



San Diego County links homeless San Diegans with mental illness to supportive housing as a first step towards stability and recovery.

Housing Matters

Supportive housing is a community-based service model that provides housing integrated support services such as: mental health services, primary health care, alcohol and drug services, case management, and social services to help homeless individuals with mental illness gain stability and live more productive lives.

Supportive housing consists of two main components: permanent housing and social and mental health services. The combination of a stable home to live, coupled with access to mental health and social services, medical care, counseling, education and employment, has been proven to benefit not only the participants, but their neighborhoods and communities as a whole.

In San Diego, an estimated 9,020 people are homeless and roughly 33 percent, or 2,706 of the homeless

population have mental illness, a major contributing factor to their homelessness. Often, those with mental illness face discrimination when looking for housing. San Diego County Mental Health Services is working to break the stigma associated with mental illness and homelessness. Homeless San Diegans with mental illness are young and old, women and men, parents, sons and daughters.

Individuals with mental illness are much more likely to become homeless than the general population because untreated mental illness can disrupt their ability to maintain relationships, hold jobs, receive health care, respond to offers of help, or maintain occupancy. Like other illnesses such as diabetes or heart disease, mental illness can be successfully treated with regular access to mental health care. But, treatment is seldom successful when people are living in shelters or on the street.

In the San Diego region, the County of San Diego's Mental Health Services Administration (MHS) is partnering with service providers and housing developers to address the dual stigmas of homelessness and mental illness. There are six Full Service Partnerships (FSP) that provide mental health services, case management, recovery services, educational programs, employment opportunities or training, and social services. The FSPs target all populations—adults, older adults, transitional aged youth, and those in the justice system. The partnership between MHS, the FSPs, and the housing developers is instrumental to the success of the program. This partnership recognizes that Housing Matters, because a stable home in combination with social and mental health services can break the cycle of homelessness.

Home is where recovery begins.



Supportive Housing = Recovery

Program Successes

National and local studies indicate that supportive housing provides a cost-effective, long-term solution to the continuing challenge of homelessness coupled with mental illness.

According to a University of California San Diego, School of Medicine study, published in the American Journal of Psychiatry, supportive housing is an effective health recovery process for homeless individuals with mental illness.

A stable home with social and mental health services result in (a):

- 70% increase in recovery.
- 42% can work after six months of supportive housing.
- 32% decrease in emergency services, and 14% fewer doctor's visits lowering public health costs by increasing the availability of hospital beds, and reducing emergency room waiting time simply by helping residents become stable and healthier.
- Medicaid payments drop an average of 55% when clients enter supportive housing.
- 17% fewer justice system referrals.
- Provides educational opportunities for participants, enabling them to become more self-sufficient.
- Participants feel better, need fewer psychiatric services, and discontinue alcohol and substance abuse.

Supportive Housing does/is:

- **not** increase crime or vandalism in neighborhoods.
- **not** a temporary shelter or psychiatric facility.
- **not** lower property values.

How It Works

Supportive housing units are typically part of a larger affordable housing development. County MHS works with community partners and housing developers to designate a small percentage of units within the developments for qualified individuals who have psychiatric disabilities and who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Tenants in these designated units are also provided with ongoing social and mental health services essential to their recovery and successful occupancy.

- Participants qualified for the services are people diagnosed with serious mental illness or other psychiatric disabilities, such as depression, post traumatic stress disorder or schizophrenia, who are also homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- All applicants for the designated units are screened and selected for occupancy.
- Tenants in the designated units hold their own leases, contribute to their rents, and are subject to the same rules and regulations as all other tenants.
- Tenants in supportive housing units are provided mental health services, other medical care, counseling and key social services that support their recovery for a healthier, more productive life.

Study after study has shown that the simple act of providing a home to homeless individuals with mental illness has positive, dramatic results — both for participants and for communities.

MHSA Process

A county-wide 30-day public notification process is required for all MHSA Housing Program-funded projects. All County residents have an opportunity to provide input and feedback to County MHS during the 30-day process.

The 30-day Public Review posting for upcoming MHSA Housing Program developments can be found at: <http://www.sandiego.networkofcare.org/mh/countycontent/san-diego/housing.cfm>.

HOUSING matters.



Developments and Developers in San Diego

The long-term goal for the County’s MHSAs program is to provide 241 supportive housing units for the homeless with mental illness. However, this is highly dependant upon the availability of funds from financial markets.

Currently, there are 12 County MHSAs projects—with an estimated value of 34 million dollars in state and local funding—identified for development across the region. These 12 supportive housing developments outline just one of the many elements of MHSAs supportive housing program. If all the existing projects are successfully developed, they will provide 993 housing units, with 209 of the units designated for MHSAs supportive housing residents.

Developers currently active in the MHSAs program: Father Joe’s Villages, Townspeople, Squier/ROEM Properties, Affirmed Housing, The Trimble Company, Mental Health Systems, Community Housing Works, BRIDGE Housing Corporation, MAAC Project, Bronze Triangle, Wakeland Housing, Housing Development Partners, Hitzke Development and Meta Housing.

Supportive housing units have been integrated into developments across the San Diego region.

Proposed San Diego MHSAs Housing Developments

Project Name	# of MHSAs Apartments	Total Units	Expected Opening	Location	Target Population	Developer
Developments Currently Operating						
34th Street	5	34	2010	San Diego	Adults	Townspeople
Developments with Applications Approved by CALHFA						
Cedar Gateway	23	65	2011	San Diego	Adults Older Adults	Squier/ROEM Properties
15th & Commercial	25	65	2011	San Diego	Older Adults	Father Joe’s Villages
Tavarua Senior Apts.	10	50	2013	Carlsbad	Older Adults	Meta Housing
The Mason	16	16	2012	San Diego	Adults	Housing Development Partners

* Other housing units are in the predevelopment stage throughout San Diego County.

More Cost Effective

Providing a home is more cost efficient than allowing people with mental illness to remain untreated and living on the streets. Nationally, the cost of one hospital stay for a person who experiences chronic homelessness and mental illness typically exceeds the cost of an entire year of funding for a supportive housing unit.

Supportive **Housing Matters** - to improve communities, to help the people - our friends, brothers, mothers, sons and daughters— who need help.

Funding

Supportive Housing is funded by the state of California Mental Health Services Act, a voter-approved measure that taxes individuals who earn more than \$1 million a year. These individuals pay an annual tax of 1 percent on any income over \$1 million.



Housing Matters because home is where recovery begins.

If you know of someone who may benefit from supportive housing, or to learn more about why **Housing Matters** and the County of San Diego's supportive housing projects, please visit **www.HousingMattersSD.org**.

Housing Matters funded by the County of San Diego and produced by:

Cook + Schmid

2760 Fifth Avenue, Suite 210
San Diego, CA 92103
(619) 814-2370
CookandSchmid.com

Sources for this Fact Sheet:

Gilmer, Stefancic, Ettner, Manning, and Tsemberis, "Effect of Full Service Partnership on Homelessness, Utilization and Costs of Mental Health Services and Quality of Life among Adults with Severe Mental Illness," Archives of General Psychiatry, November 2009.

University of California San Diego School of Medicine study published in the American Journal of Psychiatry, February 2005.

2002 Arthur Andersen report on homelessness.

2011 Regional Task Force on the Homeless.

HousingMattersSD.org



Live Well, San Diego!