

Housing for Health

2017-2020 Behavioral Health Funding Initiative

Background: The mission of Kaiser Permanente is to provide high-quality, affordable health care services to improve the health of our members and the communities we serve. As a nonprofit organization, Kaiser Permanente makes carefully selected investments each year to address the needs facing our communities and improve community health.

Our Community Benefit programs are specifically designed to target identified health needs based on our Community Health Needs Assessment process. Behavioral Health (including mental health and substance abuse) is one of the current health needs identified by this process. Additional research conducted in 2016 identified housing as the single largest need for people with behavioral health challenges. Safe, stable housing is a key determinant of health and people with behavioral health challenges represent a large portion of the homeless population in our region.

Traditional Health Workers are people who share similar life experiences with the people they serve. They are known as Peer Support Specialists or Community Health Workers and they are members of the community who receive specialized training and provide in-depth services to people like themselves. Their work has been shown to increase participation in health promoting activities and save healthcare costs. Kaiser Permanente has identified support for this workforce as a key strategy for improving health and increasing health equity in our region.

This funding initiative was designed to:

1. Encourage agencies and organizations to work collaboratively to address the housing needs of people with serious behavioral health challenges;
2. Increase the number of Traditional Health Workers (Peer Support Specialists and Community Health Workers) serving people with behavioral health challenges;
3. Improve the health of people served by participating organizations through housing supports;
4. Involve community members in policy change activities that lead to improved behavioral health.

Highlights of funding initiative:

- **Total number of grantees:** 7
- **Total funding:** \$2,272,766
- **Funding timeframe:** January 2017 - June 2020
- **Total estimated number of people to be served:** 1,100
- **Number of Traditional Health Workers to be deployed through these projects:** 15

Summary of the 7 funded projects:

- **Catholic Charities of Oregon (Multnomah County, OR):** Catholic Charities will help homeless women with severe mental illness and substance use disorders secure and retain housing through integrated housing, healthcare, and behavioral health supports provided by Peer Support Specialists. Catholic Charities will partner with NAMI Oregon to provide empowerment trainings

and advocacy opportunities to allow participants to share their stories with community members and elected officials to increase housing access and supports for individuals with mental illness.

Expected # served: 60 Contact: Margi Dechenne: 503-688-2670 mdechenne@ccoregon.org

- **Catholic Community Services of the Mid-Willamette Valley and Central Coast (Marion County, OR):** Catholic Community Services will train Community Health Workers, provide housing support services to community members struggling with mental health or substance abuse in nine low income neighborhoods in Marion County, and advocate for statewide policy changes to increase the number of affordable housing units in Oregon. **Expected # served: 90-120 families** Contact: Maureen Casey: 503-510-0151 maureencasey@ccswv.org
- **Love Overwhelming (Cowlitz County, WA):** Peer Support Case Managers will provide intensive community services to high need households to help them locate, obtain and retain safe, affordable housing. Love Overwhelming will partner with others to advocate for homeless shelters, affordable housing and improved policies related to people being released from prison. **Expected # served: 180** Contact: Chuck Hendrickson: (360) 749-8056 chendrickson@loveoverwhelming.org
- **Outside In (Multnomah County, OR):** Outside In and NAYA will partner to serve transition aged homeless youth (18-25 years old) experiencing behavioral health challenges. Community Health Workers will work hand in hand with these youth, supporting them to find, stabilize, and maintain housing and participate in policy advocacy activities. **Expected # served: 140** Contact: Heather Brown: (503) 535-3805 hb@outsidein.org
- **ShelterCare (Lane County, OR):** In collaboration with partners, ShelterCare will provide training to property owners and managers to support their efforts to work with tenants with behavioral health challenges, refer tenants at risk for eviction to Community Health Workers (CHWs) for assistance, and advocate for statewide policy changes for a robust reimbursement of CHWs that recognizes their unique skills and contributions. Project partners include Trauma Healing Project, Cornerstone Community Housing, Laurel Hill Center and the Housing and Community Services Agency of Lane County. **Expected # served: 120** Contact: Susan Ban (541) 686-1262 sban@sheltercare.org
- **Urban League of Portland (Multnomah County, OR):** Urban League will help households affected by chronic homelessness become housed, healthy, and empowered as advocates for systemic change. Support services will be provided by Community Health Workers, and a Peer Support Specialist (addiction and recovery) and a Peer Wellness Specialist (mental health) will join the Housing Support Team. **Expected # served: 120** Contact: Julia Delgado: (503) 995-2675 jdelgado@ulpdx.org
- **Willamette Family, Inc. (Lane County, OR):** Willamette Family will work to help people with behavioral health challenges find and maintain stable housing by training Community Health Workers, providing case management, delivering a rental rehabilitation program and advocating for statewide policy changes for prolonged case management and peer delivered services. **Expected # served: 300** Contact: Eva Williams: (541) 762-4526 evaw@wfts.org

For more information about this funding initiative, contact:

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