

A Place to Call Home

2008 – 2012 CHICAGO AREA AIDS HOUSING PLAN CONSUMER PREFERENCES FOCUS GROUPS

FACILITATOR:

Welcome to the consumer preferences focus group for the 2008 – 2012 Chicago Area AIDS Housing Plan. The Chicago Area AIDS Housing Plan presents collected data on AIDS Housing services and presents recommendations to the AIDS Housing community. This is one of three focus groups being conducted for the Plan. The purpose of the groups is to gather input on consumer experiences and preferences within the AIDS Housing continuum. Your input is valuable and very important in the development of the Plan. It will help inform and guide the process. A final draft of the plan will be complete at the end of August, with findings presented to the larger community in the fall. **YOU WILL BE SENT A PERSONAL COPY OF THE PLAN AS ONE WAY TO THANK YOU FOR BEING SUCH AN IMPORTANT PART OF THIS PROCESS.**

Today's discussion will be broken into four sections, all with the primary intent of gaining a better understanding of AIDS Housing Consumers' preferences. We are interested in learning about your AIDS Housing preferences. You have been asked to participate in THESE focus groups because we want to learn about your experiences with AIDS Housing and how those experiences shape your preferences. You are the experts here and we want to learn from you. We will present you with several questions and scenarios and ask for your valuable input.

BEFORE WE GET STARED, LET'S SET A COUPLE GROUND RULES:

- 1.** The purpose of the focus groups is to get your opinions. Everyone's opinion is important and that's what we want to hear. There is no right or wrong answer. Because everyone's opinion is important, I may call on you to make sure that we hear from you or follow-up on a particular point that you might make.
- 2.** Because this is a group discussion, we ask that there be no side conversations, and please try to be brief and to the point so that everyone has a chance to speak.
- 3.** Your answers are confidential so please feel free to be totally honest. We will not use your name or any other identifying information with whatever you say and becomes part of the plan.
- 4.** On your part, what is said in the focus group stays in the focus group – please!
- 5.** You can pass on any question you do not want to answer.
- 6.** If you feel uncomfortable for whatever reason, you may leave the group early. But please note, stipends will not be distributed until the end of the focus group.
- 7.** My job is to help facilitate ALL of the ABOVE and make it as comfortable for you as possible.

APPENDIX I

Focus Group Facilitator's Guide

A Place to Call Home

APPENDIX I

Focus Group Facilitator's Guide

The discussion will take place for about 90 minutes. I promise we will be done by _____. The bathrooms are () so if you need to use one during the focus group, just go ahead and get up and come right back when you're done.

For the answers to some of my questions, I will ask that we go around the room so that everyone of you has a chance to answer. For others, it would be great to have at least 3 or 4 of you answer, and then we can have a conversation about them as a group.

There's food and drink, so please help yourselves.

Does everyone have everything they need?

Does anyone have any questions before we get started?

OK, let's get started!

SECTION I – ICEBREAKER (15 minutes)

1. Facilitator will ask each to participant to share: (write these in a flip chart so that all can see them – uncover questions right before you ask them of the group)
2. My name
3. What type of AIDS Housing do I use, if any?
(They can use their own words and descriptions)
4. In five words or less, how would I define the "IDEAL LANDLORD" for me
5. If I could change one thing about AIDS Housing in Chicago it would be –
five words or less

A Place to Call Home

SECTION II – PREFERRED TYPES AIDS HOUSING (30 minutes)

Before we jump into this section, I'd like to review some terms and definitions to make sure we are all on the same page.

GIVE OUT 1-PAGE INVENTORY AND REVIEW STARTING WITH DEFINITIONS

Are there any questions? (DO NOT RUSH THESE; MAKE SURE IT IS CLEAR TO ALL OF THEM – THAT IS WHY I HAVE SIMPLIFIED the inventory/definitions sheet. Have them give or facilitator gives local examples of each category)

Now that we've reviewed the inventory, I'd like to ask you some questions for our consideration and discussion:

- 1. What are the advantages / disadvantages of abstinence based housing?**
- 2. What are the advantages / disadvantages of harm reduction housing**

Please use the work sheets and pens in front of you consider these two questions. (Worksheet should be a quadrant with the 4 variables). After you take 3 minutes to complete the worksheet, which we will NOT collect, I am going to ask a handful of you to share at least two of each: advantages and disadvantages. Then we will have a conversation about them.

