

2007 Innovations Awards Program APPLICATION

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 07-E-12CTSUPPORTIVEHOUSING

Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:

State: Connecticut

Assign Program Category (applicant): Corrections

1. **Program Name:** Supportive Housing Pilot Program
2. **Administering Agency:** Community Renewal Team, in collaboration with the State of Connecticut Department of Correction
3. **Contact Person:** Christopher McCluskey, Director of Forensic Services, CRT
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9. **Please provide a two-sentence description of the program:**

The Supportive Housing Pilot Program is collaboration between the Community Renewal Team and the State of Connecticut Department of Correction with the goal of reducing re-incarceration and recidivism rates by offering two years of supportive housing to the high risk population of offenders who have a history of homelessness. The rent-subsidized housing is in the form of scattered site apartments in Hartford, with supportive services that focus on employment and substance abuse treatment.

10. **How long has this program been operational (month and year)? Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on April 2, 2007, to be considered.**

The program began in July 1, 2004 and the first ex-offenders were housed in January of 2005.

11. **Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address?**

This program was designed to address the "revolving door" relationship between homelessness and prison (Kushel et al. 2005). Re-entry into the community is a risk factor for becoming homeless, and homelessness may increase the risk for imprisonment. In a large study in New York City of the relationship between homeless shelter use and re-incarceration, 11.4% of the 48,424 prisoners released from prison entered a homelessness shelter within two years, and 32.8% of those were re-incarcerated. Further, long term homelessness (staying in a shelter for more than six months) is associated with a history of arrests (Caton, et al. 2005). Most of the participants in the Supportive Housing Pilot Program have significant and long term addiction problems. The Supportive Housing Pilot Program was designed to have an evaluation component, in order to follow the participants as they move through the supportive housing program. The evaluation has enabled the program to learn from the successes and failures of the participants, and to modify the program. The evaluation has been conducted by Irene Glasser, Ph.D., a medical anthropologist who is Director of Research at CRT.

12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.

The Supportive Housing Pilot Program began in July 2004. CRT hired a full time clinical case manager to work with the clients, and rented 11 single apartments and 2 double apartments for the 15 individuals coming out of prison who had been homeless before prison. The first offenders were referred to the program by November 2004, at which time they were interviewed while still in prison by the clinical case manager. The first offender moved into a CRT leased apartment in January 2005. There have been advisory meetings monthly since the inception of the program. This has given us the opportunity to look at the on-going evaluation of the program, and tailor the program to best meet the needs of the offenders who have a history of homelessness.

13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?

In our on-going review of the literature, we have found frequent reference to the *need* for intensive services for the re-entry community (see *The American Journal of Public Health*, October 2005 for their entire issue devoted to public health and prison and re-entry, *The New York Times*, August 12, 2006 “Help for the Hardest Part of Prison: Staying Out” A1, A12) but few in-depth discussions of supportive housing programs that can be replicated. We anticipate that the Byrne Program will become a model throughout the State of Connecticut if the program can be funded.

The innovation of the Supportive Housing Pilot Program is:

- Targeting some of the most high risk offenders for recidivism, those who were homeless before incarceration
- Combining a rent subsidy program with intensive substance abuse recovery and employment services
- Frequent follow ups with individuals in the program, so that clients’ opinions can be taken into account in the on-going program development

14. What were the program’s start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)

The initial funding for Supportive Housing Pilot Program was \$175,000, with \$20,000 projected as client income as the ex offenders began to work and contribute a portion of their earnings for the program. There were no specific start-up costs. However, we did not house participants for the first six months. We were able to utilize the money for security deposits for the apartments, furniture, linen, household items, advertising the new position, a computer for the staff person. We recommend that the start up budget be approximately \$28,000 to take care of the expenses of leasing and outfitting 15 apartments and related program expenses.

15. What are the program's annual operational costs?

Currently, the operational costs are \$218,074, with \$6,500 projected as the client contribution. There are currently in-kind contributions of CRT. We recommend approximately \$300,000 annually for this program.

16. How is the program funded?

The program began through funding through the Byrne Memorial Fund for the State of Connecticut Office of Policy Management, which then funded the State of Connecticut Department of Correction for innovative programs. The second year of the program, as Byrne funding decreased, the program was funded by the DOC and the JAG fund.

17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? NO

18. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program?

Microsoft Office programs (Word, EXCEL, ACCESS and PowerPoint) and SPSS are used for the evaluation.

19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address.

