Developing Housing Support

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Corporation for Supportive Housing Mission

CSH helps communities create

permanent housing with services to

prevent and end homelessness.

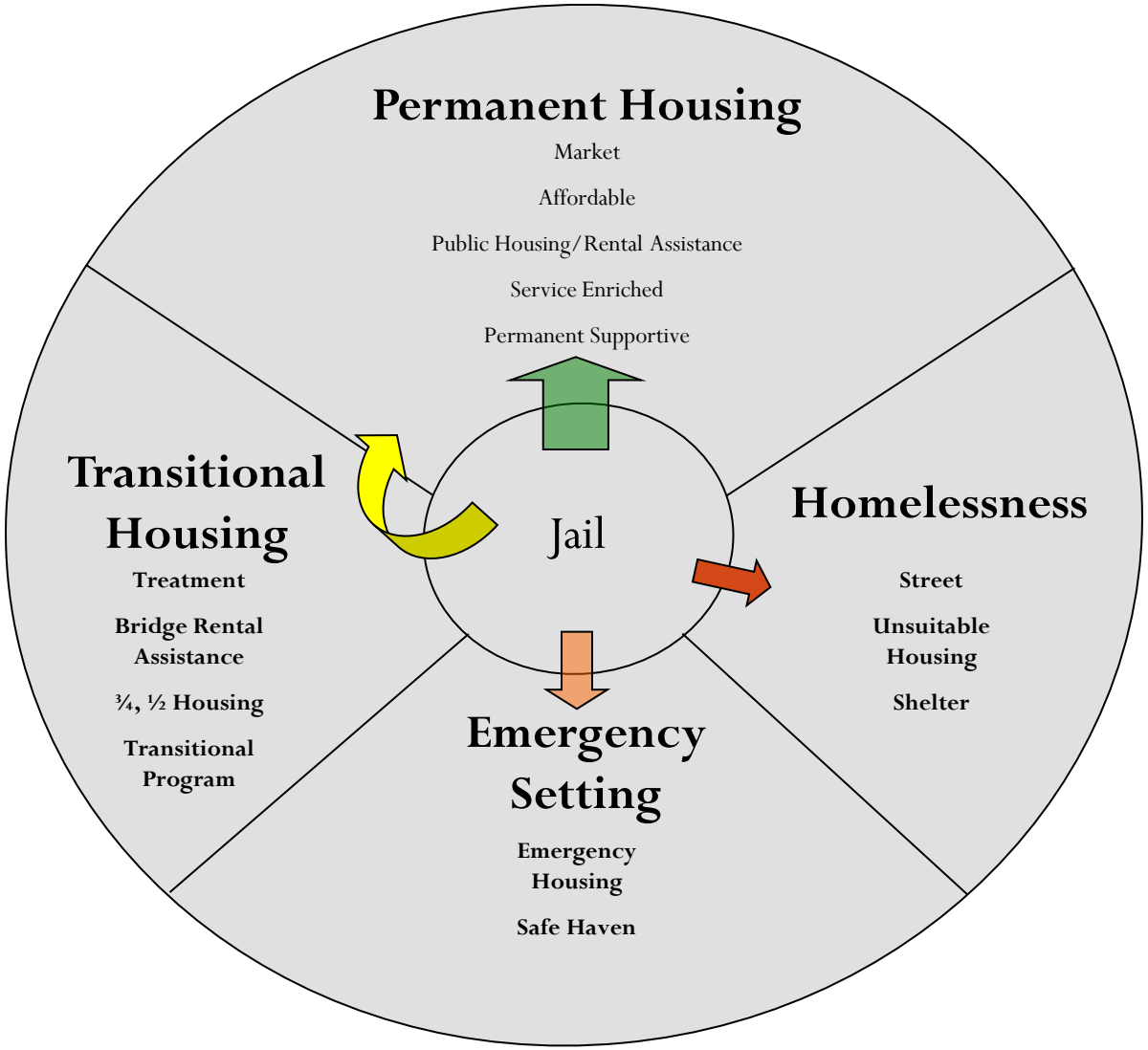
Overview

- Where does housing fit in successful strategies for reentry?
- Housing options
- Promising practices and evidence about what works
  - Supportive housing as an alternative to the revolving door
- Where to begin?
  - Leveraging resources and opportunities

