

Partnering with Housing Authorities to Improve Community Health

Strategies and Best Practices

*A Presentation by the Council of Large Public Housing Authorities, the Durham
Housing Authority, and the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority*

Thursday, June 12, 2014

Agenda

- About CLPHA
- Overview of CLPHA member housing authority health engagement
- Case study: Durham Housing Authority
- Case study: Norfolk Redevelopment & Housing Authority
- Summary of strategies and best practices

CLPHA

*Strengthening Neighborhoods.
Improving Lives.*

Council of Large Public Housing Authorities

CLPHA

Council of Large Public Housing Authorities (CLPHA)

- Membership association with about 70 large metropolitan housing authority members
- Members manage about 40% of the public housing stock and 25% of Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers

About CLPHA: What We Do

- Advocate for adequate funding for affordable housing
- Develop and advocate for policies that improve the delivery of affordable housing
- Have a “systems alignment” initiative to build relationships between the affordable housing field and other social sectors

About CLPHA: Systems Alignment

CLPHA is working to align affordable housing policies and programs with those of other social systems to support health, education, employment, and environmental sustainability goals and to improve the life outcomes of low-income households whom housing authorities serve.

About CLPHA: Systems Alignment

- CLPHA members make both affordable housing and vital services available to more than one million households.
- Housing authorities' service partnerships demonstrate that there is a viable way to provide the affordable housing and services necessary to improve life outcomes.

Housing as Health Intervention

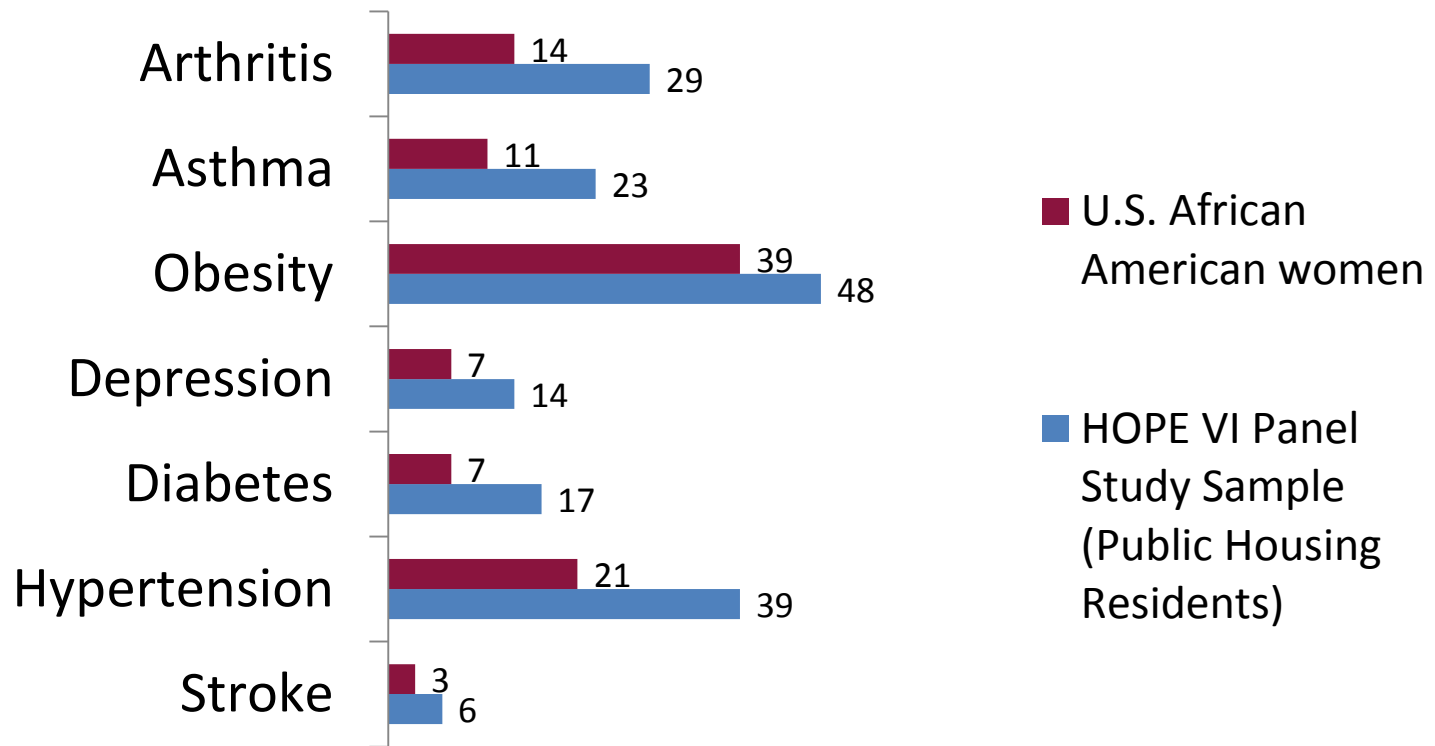
“When we think of improving the health outcomes of Americans, we often think of better medicine, lower health care costs, and smarter prevention strategies. But in many ways, safe, decent, affordable housing is just as important.”

