

Cycle I

Community Living Support Services SHELTER PLUS CARE Program # M015

Definition

The Shelter Plus Care (S+C) Program is a U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) initiative which funds housing agencies to provide rent subsidies for low income, homeless individuals with special needs. S+C regulations require that individuals receiving housing assistance under this program also receive appropriate support services which help them secure and maintain permanent housing. S+C enables homeless individuals to secure permanent housing of their choice accompanied by supportive services funded through other sources. Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division is a S+C grant recipient and in cooperation with Milwaukee County Housing administers a S+C Tenant Based Program known as My Home. For S+C purposes special needs target populations are people living with severe mental illness, AODA, or HIV/AIDS.

The goal of the Milwaukee County S+C Program is to break the cycle of homelessness and to provide permanent housing for target populations. To accomplish this, Milwaukee County and various service providers make a long-term commitment to the coordination of housing benefits and support services. Several providers who are selected to be a partner in My Home must assess the special needs of the individual, prepare a service plan for the individual, provide case management for the individual, and assist the individual in fulfilling responsibilities in order to maintain permanent housing. Further, the service provider must provide long-term case management which addresses the changing needs of the individual and work closely with Milwaukee County Housing Division to ensure the individual is successful in housing.

To meet the goal of permanent housing, the homeless individual and Milwaukee County also make long-term commitments. The homeless individual agrees to participate in the housing program, work with a case manager (CM), fulfill all responsibilities, and comply with the service plan prepared in collaboration with the case manager. Milwaukee County agrees to determine the income eligibility of the individual, inspect the property, administer the housing subsidies, work closely with the case manager and client, and develop procedures which accommodate the case manager and the client.

Target Population

S+C exists to serve homeless individuals with disabilities that meet HUD guidelines and have been verified by an M.D. In some circumstances this may include families. The three disabilities specifically targeted by the S+C program are:

- Serious mental illness
- Chronic alcohol and/or other drug abuse
- AIDS or related diseases

Homelessness

The HUD definition for the S+C program specifically targets homeless persons who are either:

- sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, and abandoned or condemned buildings, or are sleeping in emergency shelters
- staying in transitional housing for homeless individuals

Access

Engagement of individuals is on the streets, in emergency shelters, and at meal programs. Once identified, either by referral or outreach, an attempt is made to engage the individuals in a relationship.

Program Standards

HUD requires that for each grant dollar expended for housing, a matching amount must be spent in providing support services for the client/tenant. This match requirement is on a per grant basis and necessitates a long-term commitment to the provision of support services. Additional requirements are:

- compliance with all Section 504, ADA, and Fair Housing Laws
- submission of Monthly Service Match Reports, Outcome Reports, and any other report(s) that may be required for the administration of the S+C Program
- attendance at all meetings necessary for the ongoing administration of the S+C Program
- client meetings to address any tenancy deficiencies, preparation of client corrective action plans to support successful tenancy

Case Management Standards

The success of a client in the S+C Program is often dependent upon the quality of the CM. The level of CM services that are required at various times during the clients' participation in the S+C Program may vary and is at the discretion of the CM to make that determination and provision. CM is responsible for the following:

- Assessment – to assure that the client is homeless, has a target population diagnosis, is income eligible and ready for independent living with appropriate supports.
- Service Plan – to address each client's individual needs and should include a plan for assuring that the client is receiving appropriate services so that housing is maintained.

- Role in Housing Process – to assist the client in every aspect of the housing process. May mean collecting the necessary information for the eligibility interview, working with the landlord, making sure necessary paperwork is returned to the Housing Division Office.
- Maintaining Housing - to be actively involved in assisting the client in fulfilling all of the housing responsibilities. There should be daily contact with the client until the case manager is certain that the client is stable and comfortable in housing. At a minimum, an in-home visit should occur once each week. Any issues that may arise should be addressed with a plan, i.e. housekeeping, neighbor relations, etc.
- Communications with the Landlord – CM should be in regular contact with the landlord and be responsive to the landlord if contacted about a concern in a timely manner.
- Communications with the My Home Housing Office – if problems should arise that cannot be worked out with the landlord and client, the CM should contact the My Home Housing Representative to discuss and pursue resolution of the issue.
- The Case Manager As Proxy – every CM must sign a Proxy form for the client, and is authorized and is expected to fulfill the housing responsibilities on the behalf of the client.
- Annual Recertification Process – approximately four months prior to the lease expiration, the My Home Housing Program will mail a notice to the CM and the client. It is the responsibility of the CM to assure that all responsibilities are taken care of.
- Case Manager as Emergency Contact Person – the name of the CM and the respective agency will be listed on the lease, and may be the first person contacted in the event of an emergency.

Capacity

In the application, the first sentence of the program description must clearly state the agency's static capacity (i.e. on any given day, the maximum number of people enrolled and receiving services through this contract).

Staff

Indicate the number of staff in F.T.E.s who will be serving clients in the S+C Program, and their respective roles.

Unit of Service

The unit of service is one-quarter hour of direct service time. Direct service time is staff time spent in providing service to the client, which includes face-to-face contacts (office or field), and time spent in documenting services. Not included in direct service time are staff meetings, in-services, etc. Direct service time also includes collateral contacts which are face-to-face or by phone. Collateral contacts are those individuals involved by virtue of their relationship to the program participant, i.e., family, physician, and other service providers.

Documentation

Files must be maintained on each client and should be kept in a central file. Files should include all written documentation, including the assessment, service plan, and case notes. A service plan must include income, monthly budget and disbursements, anticipated outcomes and methods used to attain outcomes, as well as progress towards achievement of outcomes. Case notes must include date of contact, type of contact (face-to-face, phone, collateral, etc.), length of contact and all support and services provided to the client that are reported on the monthly Service Match Report.