National Needs Assessment

This first of its kind national needs assessment of supportive housing was developed by looking at data across a spectrum of public systems. Supportive housing is affordable housing with flexible services that help vulnerable people access and maintain the housing and community supports needed to live independent and dignified lives. It is focused on addressing the needs of vulnerable individuals and families that are often disconnected from community, receiving services inefficiently delivered from multiple systems, or in crisis and institutional settings. It is a subset of the much larger affordable and private housing markets, and represents a small but critical portion of housing and services needs nationally. Supportive housing uses a holistic approach to bridge these gaps and make communities, stronger, safer, and healthier, often reducing public costs and improving the quality of life.

How We Approached It

This assessment is a compilation of point in time, or census, counts of people involved in multiple public systems that have needs consistent with supportive housing. It is a snapshot, a picture of supportive housing need as it appears today. In order to avoid duplication, it does not show need over time in each individual system or project broader trends, although this is an area for future data development. It draws on the best data available, attempting to be transparent and clear about how and where we are estimating needs.

CSH is committed to expanding and refining this work over time. This assessment is an invitation to stakeholders to join that conversation, sharing input and ideas. CSH is committed to transparency and collaboration to incorporate new data and use it to address the unmet needs of some of our nation’s most fragile and vulnerable individuals and families.

For more information, please visit www.csh.org/data.
ESSENTIAL PARTNERS

To meet our goals, we will need an “all hands on deck” approach that seeks increased rental assistance, harnesses the power of the private market, accelerates new housing development, and integrates support into mainstream service systems. In addition: prioritization of existing supportive housing; thoughtful triage to other housing and service access strategies; and focus on coordinated entry systems can have significant impact with limited resources. This work will require broad partnerships that take collective responsibility for progress. To that end, CSH will step up our engagement efforts asking stakeholders to work together to improve data quality and coordination, design new housing and service delivery models, reform policy, and develop resources to expand opportunity and well-being for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. CSH will step up our engagement efforts with the following key sectors to achieve these goals: Advocacy and Research; Business and Non-Profit Sectors; Community Development and Planning; Criminal Justice and Legal Services; Emergency Assistance and Crisis Response; Family and Children’s Services; Government Partners; Housing Finance and Development; Intellectual and Developmental Services; Mental Health and Addiction Treatment; Public Health, Hospitals, and Managed Care; Tenants and People in Need of Supportive Housing; and Veterans Services.

CALCULATION OF SUPPORTIVE HOUSING NEED

CSH estimates that approximately 1.125 million individuals and families in the United States have needs consistent with supportive housing. This total is a compilation of needs across eight* distinct systems:
* Aging Systems 226,000 (22%)
* Family Systems 53,000 (5%)
* Individual Homeless Systems 105,000 (10%)
* Intellectual and Developmental Systems 269,000 (26%)
* Justice Systems 235,000 (23%)
* Mental Health Systems 56,000 (6%)
* Substance Use Systems 36,000 (4%)
* Youth Systems 43,000 (4%)

These individual systems estimates were then totaled and an additional ten percent of that total, roughly 102,000 units, was added as a lost and missing data assumption, which can account for involvement with non-residential systems that were analyzed but not included such as community corrections and people in outpatient treatment, as well as informal residential systems such as unlicensed board and care and group homes. For more information on CSH’s National Needs assessment and Housing Data Project, please visit www.csh.org/data.

*A separate analysis of Veteran Homelessness was developed showing need for roughly 22,000 units. The data is a subset of individual and family homelessness systems and therefore is added to the total needs assessment. Analysis is currently underway for Native American Systems and Primary Health Systems.