Goals of Reentry Housing

- Help people returning from incarceration
  - Prevent and end homelessness
  - Achieve housing stability
  - Reunify with families
  - Become better neighbors
- Help systems and communities
  - Reduce costs and consequences of homelessness and recidivism

Potential Residential Outcomes Post-Incarceration



Homelessness and Incarceration

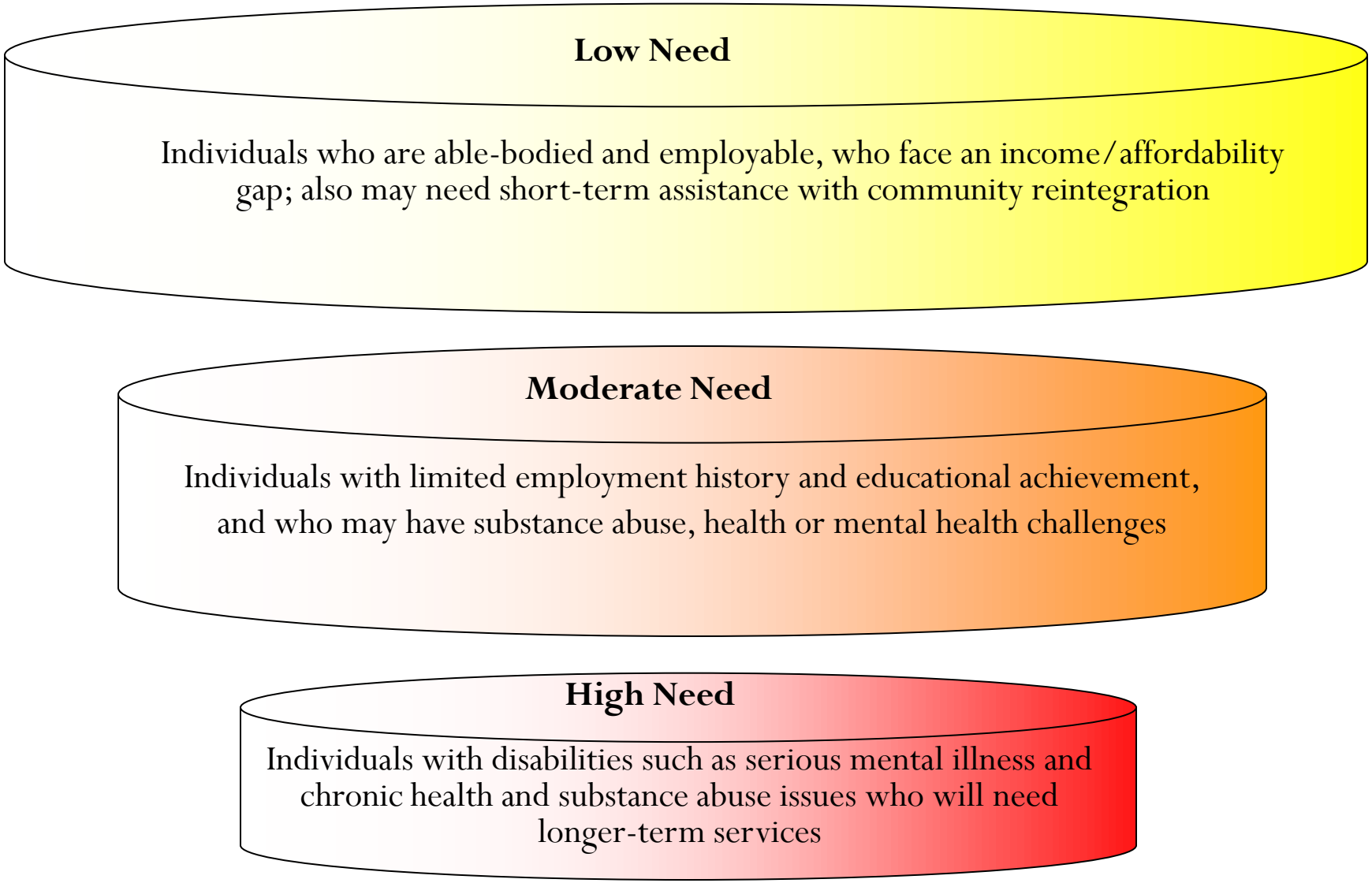
Revolving Door

- 26% of people in jail were homeless within past year
- Homeless people with mental illness and/or severe alcoholism spend years on a costly "institutional circuit"
- Promising early results from supportive housing programs target frequent users of jails & shelters & hospitals

Re-entry Transitions

- More than 60,000 people enter shelters from jail or prison each year
- Most coming from prison stay for only a few days and do not return to shelter
- Potential to convert and focus some shelter capacity with targeted services for reentry?

