

Why focus on chronic homelessness?

People experiencing long-term homelessness are at high risk of death and severe disabilities as well as putting a major strain on public services. United Way of King County is focusing on this vulnerable group that includes veterans, women, and individuals suffering from disabling mental illness. With an efficient and coordinated approach, we are making real progress toward ending chronic homelessness.

FACTS

- Roughly 33 percent of homeless adults in our state are veterans, according to the Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs.
- An estimated 20 percent of King County’s homeless population experiences long-term homelessness.
- Veterans of the most recent wars who become homeless will usually do so within 2 years of leaving the service. For veterans of past wars, such as Vietnam, this took approximately 10 years.
- Most chronically homeless people suffer from severe mental and physical health issues as well as alcohol and drug addictions.
- People dealing with long-term homelessness frequently use crisis services—hospital ERs, county sobriety centers and the county jail.
- Leaving someone struggling on the streets is significantly more costly than housing her and providing supportive services like mental health care, substance abuse treatment, and job training.

Supportive housing costs less

COST PER DAY FOR ONE PERSON	
Supportive housing	\$40 per day complete, including services \$26 per day (for services only)
Jail	\$130 a day (more if onsite health care is needed)
Mental hospital	\$1,000 a day
Hospital	2,696 a day

Sources: King County Council policy staff, King County Community Services

Corey Marine, dad—and no longer homeless



A Marine who’s fought for his country in Iraq has faced enough danger. He shouldn’t have to come home and worry about where he and his young daughter are going to spend the night. But Corey McKay had to face that situation. He was a young man of 20

serving in Iraq when his daughter was born. The excitement of meeting her carried him through difficult days, but that meeting came sooner than planned when his wife fell into a serious depression and he had to take emergency leave. As soon as he returned home, his wife left.

Corey had a huge decision to make—should he return to combat or stay home to care for his daughter? He chose to take an honorable discharge and stay, believing “my daughter’s life and how she’s raised are more important.” Circumstances got harder when he was unable to find work and lost his housing. His mother, who tried to help him, became seriously ill. He moved into one temporary shelter and then another, situations he never expected to face. Finally he found a place in a transitional housing program in Redmond through Hopelink, a United Way grantee. He and his daughter were able to move in, knowing they could stay for a full two years while he rebuilt their life.

Corey says he understands now that every category of person can end up homeless and he’s grateful for the chance he’s been given. And every day, he says, he’s glad he decided to stay with his daughter.



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BE PART OF THE SUCCESS CAMPAIGN TO END CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

“40 percent of good health is a roof over your head.”

DR. DON BERWICK
Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

We've made significant progress—and you can help us continue.

Phase One of the Campaign to End Chronic Homelessness is complete and we've exceeded our goal, providing more than 1,500 units of supportive housing. Now, in Phase Two, our efforts are especially focused on a key population—the men and women who have served our country through military service. Your generosity will help us reach our final goal.

The \$15 million raised so far has been leveraged significantly – over 10 times – from investors including generous individuals and foundations, the City of Seattle, King County, and area housing authorities.



Invest in the most effective way to end homelessness—United Way.

Ending chronic homelessness in King County is an ambitious goal but United Way of King County has proven that an integrated approach can succeed. Working in partnership with frontline agencies, government and individuals committed to finding solutions, United Way of King County maximizes every dollar, focusing on the most effective projects with proven results.

THE CAMPAIGN TO END CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS GETS RESULTS:

- Recognized by the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University as one of the Top 25 Innovations in American Government – United Way and its partners in the Homeless Funders Group have employed a smart, collaborative approach that works.
- Our \$5 million Bridge Loan Program has so far provided \$2.2 million in low-interest loans to build permanent, supportive housing including 178 units in three projects to open in 2011 and 2012 in Ballard, and the University and Central Districts. One loan has already been repaid and those funds are now re-invested in supportive services.
- To date, more than 1,500 units of supportive housing have been provided, exceeding the original goal of 1,000, and at less time and cost than planned. One such facility is McDermott Place in Lake City, where half the units are reserved for veterans. Across the community, at least 300 more units will be open and operational in 2012.



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Strategies that work—we've seen the proof.

- A “combined funder approach” allows providers to apply to one place for assistance from a variety of funders. The funding process is streamlined making it efficient and cost effective, and getting individuals into permanent homes that much sooner.
- Client Care Coordination works to ensure those at greatest risk are helped first. A collaboration among housing providers and service agencies, this approach is expanding to 50% of existing units and will be required in all new units.
- Permanent, supportive housing gives individuals the services they need to thrive—drug and alcohol counseling, health care and employment assistance.
- An upcoming effort called the Street to Home Project will put caseworkers on the street, getting to know people and the dynamics of a neighborhood so influential individuals in the homeless community can be identified to help pave the way to a permanent home.
- We're creating systems that won't discharge people onto the streets from hospitals, mental health institutions, jail and foster care. For example, a respite care facility was developed to provide a safe place for people discharged from Harborview.

Support the campaign and help welcome veterans and others back home.

With your generosity, United Way of King County can ensure that every person experiencing long-term homelessness, including many of our veterans, finds a permanent home. Imagine a future without homelessness. Together, we can make that a reality.

To make a gift to the Campaign to End Chronic Homelessness or get more information, please contact Peter Murray at 206.461.8539 or pmurray@uwkc.org.