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**New Study Analyzes the Unmet Housing Needs of People with HIV/AIDS in Metro Chicago**  
*Report Will Guide Regional Planning Efforts on AIDS Housing through 2012*

CHICAGO—An acute shortage of government-funded housing in metropolitan Chicago leaves most homeless or unstably housed people with HIV/AIDS with nowhere to turn, according to a new report released today by the AIDS Foundation of Chicago (AFC).

AFC and the Chicago Department of Public Health, a co-author of the report, unveiled findings at a public meeting attended by dozens of housing experts, people with HIV/AIDS, and regional public health officials. Entitled *A Place to Call Home*, the report will help inform future service planning and implementation efforts in Cook and seven surrounding counties.

“Better medical treatments have, thankfully, increased survival for thousands of people with HIV/AIDS. As people live longer their need for services also increases in scope and duration,” said Christopher Brown, CDPH assistant commissioner. “It’s time for Congress to address this trend by awarding the region substantially more money for AIDS-related housing.”

Report authors consulted hundreds of service providers and people with HIV/AIDS in preparing the detailed report, which contains 29 specific recommendations aimed at increasing the region’s stock of AIDS-related housing by 800 or more units over a five-year period. The report’s comprehensive account of available housing services for people with HIV/AIDS in the region also draws comparisons against two previous regional housing reports prepared by AFC in 1995 and 2001.

“For too many disabled people with AIDS, maintaining safe and affordable housing is a source of great anxiety, which causes tremendous strain on their health,” said AFC President/CEO Mark Ishaug. “Providing housing stability is one of the most important ways we can improve the lives of low-income people with HIV/AIDS.”

The report attributes unstable housing situations, including homelessness, among people with HIV/AIDS to high rates of poverty and disability. Housing instability can be most severe among those with addictions and/or co-occurring physical and mental health problems. For people with HIV, lack of safe and affordable housing can inhibit proper nutrition, complicate adherence to medical treatments, and accelerate serious declines in health.

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According to the plan, an estimated 15,000 HIV-positive people in the Chicago area may face housing instability in their lifetime, a number that far outpaces the 1,300 units of AIDS-designated housing by a rate of 10 to 1. The AIDS-related housing gap persisted in 2007 despite a greater than 20 percent increase in the supply of housing specifically for people with HIV/AIDS since 2001.

The plan seeks a 10 percent or greater increase in HIV/AIDS housing stock each year to achieve a minimum 800-unit expansion by 2012. The goal may be adjusted once a regional AIDS housing needs-assessment is completed. Area shelters, correctional facilities, and medical providers are also urged to work more closely with housing organizations to help people with HIV/AIDS achieve housing stability.

“The region’s affordable housing crisis does not only affect people with HIV/AIDS,” said John Dawkins, chair of the AIDS Housing Advisory Council (AHAC). “But for those of us with compromised immune systems, the service options are fewer and the risks of complications are far greater.”

“I’m enormously grateful to Mayor Daley for supporting a one-time \$250,000 increase in City funding for AIDS housing services this year,” said Franklin Gray, AHAC participant. “But much more must be done to help chronically ill people like me keep a roof over our heads.”

“By systematically reviewing available services and client needs and preferences across the region, this plan gives us a roadmap to inform how we use existing service dollars. This plan also gives us the tools needed to attract greater AIDS housing investments from public and private funders,” said Fred Maclin and co-chair of AFC’s Housing Committee.

The full report can be downloaded at AFC’s website, [www.aidschicago.org](http://www.aidschicago.org).

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