- 3. What are the advantages / disadvantages of building based units?**
- 4. What are the advantages / disadvantages of scattered apartments?**

Please use the work sheets and pens in front of you consider these two questions. After you take 3 minutes to complete the worksheet, which we will NOT collect, I am going to ask a handful of you to share at least two of each: advantages and disadvantages. Then we will have a conversation about them.

After the conversations are over, you will point out using the Inventory Sheet that most AIDS Housing scattered apartments tend to be "harm reduction" and that most building based units tend to be "abstinence based."

APPENDIX I

Focus Group Facilitator's Guide

A Place to Call Home

APPENDIX I

Focus Group Facilitator's Guide

SECTION III – NEED FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING (20 minutes)

I'm going to read two short stories about people living with HIV/AIDS. After the stories, we will have another brief conversation.

Cheryl's Story

Cheryl, a 44 year old female, is living with HIV. She's previously been diagnosed with AIDS, but worked to regain her health. She's also been treated for TB.

For Cheryl, life has been a series of struggles that started in childhood. She attended but did not complete grade school. She's used alcohol and drugs, including crack cocaine, on and off for the last twenty years. She is prone to relapse and unable to maintain sobriety. Psychiatric complications of the substance abuse include blackouts, depression, and psychotic symptoms. She's been incarcerated for felony possession of a controlled substance, and has never held steady employment. She has lost contact with her two children, who at this time are 30 and 31.

Cheryl has lived in a nursing home for the last six months, but was asked to leave after her disability application was denied. She cannot afford to stay in the nursing home. In the three months following her discharge from the nursing home she stayed in the park, in the hospital, or at a shelter. She's currently seeking a placement in an AIDS Housing program.

John's Story

John, a 57 year-old male is living with several medical diagnoses including HIV, Congestive Heart Failure, a nodule on his lung, and a work-related hand injury. He's been without his own home for three years, occasionally staying with a sister who lives on the city's south side, with friends, or in worst case scenarios, weather permitting, in the city parks.

John works intermittently as a day laborer. He self-identifies as a recovering alcoholic with a 36-year long history of alcohol abuse - at one time consuming up to two 40-oz bottles of beer per day. John says of this time, "when I realized that I could no longer work or pay for a place to live I contemplated taking all my medicine at one time; but I realized this was not what I wanted for myself, so I sobered up and began trying to get my life together."

John has an income, albeit unstable, and has been sober for the last 3 years. His health is still shaky, but he feels he is stable enough to live in his own space. He is currently seeking an AIDS Housing Placement.

1. In your opinion, what are the most important considerations in finding Cheryl and John an appropriate AIDS Housing Placement? Why?

This time around, we are going to go around the table so that everyone has a chance to answer. I ask that everyone share with us briefly your top two considerations. (Facilitator writes and tallies, using key words, the considerations on a flip chart).

A Place to Call Home

SECTION IV – TOUGH FUNDING CHOICES (20 minutes)

The following question concerns funding and how AIDS Housing money should be spent. Let's imagine that you are a committee that has been charged to oversee the disbursement of an additional \$2,000,000 award for the Chicago area AIDS Housing continuum. I'd like you to take a couple of minutes and work together to determine how you would disburse the funding.

Before you begin, let's look at a couple of considerations:

1. Use the current AIDS Housing Inventory Sheet and just FOCUS on the following two categories: **Building Based Units & Scattered Apartments**
2. As a committee, you have to allocate ALL \$2,000,000 to one of the two categories.
3. Let's go around the room and each of us state what your choice is, with one or two reasons for your choice.
4. After we go around the room, we will take a vote by this committee of where the \$2,000,000 will go.

That concludes our focus group. **YOU HAVE BEEN A GREAT GROUP!** I want to thank you again for your participation. It is appreciated. Please see stick around to receive your stipend, eat some more food and socialize for a bit more.

