

Peninsula RSN Housing Plan Update: September 2011

Purpose and Goals

Peninsula RSN is committed to helping consumers obtain safe and affordable housing in the most independent setting possible given each consumer's individual skills and needs. With this goal in mind, the providers within PRSN have a wide range of residential and support services available for consumers.

PRSN and its providers will, as resources allow, continue to develop residential resources that meet our consumers' needs while helping them obtain the skills necessary for more independent housing, with the following goals in mind:

- Consumers will have access to housing at the most independent level possible based on their individual needs.
- Housing will be both safe and affordable.
- There will be a focus on consumer choice regarding type and location of housing.
- When consumers are hospitalized providers will work toward helping consumers maintain housing.
- Providers will provide advocacy for consumers in both obtaining and retaining housing.
- Providers will continue to assess each consumer's life skills to determine their needs.
- The RSN and providers will pursue subsidies and additional funds that increase access to community housing.

Current Resources

PRSN providers are responsible for four distinct geographical areas across three counties. Provider agencies are between one and a half to four hours apart from each other. For this reason, the RSN asks each provider to describe the resources and development plans for their areas separately. This is done through a housing survey sent to each provider (last completed September 2011). The results of this survey are included as Attachments 1a and 1b.

In addition to other community resources, the providers within PRSN currently have the following housing resources available:

- Boarding Home (1 operated by a CMHC)
- ARTF (1 operated by CMHC)
- Supported Housing and Co-Occurring Supported Housing (Some units owned or leased by CMHCs)

- Section 8 Apartments
- Emergency Shelters for families, individuals, and couples
- Rent and utility assistance
- Housing repair assistance
- Stabilization services

See Attachments 1a and 1b for specifics on each geographical area.

Analysis of Barriers to Independent Housing

The RSN's plans to develop housing options for consumers is contingent not only upon available resources and funding, but on the needs of consumers. A recent survey (September 2011) of agency housing specialists within PRSN indicated common themes around barriers to obtaining and maintaining consumer housing. The following is a list of the most common themes:

Cost: In many areas the rent is higher than most consumers can afford. Also, the closing of the Section 8 list is an ongoing problem.

Suitable Neighborhoods: Often the cheapest rent is in unsafe neighborhoods. Another related problem is consumers having drug users or others over to the property, which results in damage, complaints, etc.

Rental History: Many consumers have a poor rental history including an inability to pay rent or maintain the property.

Criminal History: Consumers with a criminal history are difficult to place.

Current Functioning: Some consumers are currently unable to maintain the unit. They also miss appointments and other responsibilities.

Coordination with Other Organizations Around Housing Issues

The RSN's providers are extensively involved in coordinating with other housing organizations in each area of the region. These efforts include the 10 year plan to end homelessness, local housing committees, and statewide efforts. A complete list for each agency is included in Attachment 1a.

The RSN also takes part in ad hoc interventions with local governments and state agencies around appropriate housing for consumers. PRSN participates in the Housing Consortium on a regular basis as well.

Additional Funding

The providers within PRSN have sought additional funding to help consumers maintain independent housing. A portion of this comes from Federal Block Grant monies dedicated by the RSN for housing projects. Each agency makes a proposal for the use of this funding to the RSN. A summary of the current Federal Block Grant monies dedicated to housing is included as Attachment 2.

Future Plans (updated September 2011)

The RSN's plan to increase housing options available to consumers involves the use of Federal Block Grant funds as well as other local and state funding. Plans not involving Federal Block Grant funding include those being pursued by providers are detailed in Attachments 1a and 1b.

A summary of the RSNs future plans for Federal Block Grant funds as proposed in the FY 2011-12 Federal Block Grant application is included in Attachment 2.