Targeting housing interventions to match needs



Strategies for Housing Access

Linkages from Incarceration to the Community

- Advance Discharge Planning
- Benefits and Housing Application and Enrollment
- Prison and Jail "In-reach" Collaborations
- Correctional and Community Health Linkages

Strategies for Housing Access

Working with Public Housing Authorities and Landlords

- Understand eligibility for federal housing programs
  - Public housing
  - Housing Choice Vouchers
  - Targeted programs for special needs populations
- Tenant screening and policies regarding criminal backgrounds
- Mitigate risks (real and perceived)
  - Reliable supportive services partnerships
  - Rent-loss reserves
- Cultivate network of housing providers and landlords

Supportive Housing Is…

Permanent affordable housing with combined supports for independent living

- Housing is **permanent**, meaning each tenant may stay as long as he or she pays rent and complies with terms of lease or rental agreement
- Housing is **affordable**, meaning each tenant pays no more than 30% to 50% of household income
- Tenants have **access to an array of support services** that are intended to support housing stability, recovery and resiliency, but participation in support services is not a requirement for tenancy
- May be site-based or scattered site
- Options available for adults who are single, those who choose to share housing, and families with children

The "Institutional Circuit" A Revolving Door

- While many individuals experience some form of homelessness or residential instability after prison or jail, recent research has identified a subset of individuals who repeatedly enter prison or jail
- These individuals have a high likelihood of using other services at a high level including:
  - Substance abuse services (esp. crisis/detox)
  - Inpatient mental health services
  - Hospital emergency departments
  - Homeless shelters
- Not served well by any system of care, but use them all in an uncoordinated, chaotic, and costly fashion

What is Needed to Create Reentry Housing?

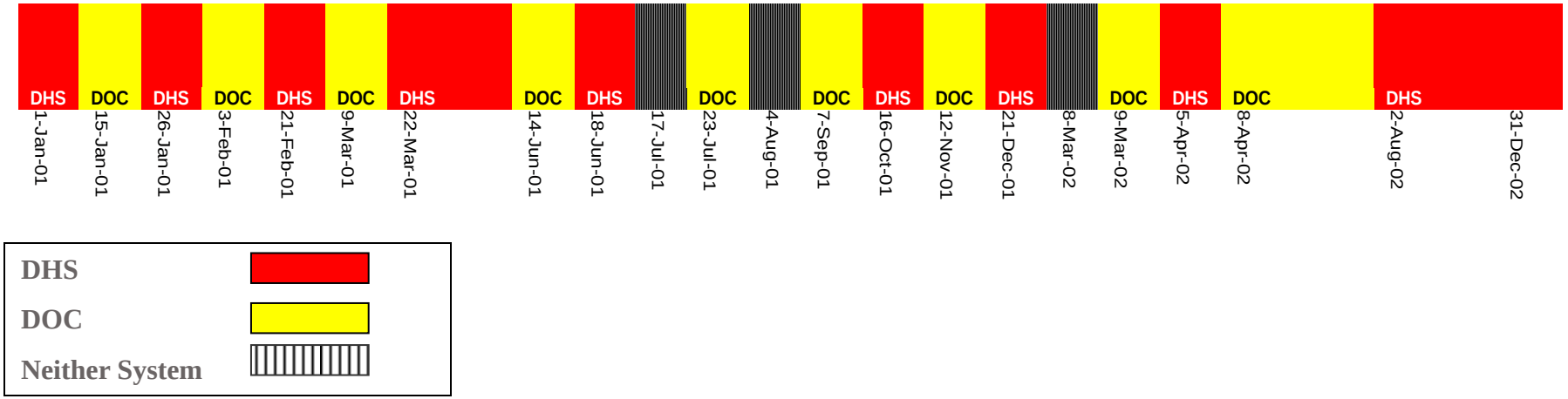
- Hands-on government involvement
- Non-profit partners that with strong commitment
- Data and Research
- Baseline operating and service resources
- Foundation support to galvanize partners and spur public investment
- Clear sense of who you are targeting for housing
  - Housing options that match needs and goals
- Clinical practices that reflect the specific challenges
  - Persistent "in-reach" and upfront engagement of individuals prior to placement
  - Shift in provider practice from passive tenant selection to active recruitment
  - Flexibility to use funds creatively to address population needs, transportation, recreation, peer support
  - Evidence-based service models

