

MRT Affordable Housing Workgroup

Steven C. Bussey

to:

affordable

11/07/2011 05:44 PM

Cc:

"Mark L. Kissinger"

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Mark,

Sorry for the delay. I sent this information last week to Maclain who was compiling a list to present on behalf of the Supportive Housing Network.

The following are some of my thoughts on barriers:

1. The fact that supportive housing is permanent is an advantage to tenants but a major weakness of the system because once someone moves in they can stay forever and thus no additional housing can be provided until additional inventory is built. We need to create more low income housing so that clients can move on from supportive housing and thereby remove the bottleneck for new entrants. The lack of affordable housing prohibits tenants of supportive housing from moving on.

Ted's presentation includes this line: "Require all publicly-funded affordable housing development to include supportive units." This is an excellent idea, and I think it should be taken a step further whereby current supportive housing tenants are given priority status for a portion of regular affordable units in all publicly-funded affordable housing. This would allow supportive housing tenants who are ready for greater independence to move on, thus freeing up resources for others.

2. Ted's presentation shows that development of NYNYIII congregate housing is significantly behind schedule. There are many barriers with developing new congregate housing: the length of time needed to develop new congregate housing is significant (approx 5 years); major funding is needed upfront to build new housing; and many congregate housing sites tend to be located in high-crime neighborhoods without a lot of amenities, essentially segregating clients from the greater community. SHNNY won't agree with this, because they strongly support new development, but we put too many resources in congregate housing.
3. Unlike other populations, HASA-eligible clients have access to HASA rent subsidies which are portable. One recommendation to promote moving on from supportive housing should be for HASA to update (increase) the rent payment limits they will approve (not updated since 2003).
4. NIMBYism is indeed a barrier, and I think that all government agencies that fund supportive housing in New York must take a stronger leadership role with siting and addressing community resistance by articulating publicly the effectiveness of supportive housing, encouraging community support of new programs, and advocating for supportive housing as a key public health intervention.

Best regards,

Steven C. Bussey

Chief Executive Officer

Harlem United Community AIDS Center, Inc.

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