APPENDIX I

Focus Group Facilitator's Guide

A Place to Call Home

CONSUMER
PREFERENCES
FOCUS GROUPS

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Your answers are anonymous and confidential. Your participation will help inform the 2008-2012 Chicago Area AIDS Housing Plan.

Which best describes you? (please choose one)

- I am female
- I am male
- I am transgender
- Other

Which best describes you? (please choose one)

- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Black (includes African American, African Caribbean, & others)
- Hispanic, Latino, or Latina
- Native American
- White, non-Hispanic, non-Latino, or non-Latina
- Multiracial
- Other _____

I am? (please choose one)

20 – 30 years of age

- 31 – 40 years of age
- 41 – 50 years of age
- 51 – 60 years of age
- 61 – 70 years of age
- 71 – 80 years of age
- Other _____

Please help us understand you financial situation:

What is your monthly income? \$ _____

What are you income sources? (please check all that apply)

- Employment
- Social Security (SSI)
- Pension
- Disability (SSDI)
- Family
- Friends
- Other _____

A Place to Call Home

CONSUMER
PREFERENCES
FOCUS GROUPS

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please help us understand what services you are accessing:

Are you currently receiving case management services? (please choose one)

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

Are you currently working with a housing advocate? (please choose one)

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

Please help us understand your current living situation:

Which best describes you current living situation? (please choose one)

- A house, condo, or mobile home that I own
- An apartment, house, condo, or mobile home that I rent
- A room that I rent
- A hotel/motel that I rent by the week or month
- A house, apartment, condo, or other home where I get help for my HIV/AIDS
- A house, apartment, condo, or other home where I get help for alcohol or drug use
- With friends or family, but I can only stay for a short while
- With friends or family who are taking care of me and I can stay as long as I need to
- A shelter
- The streets, in parks, or in a car
- In jail or prison
- Other _____

Are you currently receiving housing assistance? (please choose one)

- Yes (Go to Question #10)
- No (Go to Question #11)
- I'm not sure (Go to Question #11)

What kind of rental assistance are you receiving? (please check all that apply)

- HAP – Short Term (5 months per year)
- LTRS – Long Term (12 months per year)
- Supportive Housing Program
- Section 8
- Other _____

A Place to Call Home

CONSUMER
PREFERENCES
FOCUS GROUPS

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please help us understand your housing history:

Have you moved in the last three years (please choose one)

- Yes (Go to Question #12)
- No (Go to Question #13)
- I'm not sure (Go to Question #13)

Which sentences best describe the reasons why you have moved in the last three years? (please check all that apply)

- I was asked to move because I am HIV-positive
- I was evicted
- I didn't have enough money for rent
- I moved to live with or near family
- I moved to be in a safer neighborhood
- I moved so that could stay clean and sober
- I moved so that I could get better services for my HIV/AIDS
- I moved so that I could get help from a better doctor
- I moved because I need more privacy about my HIV/AIDS
- I moved because of my drug and alcohol abuse
- I moved because of relationship or family problems
- I moved because the housing help I was getting from the government or other organization ended
- I moved to be closer to transportation
- I moved because I got healthier
- I moved because I got sicker
- I moved because of this other reason:

Have you experienced homelessness in the last three years? (please choose one)

- Yes (Go to Question # 14)
- No (Go to Question # 16)
- I'm not sure (Go to Question # 16)

What is the longest period of time you experienced homelessness in the last three years? (please choose one)

- 1 – 7 days
- A week to a month
- Two months to a year
- More than a year

A Place to Call Home

Which sentences best describe the circumstances that led to you experiencing homelessness? (please check all that apply)

- I became homeless because I was evicted from my home
 - I became homeless because I had no income from a job or from benefits checks
 - I became homeless because my family or partner or roommate made me move
 - I became homeless because I was living in a building or apartment that was closed by the government because it was unsafe
 - I became homeless because I moved to a new area and had no money, friends, or family
 - I became homeless after I was released from jail. County lock-up, or prison
 - I became homeless because of my use of alcohol or drugs
 - I became homeless for another reason:
-

Have you spent the night in a shelter in the last three years? (please choose one)

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

The survey is complete. Thank you for your participation!

CONSUMER
PREFERENCES
FOCUS GROUPS

QUESTIONNAIRE