

Sandy Hill Community Health Centre

OASIS

Intensive Case Management Program

Presented by, Robert Desarmia

ICM & Folks We Work With

- 10 case managers
- 120 clients
- 105 clients housed
- Case management standard: 2 direct contacts equaling 2 hours a week including travel time.

Housing First Works

- We do not wait for someone to get better before we house them, we house them so they can get better.
- We have access to housing subsidies.
- We have a banking project.
- We drive folks to and from appointments.
- Assist with apartment cleaning, life skills, with recovery.

Housing First Works

- We build relationships with landlords. (face to face interactions, working with, counseling, negotiating.)
- We have some financial flexibility. (for now)
- We have a move in basket to create a home.
- We provide a bed, micro wave, air conditioner.

Finally

Housing First Works

Housing is an excellent form of
Harm Reduction.

Housing creates stability out of
chaos!

Housing is a Huge Boon To
Health

Try, Try, Try, Slow, Slow, Slow

Housing First Innovations and Lessons Learned

Robert Desarmia

Mission

- Our program recognizes the uniqueness of those we serve and their capacity to define their own successes. We accomplish this by the development of partnerships with clients and their community, guided by the harm reduction and housing first models.

Sandy Hill Community Health Centre

- Primary Care
- Addictions and Mental Health Services
- Oasis
- Client Access Team
- Downtown Location – four shelters in the area. Three drop ins. Open drug use.

Introduction

- Program Overview
- What makes our program different.
- Our challenges.
- Lessons learned.
- Conclusions.

Program Overview

- 10 case managers
- 120 clients
- 105 clients housed
- Case management standard: 2 direct contacts equaling 2 hours a week including travel time.

Clients

- Adults
- Most complex in Ottawa
- Substance use disorder
- Chronic homelessness
- Interactions with legal and hospital systems

What Makes Our Program Different

- Partnership between two agencies:
 - CMHA
 - Sandy Hill Community Health Centre
- Housing First Purists:
 - Housing is a right, not a privilege
 - We do not wait for someone to get better before we house them, we house them so they can get better

What Makes Our Program Different

- Access to rent supplements
- Banking Project
- Financial Flexibility. (for now)
- Move In Basket to Create a Home
- Bed Micro Wave and Air Conditioner
- Case Managers drive clients in their cars.

What Makes Our Program Different

- Assist with apartment cleaning:
 - helps with life skills
 - helps clients with their recovery
- Relationships with landlords (face to face interactions, working with, counseling, negotiating site visits and training).
- Landlords “give” us apartments.
 - “your clients are just like any other tenant, except we can call you for support”

Challenges

- We are learning as we go. New challenges every day. No experience to draw back on.
- Housing search:
 - Rejection can be hard on clients.
 - Client's expectations may not match reality
 - Learning curve in apartment living
- Increase in activity when client's move in.
 - Party mode, frequent guest, late hour, loud music, substance abuse increases, complaints from neighbours.

Challenges

- Apartment takeovers:
 - Can be with “guest” that won’t leave.
 - Gangs (targeting our clients)
- Keys, keys, keys, Lost keys lead to broken doors and windows.
- Abandoned apartment.
- Super-motivated clients.
- Clients becoming stable.
- Future – rent supplements.

Lessons Learned

- Location, location, location
 - not near super!
 - not in basement!
 - No low balcony!
 - Near supports!
 - Client choice vs market realities
- Make Friends with your building superintendent.
- Duplicate keys and keep them in office.
- Have money for repairs.

Lessons Learned

- **Go Slow, Go Slow, Go Slow**