



Safe Havens

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Safe Haven Background

- Authorized by McKinney-Vento Act of 1994
- Funded from HUD's Supportive Housing Program
- Primary mission was to target chronically homeless dually diagnosed homeless that were ineffectively served by traditional homeless programs
- HUD initially funded 300 Safe Haven programs



Core Principles & Evidence Base

The Low Demand/Safe Haven Model Core Principles

- Targets chronically homeless with mental illness and substance use problems
- Targets Veterans who have failed in traditional programs
- Does **not** require sobriety or compliance with MH TX as a condition of admission or continued stay
- Demands are kept to a minimum
- Environment of care is non-intrusive as possible
- Rules focus on staff and resident safety

Evidence Base

- Modeled on HUD's Safe Haven Program funded by the HUD Supportive Housing Program authorized by McKinney-Vento Act of 1994
- A Harm Reduction Model



Key Differences in VA's Safe Haven Program

- Program is a Model Development Initiative
- HCHV contract funding authority is used to support the program
- Program has time limits
- Carries the expectation that veterans and their families will transition to permanent housing
- Program effectiveness and fidelity will be measured on an ongoing basis



Developmental Stage

- Funded with HCHV Contract Funds in FY 2010
- Two sites (Bay Pines and Bronx) have been operational for 6 months
- Two sites (Bedford and Philadelphia) becoming operational in August 2011
- Ability to use sole source contracting directly impacts the speed of start-up



Initial Findings & Next Steps

- **Benchmark for Safe Havens:** Ward Family Foundation Study found that slightly more than half were able to be permanently housed
- **VA National Center on Homelessness among Veterans** first six months results: Slightly more than 60 % moving to permanent housing
- **Next Steps:** National Center will conduct an evaluation at one year mark and determine if program should be expanded to other cities.



Safe Havens and the Five Year Plan

- VA's Five Year Plan calls for innovative programs to eliminate homelessness among all Veterans
- Safe Haven models utilize a low demand/harm reduction strategy to serve homeless Veterans that cannot be reached by traditional homeless programs