

Talking Points: Housing & Homeless Services

3 Key Messages:

Who is Integral Care? Integral Care supports adults and children living with mental illness, substance use disorder and intellectual and developmental disabilities in Travis County.

How does Integral Care support the homeless community in Travis County? Integral Care has supported our homeless community for 20 years. We believe in the philosophy of housing first and use housing as a health intervention. With a safe place to live and appropriate support services, recovery from homelessness, mental health issues and substance use disorder begins.

How does supporting the homeless impact public resources? People living on the streets who experience mental illness, substance use disorder and chronic health conditions often use crisis and emergency services because they don't have a regular source of health care. This is expensive for the community. Housing with rehabilitation supports creates long-term stability, improves health and is more cost effective due to decreased utilization of health services.

How does Integral Care support the homeless community in Travis County?

- Integral Care has supported our homeless community for 20 years with a goal of moving people from the streets into housing as quickly as possible.
- Integral Care's philosophy is housing first. We use housing as a health intervention. With a safe place to live and appropriate support services, recovery from homelessness, mental health issues and substance use disorder begins.
- Integral Care has specialized teams that provide support to individuals from homeless to housed.
 - Integral Care builds relationships with individuals living on the street in order to connect them to services that support their mental and physical health – providing direct care both in the community and at our clinics.
 - Once housed, Integral Care provides ongoing care to individuals in their new homes – either owned by Integral Care or privately-owned apartments in the community.
- When someone has access to tools like housing to regain health and independence, counseling and a community to support emotional health, primary care to improve physical health, and drug and alcohol treatment to help with recovery, they can reach their full potential and contribute to the community.

Does Integral Care provide housing?

- Integral Care has been providing housing services in our community since the 1980s. Our housing programs provide access to housing and support services to nearly 500 individuals.
- Integral Care's newly opened Terrace at Oak Springs is a unique 50-unit apartment community that includes furnished, single occupancy efficiency apartments and an onsite integrated health care clinic. We have 24/7 onsite staffing, an onsite laundry facility, an outdoor green space, and a community room with a library and computers. Terrace at Oak Springs is modeled after other successful Housing First programs across the country and the first of its kind in Central Texas.

How will Terrace at Oak Springs impact public resources?

- People living on the streets who experience mental illness, substance use disorder and chronic health conditions often use crisis and emergency services because they don't have a regular source of health care. This is expensive for the community. Providing housing and rehabilitation supports creates long-term stability, better health and is more cost effective due to decreased utilization of health services such as EMS transport and hospital stays.
- An analysis of 39 people housed for 12 months and provided wraparound services showed significant reductions in encounters with law enforcement and decreased utilization of health services such as EMS transport and hospital stays.
 - 71% fewer inpatient psychiatric hospital stays
 - 29% fewer inpatient medical hospital stays
 - 51% fewer days spent incarcerated
- The annual average cost of clinical and emergency services used by a person experiencing chronic homelessness is estimated at \$50,000. When someone is housed, there's a minimum annual savings to the community of \$20,000 in reduced shelter usage, hospital stays, emergency room visits and nights in jail

Does Integral Care partner with anyone to support the homeless community?

- Great things happen when partners come together for the health of our community.
- Integral Care partners with ECHO, Foundation Communities, Mobile Loaves and Fishes, Austin Police Department, EMS, Downtown Austin Community Court, City of Austin, Housing Authority of the City of Austin, Austin Public Library and many more to support the health and well-being of individuals experiencing homelessness in our community.

What is Housing First?

- Housing First is an evidence-based model that offers permanent supportive housing to address the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness, who also live with mental illness, substance use disorder and/or other chronic health conditions.
- Permanent supportive housing is a type of affordable housing that includes ongoing support services, such as case management, primary and mental health care, substance use treatment and employment services. It is designed for individuals with disabilities (including mental illness) who need housing assistance and ongoing support to live healthy, stable, independent lives in the community.
- Housing First is a proven solution for people who have experienced chronic homelessness. This model removes barriers to housing that have contributed to people experiencing chronic homelessness in communities across the United States. Chronic homelessness persists in our community because people experience barriers to housing.
- Housing First has been used successfully across the United States in cities like New York, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles and Portland, ME.
- At least 92% of individuals remain housed for 12 months or longer.

Who is Integral Care?

- Integral Care helps people build health and well-being so everyone has the foundation to reach their full potential.
- We support adults and children living with mental illness, substance use disorder and intellectual and developmental disabilities in Travis County.
- Our services include a 24-hour helpline for anyone who needs immediate support, ongoing counseling to improve mental health, drug and alcohol treatment to help with recovery, and housing to regain health and independence.
- Integral Care helps provide a strong foundation for well-being.
- Founded in 1967, we are the Local Mental Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority for Travis County.