

Permanent Supportive Housing Results in Substantial Savings

BY ELISSA PLANCHER AND STEPHANIE BERMAN

Carrfour Supportive Housing's Coalition Lift project, first selected by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) as one of three 2014 Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) pilot projects in Florida, analyzed the cost and benefits of providing PSH to individuals cycling through costly publicly funded services in Miami-Dade County. As evidenced by Coalition Lift, PSH is an effective solution to ending homelessness among people who may remain unhoused but for the targeted engagement and prioritization that leads to individualized services and rental assistance. Demonstrating the direct link between housing and healthcare, the Coalition Lift pilot project validates the effectiveness of supportive housing and proves once again that housing is the solution to ending homelessness.

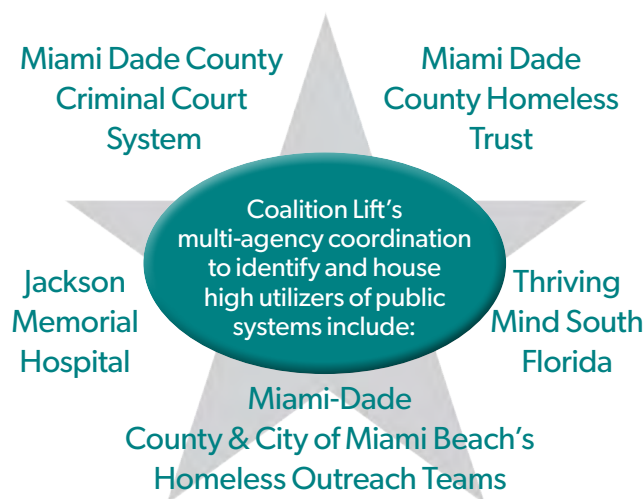
The project's research component, led by the University of South Florida, examined whether supportive housing for high-need residents delivers cost-effective outcomes compared to shelters, hospitals, and jails. Taking a multi-system approach to identifying the most at-risk community members, Coalition Lift aims to engage persons who may otherwise resist assistance and leaving them to self-manage crises as they come.

The Ending Homelessness Forum at the Florida Housing Coalition's 2020 Conference focused attention to preliminary research findings from the project by hosting project participants from FHFC and Carrfour. During the session, FHFC's Bill Aldinger (Director of Policy and Special Programs) and Zachary Summerlin (Assistance Policy Director), and Carrfour Supportive Housing's President and CEO Stephanie Berman-Eisenberg, shared their insights on creating long-term, effective solutions to ending homelessness. The three PSH pilots, including Carrfour's Coalition Lift, demonstrate that strategic funding and community partnerships catalyze quality of life improvements for Florida's most vulnerable residents.

The project's research methodology helps researchers study outcomes by studying three separate groups of persons experiencing homelessness. For each group, project

participants are evaluated using data from the year prior to the research study and from one year after being housed. Group 1 participants, living in the Coalition Lift building, received community-based services through a partnership between Carrfour and the Citrus Health Network's mental health and case management services. Services are focused on housing stabilization and prevent returns to intensive crisis services through services tailored to high need program participants. Participants in Group 2 were drawn from persons living in other PSH communities within Miami-Dade County. Participants in the second group receive services focused on stabilization and independent living supports. Participants in Group 3 consist of persons who remained homeless, were not housed, and did not seek out housing services during the two-year timeframe. Community partners among various service systems collaborated to create a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach to identify, engage, stabilize, and house Miami-Dade's most at-risk individuals with the hope, among other goals, of demonstrating the reduction of high utilization of costly public crisis services through service and housing supports.

Released in July 2019, Coalition Lift's One-Year Interim Report (available at: http://carrfour.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Carrfour-First-Year-Report_v6.pdf) makes a compelling case that effective cross-system coordination



paired with strategic funding, targeted engagement, subsidized housing, and tailored service supports drive cost-effective positive outcomes for program participants compared to other intervention models. Among the 34 Coalition Lift site participants (Group 1), there was a total cost savings of \$385,662 (a reduction of \$11,343 per person), 83.3% of tenants retained their housing, and 42.5% of participants increased their income since entering the pilot project.

Service System	Baseline	One Year Follow-up	Change	Percent Change
Jails	\$105,100	\$52,200	-\$53,000	-50.4%
Medicaid	\$357,470	\$124,082	-\$233,388	-65.3%
Outpatient Transition	\$8,744	\$4,586	-\$4,158	-47%
Shelter Stays	\$79,070	\$0	-\$79,070	-100%
Total	\$562,580	\$244,981	\$317,599	-56.5%
Average Cost	\$20,092	\$8,749	-\$11,343	-56.5%

Source: Carrfour Supportive Housing, Coalition Lift Interim Report. July 19, 2019. Available at: http://carrfour.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Carrfour-First-Year-Report_v6.pdf

Measuring Success Beyond Data: AM's Success Story

Growing up in California, 36-year-old AM experienced various traumatic events as a young child, leading him to leave home and live life on the streets where friends became his family. Despite being without a home, AM graduated high school, which he considers as "the only thing that kept me alive." Living on the street steered him on a path of drug use and criminal activity until he entered residential treatment. Entering residential treatment helped him start fresh and relocated to Florida with hope for a better life. His homelessness continued in Miami Beach for many years, leading to further involvement with the legal system. With no end in sight due to lack of housing, past-due restitution, and inability to maintain stable employment, AM continued cycling through public systems. AM entered the



Coalition Lift program on October 10, 2017. Initially hesitant to engage and unable to trust, with time and support he began working with staff and creating a community for himself. AM paid off outstanding probation fees, has not had any legal issues since 2017, and is participating in therapy. Since entering Coalition Lift, he is reconnected with his family in California, secured employment, and started college. He is pursuing a degree in Social Work, is on the Dean's List, and is working toward his Certified Peer Specialist Certification. He has dreams of owning his own home, having a family, and living independently. AM, a survivor of over 20 years of homelessness, says he is alive today because of Coalition Lift.



Elissa Plancher is a Technical Advisor for the Florida Housing Coalition, specializing in ending homelessness, managing entity program management, and Continuum of Care grants management. Elissa has a Bachelor's degree in International Affairs and Political Science from Florida State University.



Stephanie Berman is the president of Carrfour Supportive Housing, a nonprofit organization established by the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce in 1993 to develop supportive housing for homeless individuals in Miami-Dade County. In addition to overseeing Carrfour's current inventory of 1,742 supportive housing units and more than 3,300 residents, Ms. Berman-Eisenberg has led the effort to assemble millions of dollars in funding to develop an additional 500 units over the next few years. Ms. Berman earned a Master's degree in administration, planning, and social policy from Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, and a Bachelor's degree from Brandeis University.