Yes, this is an innovation between the DOC (Patrick Hynes, Ph.D., Director of Program Development: Patrick.Hynes@po.state.ct.us); the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness, the Connecticut AIDS Residence Coalition, and the Community Renewal Team.

20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?

We know of no other similar programs in other states that house the re-entry population who has been homeless before incarceration.

21. Has the program been fully implemented? YES

22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples.

As of April, 2007, there were 45 housing episodes of 43 individuals through the Supportive Housing Pilot Program (note that two participants were housed two times). The current 15 participants now in the apartments include people who are attending, working, and participating in treatment. Efforts are underway to recruit more of the individuals directly from shelters, so that we can more clearly focus on those ex-offenders who cycle between the streets and shelters and prison.

The 'typical' Byrne participant is a 40 year old African American male high school graduate who has had two incarcerations in the last five years. He has a significant substance abuse problem, as evidenced by his score on validated measures of addiction.

Only five individuals have been returned to prison on a new charge in the history of the program (11%), either directly from the Supportive Housing, or after discharge. This makes the experience of

the Supportive Housing Pilot Program more successful than the State of Connecticut's overall rate of recidivism, where the most recent study cites a 22% reincarceration rate (State of Connecticut Recidivism Study, Annual Report, March 1, 2007).

There have been 15 people who have been remanded to prison for technical violations of parole (33%) while in the program or after discharge. One person died of an accidental drug overdose while in the housing. Of the 45 housing episodes, 53% did not go back to prison or die. Our statistics indicate that for many of the participants, they are now in the community longer than their previous history of time spent in the community.

Providing supportive housing to the re-entry community, can serve as a model for addressing the high rate of recidivism experienced throughout the US for the re-entry community. This program specifically focuses on the high risk group of individuals who had been homeless some time before their incarceration. Housing with a rent subsidy and supportive services can serve as a model, especially for organizations that have been providing formerly homeless people with housing and can provide behavioral health services themselves, or can closely link their services with behavioral health organizations.

23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

Each month the evaluation team and the program professionals of the CRT Supportive Housing Pilot Program and mental health and health professionals of DOC came together to study the results of the program. These results included the participant feedback as well as the results of the tracking of the participants. This gave us the opportunity to modify the program and better tailor it to the needs of the participants. Among the important program modifications were:

- Gathering richer detail on the potential program participant's homelessness history, so that only those who were truly homeless in the past were entered into the program. We learned that the close social network of prisoners about to be released made some people exaggerate their homelessness history in order to enter the supportive housing program.
- Involving an employment specialist who was able to direct the participants into jobs that would accept felons.
- As the leases to the two double apartments ended, converting the double apartments into two single apartments, based on the fact that the participants in the single apartments had better outcomes than the participants in the shared apartments.
- No longer doing the drug screening on the participants after the initial drug screen when they entered the program (note: the drug screening is routinely conducted by parole and probation for those participants on parole or probation), thus separating the supportive housing from the supervision provided by parole and probation.
- Working with the parole officer in a collaborative basis and not taking on the supervisory role of the parole officer. The Supportive Housing Pilot Program case worker is seen as a treatment professional, rather than as another officer of the Department of Correction.
- Discussion of adding an aftercare worker so that people can be helped to find safe and affordable housing as they leave the program.

24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?

The Supportive Housing Pilot Program is administered by a large anti-poverty agency that has many services within it. Therefore, the participant has easy access to services including employment, behavioral health, and economic development. If a stand alone agency were to adopt this model, they would need to have referral sources in place in order to fully benefit the participant.

2007 Innovations Awards Program Program Categories and Subcategories

Use these as guidelines to determine the appropriate *Program Category* for your state's submission and list that program category on page one of this application. Choose only one.

Infrastructure and Economic Development

- Business/Commerce
- Economic Development
- Transportation

Government Operations

- Administration
- Elections
- Public Information
- Revenue

Health & Human Services

- Aging
- Children & Families
- Health Services
- Housing
- Human Services

Human Resources/Education

- Education
- Labor
- Management
- Personnel
- Training and Development
- Workforce Development

Natural Resources

- Agriculture
- Energy
- Environment
- Environmental Protection
- Natural Resources
- Parks & Recreation
- Water Resources

Public Safety/Corrections

- Corrections
- Courts
- Criminal Justice
- Drugs
- Emergency Management
- Public Safety

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CSG Innovations Awards 2007
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This application is also available at www.csg.org, in the Programs section.

Deadline: April 16, 2007