New York City's Frequent Users of Jail and Shelter

Target population

- Approximately 1,100 individuals at any point in time that have at least 4 jail stays and 4 shelter stays over the past five years
- These individuals cycle constantly and persistently with relatively short stays per episode
- The following figure illustrates an extreme case of jail-shelter cycling over a two-year period:

Frequent User Case Study



Frequent User Services Enhance (FUSE)

- Foundation grant funding provided FUSE service enhancements in the amount of $6,500 per unit (total of $650,000) on condition that the City would pick up funding if the program was proven to be successful
- Uses include:
  - client engagement/recruitment (inreach to shelters and jails)
  - intensive case management
  - clinical supervision
  - lower client-to-case manager ratios
  - fund dedicated FUSE service staff to provide intensive support during first year of housing
  - additional specialty services

Single-Site with Front-Loaded Intensive Services

- Buildings operated by non-profits as special needs housing, but usually with mixed tenancy
- On-site services include case management, mental health services, independent living skills, and benefits coordination
- FUSE tenants are mixed with other formerly homeless or low-income tenants
  - Non-profit landlord accommodates tenant challenges
  - Given intensive support, but without special label or attention

Scattered-Site with Front-Loaded Intensive Services

- Scatter-site housing situations are market-rate apartments subsidized with rental assistance (Section 8)
  - Apartments master-leased by the provider and sub-leased to tenants
  - Places service provider in position of "middleman" between private landlord and tenant
- Services are provided through mobile case management teams or staff
  - Case management and ILS assistance provided at tenants' apartments
  - Mental health or substance services provided at a central program office
- Placement in private-market apartment buildings facilitates "normalization," but creates service delivery challenges

Does FUSE change behavior?

- An evaluation of the first 12 months following the first 86 people placed through FUSE showed:
  - 91% housing retention
  - 53% reduction in jail days utilized
  - 92% reduction in shelter days utilized
  - 33 exceeded their CTP (94%)

- Using a comparison group analysis positive indicators for all indicators studied:
  - # of arrest *
  - # shelter admittance **
  - Jail days utilized*
  - Shelter days utilized**
  - community survival**

*** positive trend versus comparison **statistically significant trend versus comparison**

Supportive Housing Works

1. According to a study of Denver's *Road Home* Housing First effort, people placed into supportive housing had a **76% reduction** in days spent incarcerated. Significant reductions were also reported in emergency room visits, detox, psychiatric care, and shelter use.

2. A study of supportive housing in the State of Maine found a **62% reduction** in incarceration for people placed into supportive housing.

3. In Seattle, studies of supportive housing at 1811 Eastlake demonstrate:
   - 52% reduction in jail bookings
   - 45% reductions in days spent in jail

4. After six months of New York City's supportive housing reentry program:
   - 89% of tenants remained stably housed.
   - 100% of tenants avoided return to shelter.
   - 89% of tenants avoided return to jail.

"Placing people into supportive housing costs about half as much as keeping someone in jail or prison, while also promoting public safety and improving life outcomes for people"

- Martin F. Horn, former Commissioner of New York City Department of Correction

Leveraging Resources & Opportunities

Partnerships with Public Housing Authorities

- More flexible policies and procedures for new and returning tenants
  - understand what the law *requires* and *allows*
- Develop transitional and permanent reentry housing
- Make re-entry housing part of planning for housing and neighborhood revitalization

Leveraging Resources & Opportunities

Targeted resources may be available

- Breaking the cycle of homelessness and incarceration
- Veterans
  - VASH
  - Veterans Justice Outreach Specialists
  - Health Care for Reentry Veterans
- People with HIV/AIDS
- Families with children
  - Homeless or at risk of homelessness
  - Reunifying with children in foster care
- People with disabilities