



# Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities

## Georgia Housing Voucher and Bridge Funding Programs

SFY 2014 Year In Review



## Settlement Agreement Requirements

To provide Supported Housing and Bridge Funding to persons with Serious and Persistent Mental Illness.

- **Priority**
  - those currently being served in the State Hospitals
  - frequently readmitted to the State Hospitals
  - frequently seen in Emergency Rooms
  - chronically homeless
  - and/or who are being released from jails or prisons.



## ■ Program Design

- Patterned after HUD Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and “Housing First” models
- Lease in individual’s name
- FMR rent standard with a utility allowance
- 30% of individual's income towards housing cost
- Must meet Housing Quality Standards (HQS)
- Housing separate from service compliance



100 Served by July 1, 2011

Result: 117

117% of Goal

500 Served by July 1, 2012

Result: 624

125% of Goal

800 Served by July 1, 2013

Result: 1,001

125% of Goal

1,400 Served by July 1, 2014

Result: 1,638

117% of Goal

2,000 Served by July 1, 2015

Current Status: 1,947

97% of Goal



# Referrals

	2011	2012	2013	2014	
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>%</u>
Homeless	17%	<b>47%</b>	50%	880	47%
Intensive	<b>41%</b>	21%	16%	273	15%
Hospitals	7%	9%	<b>17%</b>	296	16%
Families	22%	9%	8%	240	13%
Prisons	0 %	0%	0%	48	<b>2%</b>
Other	13%	14%	9%	125	7%



## GHVP Status Report

■ Total Authorized for Housing	2,316
■ Total Number Served	1,947
■ Current in GHVP Supported Leases	1,347
■ Total Program Months	27,593
■ Approved and Looking for Housing	184
■ Number of Properties	773
■ Number of Providers	64
■ Number of Individuals Transferred to DCA HCV	124
■ Number of Counties out of 156	74



## Performance Measures

Housing Stability (# Staying after 6 months/# > 6 months in Housing) 1,266/1,387 91%

- DBHDD/HUD Standard 77%
- Above (Below) DBHDD/HUD Standard 14%

Reengagement (# Successfully Engaged/# of “Negative Leavers”) 67/342 20%

- DBHDD Standard 10%
- Above (Below) Standard 10%



- Long Term Housing Stability: includes individuals stability housed upon exit (Section 8 transfers and those that left under positive circumstances)
  
- SFY 2011 Program Participants      87 out of 117      75%
- SFY 2012 Program Participants      371 out of 494      75%
- SFY 2013 Program Participants      294 out of 372      89%
- SFY 2014 Program Participants      592 out of 655      90%
- Total Placed      1,646 out of 1,947      85%





## Bridge Funding SFY 2012 – SFY 2014

	% of Funds	Total Spent
■ Provider Fee	21%	\$975,802
■ Furnishings	26%	\$1,216,245
■ Household Items	8%	\$393,544
■ Utility Deposits	6%	\$271,598
■ Security Deposits	10%	\$473,759
■ 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Month Rent	26%	\$1,178,870
■ Other	3%	<u>\$234,105</u>
	Total	\$4,743,925



## ■ GHVP's Strategic Value

- As a “first in” resource, GHVP with its ability to quickly react and forge immediate cooperative relationships, can then bring other main stream resources (e.g. HCV) to bear, minimizing risk to those programs, or disrupting their more defined policies and procedures.
  - VASH: Bridge funding used to place 65 individuals using the VA's rental assistance program.
  - Community Initiatives with PHAs, CoCs, local governments (Augusta, Savannah, Columbus, Atlanta)
  - Grant Opportunities



## Keys to Success

- Leadership, capacity, staff, and decision making authority at the regional level.
  - Regional Transitional Coordinators, they make the whole system work. They know in many cases the individuals involved, provider strengths, they problem solve issues with property owners, and speak “housing” and “support service” languages. Transition Coordinators are actively involved in Continuums of Care homeless programs, local planning initiatives, and jail and prison discharge efforts.



## Keys to Success

- Strong coordination between PATH teams (People Assisting The Homeless) and ACT teams (Assertive Community Treatment) creating a seamless system of homeless outreach, service coordination, and housing (Atlanta including partnership with United Way).
- Referral system based on meeting the individual's needs.
- Strong hospital discharge planning infrastructure made up of hospital staff, transition coordinators, and providers expediting housing placements.
- Expedited transfer of funds by DBHDD accounting staff to Cobb CSB (DBHDD contracted third party financial intermediary) to pay property owners and providers meeting a net 15 day standard.



## ■ Housing Supply

- From the program's very beginning, the property owners are willing to accept rental assistance from DBHDD.
- Upon entry 45% have no income
- Need property owners willing to include utilities in rent
- +95% require a one bedroom apartment, limited supply in some markets
- Net FMR rent after utility allowance limits availability
- Need at times to exceed rent standard to get individual away from less than desirable neighborhoods
- Need to expand number of willing property owners in every market.



- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) “Safe Harbor” letter
  - Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is the balance of state HCV provider with 16,000 vouchers in 149 counties. HUD approved DCA’s preference for those individuals covered under the DOJ Settlement Agreement.
  - The preference will apply through July 1, 2015. “We leave open the possibility that DCA may apply for approval to renew this preference if necessary for ongoing remedial purposes” Note: HUD may allow housing authorities a permanent preference.
  - “We remain committed to assisting Georgia’s efforts to implement its Settlement Agreement with the DOJ and to assisting DCA in your efforts to implement this remedial program in order to ensure that persons with disabilities transitioning from institutions or at risk of institutionalization have access to affordable, integrated housing.”



## Future Challenges

- Working with the Department of Corrections/jails to create the necessary transition infrastructure to move those with SPMI from the prison system that require housing support and are ineligible for other forms of assistance.
  - Transition Coordinators “embedded” in DoC transition facilities in Valdosta and Zebulon.
  - Transition Coordinator in Fulton and Dekalb jail transition efforts with jail, provider, Atlanta Legal Aid as partners.



## ■ Challenges

- Programmatic evaluation that measures GHVP's impact on homelessness, hospital utilization, emergency room visits, and incarceration.
- Transition to the *Administrative Service Organization*
- Moving from a “production” to a “maintenance” program.
- Outreach to other Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) for disability preference.
- “Wellness” checks for those no longer actively involved with a service provider.





## ■ Implementation Strategies

- “Mental Health First Aid” to property managers to gain wider property owner acceptance of target population.
- “Housing 101” training to providers to increase knowledge of other community resources.
- Regional “Boot Camps” to bring wide range of stakeholders together to create unified streamlined local systems together.
- Encourage a Georgia Supportive Housing Conference to examine strategies annually.
- Regular reporting to the wider advocate community and Georgia General Assembly on progress.