

# Three Crises, One Solution:

## Local Data Proves Supportive Housing Reduces Jail Bookings, Health Costs and Chronic Homelessness

In 2018, the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), the City of Portland and Multnomah County's Joint Office of Homeless Services, Health Share of Oregon and County's Local Public Safety Coordinating Council collaborated to examine housing solutions for the hundreds of people who are cycled through every year by our local jails, homeless services and Medicaid supported health systems.

Cross-sector, local data for the Frequent Users System Engagement (FUSE) analysis is a springboard for future actions. FUSE is a solution designed by CSH to maximize data to inform more cost-effective and as important, humane solutions to chronic homelessness. The FUSE study looks at a shared solution — supportive housing — that's associated with fewer negative outcomes across jails, health care, homelessness and housing.

In addition, guided by the voices of people with lived experience, the FUSE study also suggests supportive housing can help address racial disparities in homelessness — if that supportive housing is paired with culturally specific services.

### What is supportive housing? It means “housing first,” but not “housing only.”

Supportive housing is an evidence-based solution that provides long-term affordable housing with wraparound services, from behavioral health support to income acquisition to case management support.

### Supportive housing provides stability, ending cycles that send people from jails to emergency rooms to the streets and back again.

Compared to the average Medicaid recipient, the 862 adults, who were chronically homeless, saw significantly worse outcomes than their peers living in supportive housing for at least a year. The data show that they were more likely to access emergency physical and behavioral health care and be booked into jail.

If those 862 adults were housed? Data show their outcomes would be much better. For example, among adults experiencing chronic homelessness, those who were not stabilized in PSH for at least a year used inpatient psych services at 3.3 times the rate as those who were.

# 862

Number of adults with Medicaid in Multnomah County who also experienced chronic homelessness.



**Over 17,000 fewer**  
Emergency Department  
(ED) visits



**Over 5,000 fewer**  
Avoidable ED visits



**Over 200 fewer**  
Hospitalizations

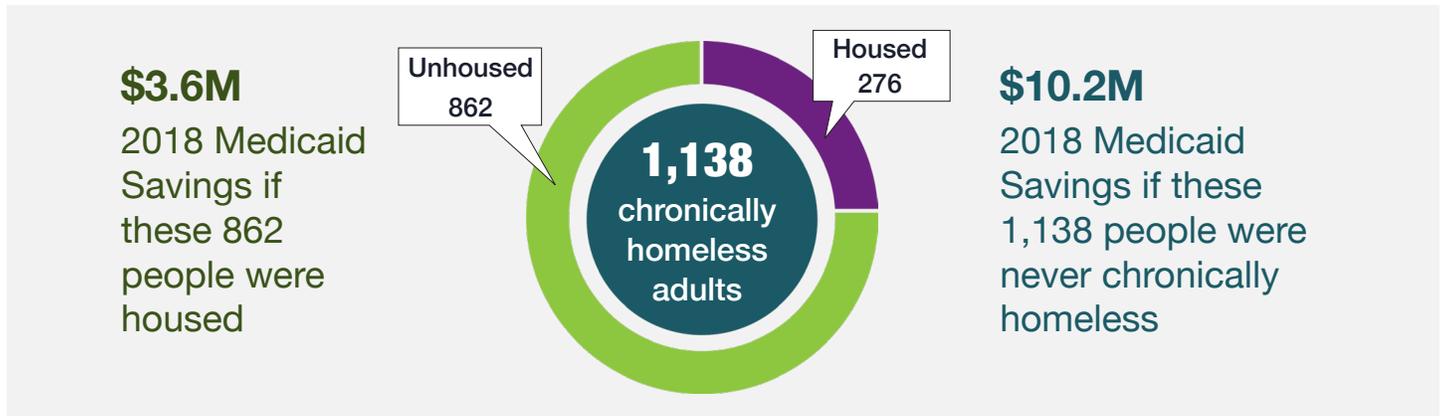


**Over 400 fewer**  
jail bookings



**Over 50 fewer**  
inpatient psychiatric stays

## Supportive housing also saves public resources over the long-term.



## By promoting better outcomes in the justice and health systems, supportive housing also helps address racial disparities in homelessness — if it provides culturally specific services.

In Portland, larger shares of people identifying as American Indian or Alaska Native, Black/African American and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander were more likely to have jail bookings, be chronically homeless and have multiple touch points with the health system than people who identify as non-Hispanic white.

Community voices join the data in making clear that structural racism looms over the health, justice and homelessness systems — and point to the need for solutions, like housing paired with behavioral health care that are accessible to communities of color.

## With supportive housing, chronic homelessness can be reduced. Additionally, prevention of traumatic and costly trips in and out of our health, homeless and jails can be increased.

The data are clear — long-term housing interventions associated with crisis response and acute care settings are essential. Without long-term solutions, the chances of people being cycled through these systems — causing re-traumatization and costing the systems millions of dollars — rises dramatically. That pain and expense are avoidable if the community commits to supportive housing as a solution.

For questions or additional information, please contact  
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