the private market.
  - They are portable; they go with the Veteran.
- PBVs, in contrast, are assigned to a housing unit and not to an individual:
  - A PHA enters into an assistance contract with a property owner for a specified number of units and for a specified term.
  - The assistance is not portable; it is tied to apartment, not the renter.
How Can You Help?

- Service Projects
- Move-In Baskets
- Furniture Collections
- Housing Stock
Service Projects

• Recurring Projects
  ◦ Assisting with move in
  ◦ Helping to clean units when they turnover
  ◦ Social opportunities to connect with one’s community

• One-Time Projects
  ◦ Furnish a project-based building
  ◦ Quilts for move-ins
Move-In Baskets

- Pots
- Pans
- Silverware
- Plates
- Glasses
- Towels
- Sheets
- Pillows

- Soap
- Laundry Detergent
- Dish soap
- Sponges
- Shampoo
- Cleaning Supplies
Furniture Collection

- Can you help organize a way for furniture to be stored and used to help Veterans moving into housing?
- Working with Voluntary Services and the Homeless Program leads to determine what furniture is needed
- Can someone in your network have the ability to provide needed items?
Housing Stock

- Are there landlords or properly managers in your community?
- Does your organization have rental properties?
- Do you have a way to help us promote the need for housing that is safe and affordable?
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