

# Ending Homelessness Through Housing First

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## What is housing first?

Housing first is a philosophy and program model that does not put conditions on housing.

### Key elements of any housing first program:

- Direct or near direct housing placement from streets or shelter
- Supportive services offered, but participation is not required to stay in housing
- Low demand methods of case management
- Effort to hold housing when client leaves program (short periods)

## Moving from a Housing Ready Model to a Housing First Model requires a fundamental change in how we think and how we work

- Most people who drink and/or use drugs are NOT homeless
- Most people with mental illness are NOT homeless

*Then why hold homeless to a higher standard?*

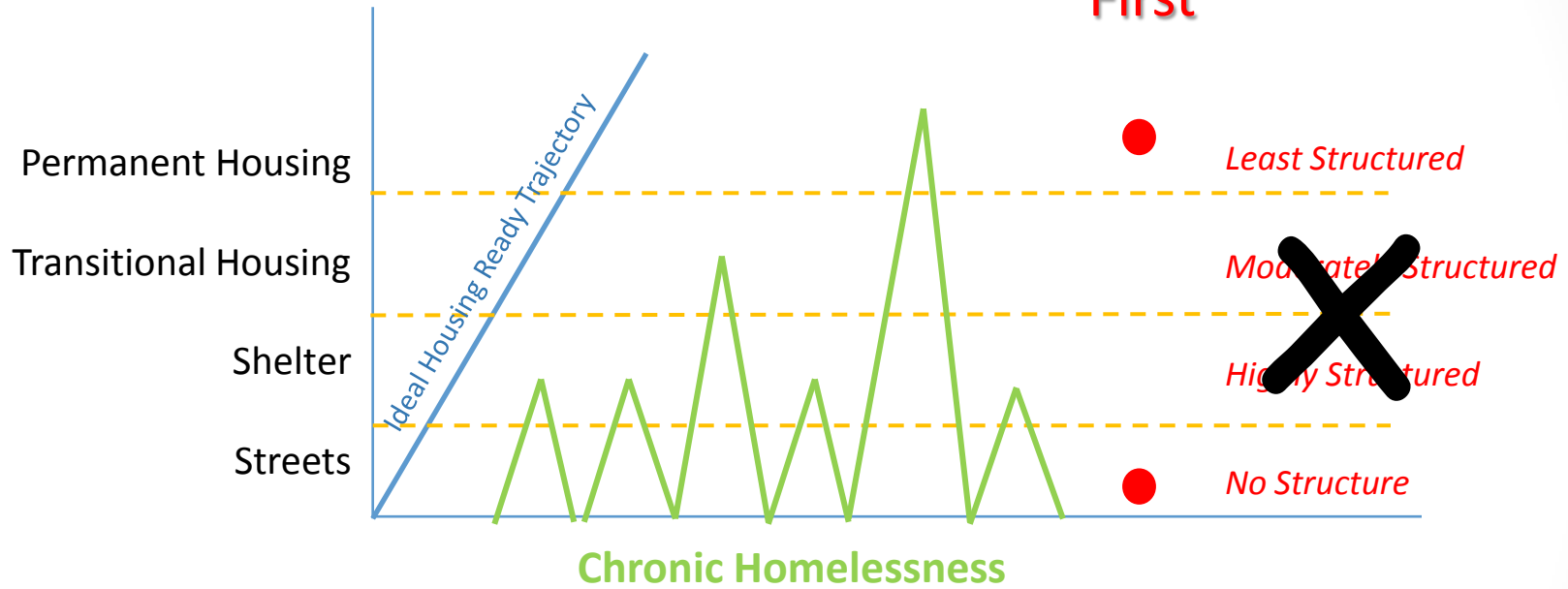
Dealing with behaviors that would cause termination in a Housing Ready model

*At the end of the day, they are NOT homeless*

Service Plans may look different

*Baby steps, focus on remaining housed*

# Housing First



TRANSITIONAL MODELS VS HOUSING FIRST

# Matt Urban Housing First Program

46 Scattered-Site Apartments, clients hold leases

Current:            14 Women, 12 came directly from the streets  
                         32 Men, 26 came directly from the streets

Terminations:    4 Voluntary; 4 Involuntary  
**Success rate of 92.45%**

Moves:            11 Moves!!!!

Income:            6 have no income  
                         5 individuals awarded SSI  
                         5 individuals are now employed

## OUR FOCUS

- Identifying and eliminating behaviors that jeopardize housing
- Assist with establishing an income or to maintain/increase an existing income
- Social Reintegration
  - Job Skills Development Program
  - Special Activities/Events

## REALITY

- Property damage
- Drug/Alcohol Abuse
- Abusive to staff & neighbors
- Arrests
- Poor budgeting
- Lots of cats!

