



## F.A.Q.s

### Who are the chronically homeless?

Santa Barbara County's chronically homeless population is composed of single adults and families with children who have

- a disabling condition
- been continuously homeless for a year or more *or* have had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years
- been sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g. living on the streets) or in an emergency shelter during that time.

It is estimated that there are 900 chronically homeless individuals in Santa Barbara County.

### Homelessness in Santa Barbara County

- Each year more than 6,300 people within the SBCR experience homelessness
- On any given night, over 4,000 people are homeless
- Within Santa Barbara County, spending on homelessness now surpasses \$36 million per year<sup>a</sup>

### The Effect of Chronic Homelessness

Based on nationwide research, it is estimated:

- 10-15% of the homeless population is chronically homeless
- The chronically homeless consume 50% to 65% of the resources directed towards aiding homeless people

As a conservative estimate for Santa Barbara County, that is 945 people consuming over \$18 million in services and other assistance annually – and still remaining unstable, un-housed, and without any hope of real change.

### The national movement

As part of a national initiative and based on proven models over 200 communities across the nation have completed plans and enacted reforms to end chronic homelessness with many more such plans currently in development.

### Local participation

The County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors and the Mayors and City Councils of five cities in the county have unanimously supported the drafting of The Plan. Over 100 community members including business persons, government officials, nonprofit social services staff, funders, and interested citizens have been involved in the writing this document.

### Strategies of Ten-Year Plan

The Plan does not advocate building a new system of care where none existed before. Rather, it is through the intelligent redirection of existing resources, collaboration and coordination to minimize inefficiencies, and development of new partnerships that success will be achieved. The hallmark of this Plan is the unprecedented coordinated approach to planning, funding, and delivering housing and services to people who experience homelessness throughout Santa Barbara County.

**Prevention and Intervention:** Catch people at-risk and stop the pattern of chronic homelessness before it begins.

- Enhance transition services and discharge planning from public institutions
- Creation of Transition Teams
- Establish transition centers in Santa Barbara, Isla Vista, Santa Maria and Lompoc
- Encourage early landlord/tenant mediation
- Intervention for those at-risk of chronic homelessness
- Encourage better planning and services for correctional facility discharges



**Outreach, Engagement and Supportive Services:** Provide diverse and appropriate care that meets the chronically homeless “where they are” and nurtures lasting, stable relationships.

- Develop “relationship first” Model of Care
- Establish street outreach capacity (minimum 2-person team available 24/7)
- Establish integrated services teams linked to housing
- Coordinate efforts between Outreach Team and Integrated Services Teams
- Create community centers in the South Coast, Santa Maria and Lompoc to house teams and operate as safe havens for short-term housing
- Provide a variety of services and treatment
- Increase resources for treatment and service providers through Medi-Cal and Medicare
- Instigate systems change to support outreach strategies

**Permanent Supportive Housing: Increase, build and preserve affordable permanent supportive housing through rehabilitation, new development and rental subsidies.**

- Increase permanent supportive housing by 60 beds County-wide during first year; 500 by year five and 1,200 by year ten
- Connect housing to services and treatment through Integrated Services Teams
- Provide immediate, short-term basic housing assistance while housing applications are being processed.
- Foster residential stability to retain housing
- Create Model of Care collaboration among agencies
- Advocate for change in the regulatory environment to accommodate the creation of housing for chronically homeless persons.
- Engage in state and federal advocacy to support housing strategies.

**Economic Self-Sufficiency:** Provide for long-term housing stability by increasing incomes through vocational opportunity and financial benefit access.

- Increase immediate benefits access for chronically homeless people in all programs which they are eligible
- Conduct assessments, including past work history, educational background and social and skills assessments every 6 months
- Provide employment after stabilizing housing
- Foster volunteerism
- Support employment
- Utilize and adapt existing employment resources
- Tailor work to client
- Create jobs through the development of social enterprise
- Engage in State and Federal advocacy to support economic self-sufficiency

**Financial Sustainability:** Create stable funding streams to support The Plan.

- Generate an annual finance plan
- Establish mechanism to track expenditures on chronic homelessness
- Foster effective spending and recapture savings
- Secure resources from all sources, including government, philanthropy and business
- Engage philanthropy leadership and donors to support implementation of The Plan
- Identify resources that can reduce implementation of The Plan
- Engage in State and Federal advocacy to support funding for housing, services and treatment

**Implementation and Coordination:** Develop leadership and collaboration to see The Plan through

- Create oversight and implementation body with power to command resources and determine policy
- Provide full-time staffing to support implementation of The Plan
- Support leadership in championing the campaign
- Develop and adhere to public report schedule on Plan development, implementation and progress
- Support Plan implementation by medial and public relations effort
- Measure outcomes and continuously apply lessons learned to improve The Plan
- Update The Plan annually
- Generate system-wide cultural shift among organization working with chronically homeless
- Engage in State and Federal advocacy to support implementation strategies

(Endnotes)

- a Heroux, Roger. “A Report on Homelessness Services in the County of Santa Barbara.” 2006.