# Jobs Skills Development Program

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The program began in August 2010

Focuses on abilities – not disabilities

To date, we have hosted 18 participants

Four are now working in the private sector

Pays a small monthly stipend

# Jobs Skills Development Program

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Food service job placement at the Hope Center's Urban Diner

Janitorial – Hope Center

Homeless outreach/human services training

Food service job placement at a partner agencies –  
Friends of Night People



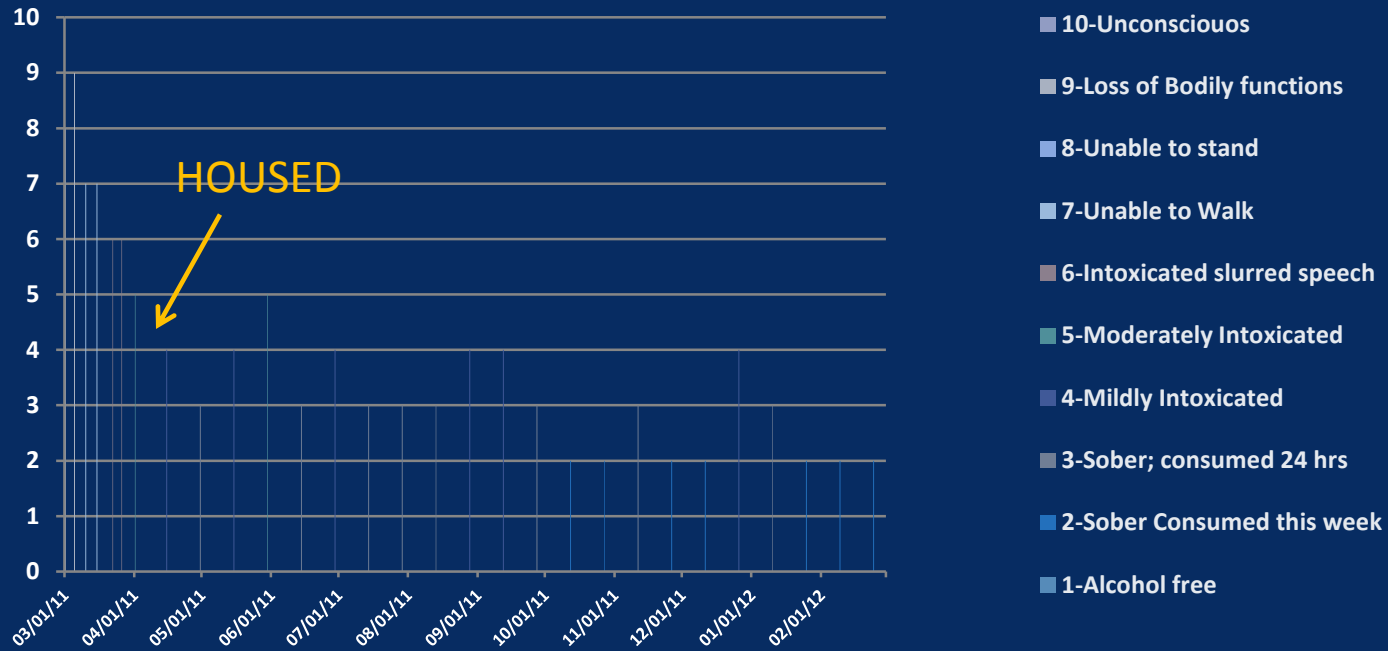
# MEASURING PROGRESS

*Do impairments improve once housed?*

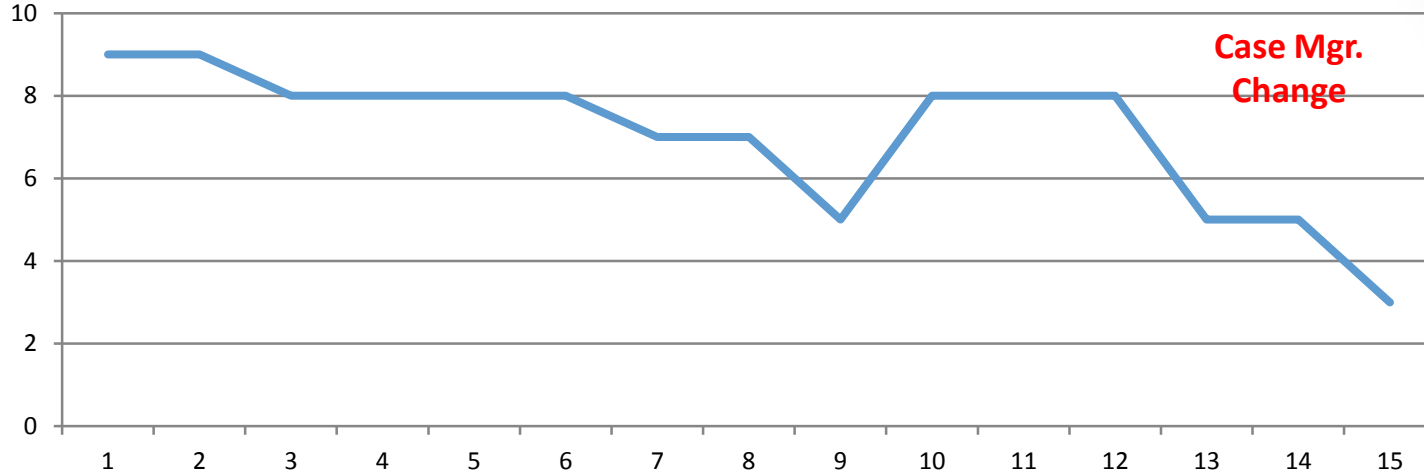
## Impairment scales measuring:

- ADL's
- Alcohol
- Behavior
- Chemical Addiction
- Housing Stability
- Lethality
- Medical
- Mood
- Socialization/inappropriate
- Socialization/Isolation

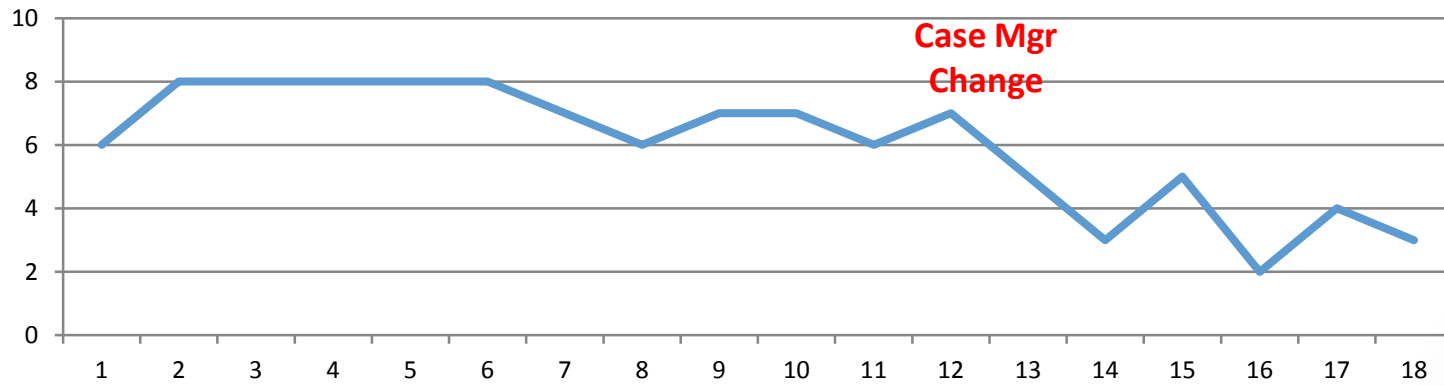
## IMPAIRMENT SCALE: ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION



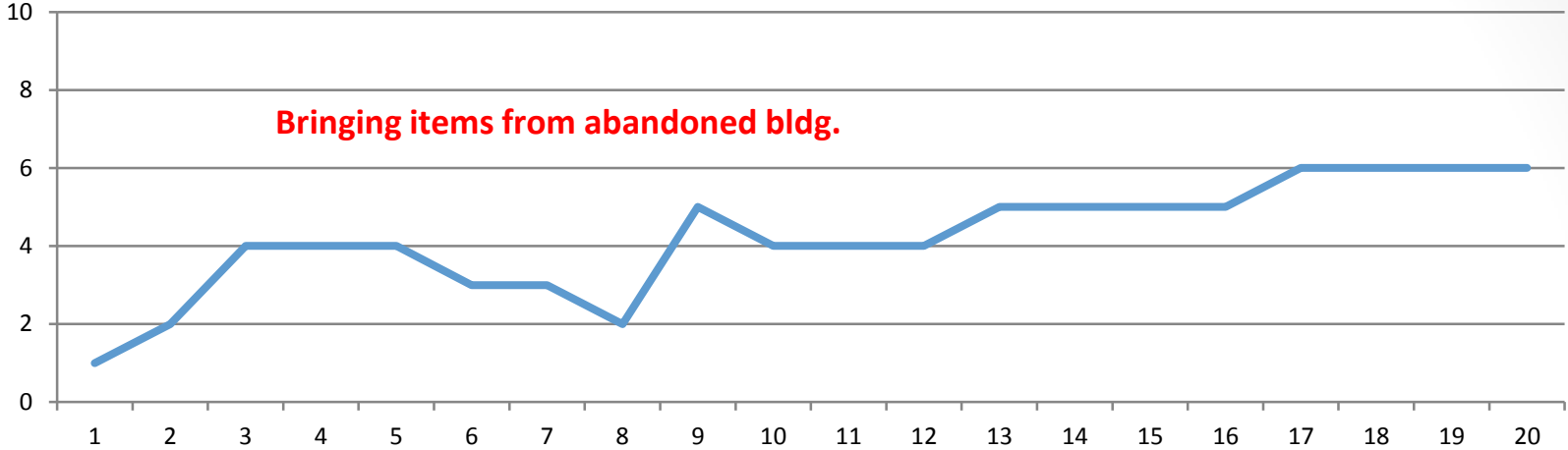
## CV: Socialization/Isolation



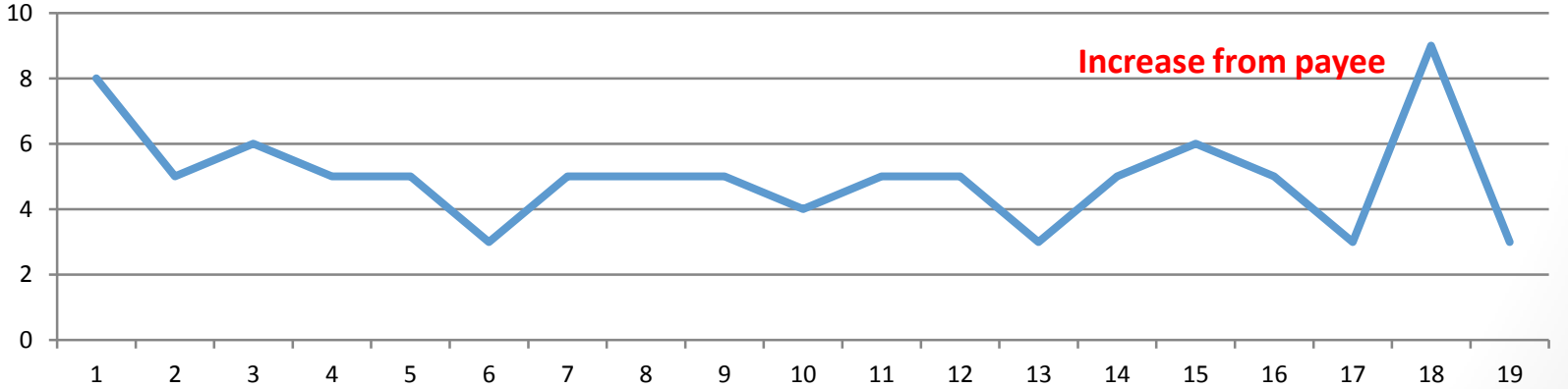
## RF: Behavior



### AO: ADL's



### AJ: Alcohol Consumption



## General Impairment Ratings

	Greatly Improved	Somewhat Improved	No change
Alcohol Consumption	5	5	2
MICA	5	13	4

# ***Lessons Learned***

Staff Training/Re-Training

Cultivate & educate landlords!

Budget for re-location

Furniture – buy from thrift stores (except bed)

Continued engagement is an essential element of housing first

Primary goal – keep them housed!

# READING MATERIAL

Pathways to Housing - NYC

Downtown Emergency Services Center (DESC ) – Seattle, Washington

Reaching Out & Engaging to Achieve Consumer Health (REACH) – San Diego, CA

## **The Applicability of Housing First Models to Homeless Persons with Serious Mental Illness**

Prepared for U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development – 2007

Carol L. Pearson,, PhD., Walter R. McDonald & Associates, Inc.

Gretchen Lock, Abt Associates Inc.,

Ann Elizabeth Montgomery, Walter R. McDonald & Associates,, Inc.

Larry Buron, PhD, Abt Associates

“Providing Housing First and Recovery Services for Homeless Adults with Severe Mental Illness”

Psychiatric Services: <http://ps.psychiatryonline.org> – October 2005; Vol. 56, No. 10