*– U.S. HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan and
former U.S. HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius*

Public Housing Residents' Health

- Studies of public housing residents show that they are in extremely poor health overall and have high rates of chronic illness.
- Urban Institute HOPE VI Panel Study showed much worse health indicators than U.S. African American women overall, who already have worse health than the general population.

Presence of Chronic Illness, 2005 (percent)



Sources: 2005 HOPE VI Panel Study and National Health Interview Survey

Local Housing Authority Surveys

Denver:

(South Lincoln Homes)

- 55% were overweight
- 75% had high blood pressure or were borderline
- Nearly 40% had a condition that prevented them from working

Chester:

- 51% had diagnosed hypertension
- 28% had diabetes (more than double the national rate)
- 24% had depression
- 23% had a heart condition

Health-Oriented Development: Denver

“As we talked to residents, we began to learn from their perspective that having new housing would be great, but that it alone wouldn’t improve their quality of life or create a path to success or sustainability for them. So we came at this from the point of view of, how are we going to transform this neighborhood into a healthy, vibrant community?”

*– Ismael Guerrero, Executive Director,
Denver Housing Authority*

Health-Oriented Development: Denver

- Used Health Impact Assessment (HIA) process and Healthy Development Measurement Tool to guide redevelopment at Mariposa
- 37 HIA recommendations include: the addition of striped bike lanes, improved lighting and street crossings to access grocery/markets, improved lighting in stairwells to encourage their use, improved pedestrian spaces/added street trees

Health-Oriented Development: Milwaukee

- Westlawn Gardens: world's first LEED-ND Stage 3 Silver-certified project
- Features include:
 - 30,000 square foot community garden
 - Extensive 33-acre storm water management system with bio-swales to direct water away from basements
 - High walkability
 - Park space, playing fields, and green pocket parks
 - Geothermal heated and cooled apartments

Addressing Asthma

Indoor Triggers:

- Mold and mildew
- Dust mites
- Pet dander
- Outdoor air entering the home
- Smoking
- Pests

- **Seattle:** Breathe Easy Homes
- **Milwaukee:** Healthy Homes
- **Boston:** Project LEAP (Lenox Environmental Assessment Project)

Smoke-Free Housing

- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
- Albany Housing Authority
- Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority
- Boston Housing Authority
- Cambridge Housing Authority
- Chester Housing Authority
- Denver Housing Authority
- Fresno City & County Housing Authority
- Home Forward (Portland, OR)
- Houston Housing Authority
- Kansas City Housing Authority
- King County Housing Authority
- Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority
- San Antonio Housing Authority
- Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino
- Housing Authority of the City of San Buenaventura
- San Diego Housing Commission
- Housing Authority of the County of Santa Clara
- Seattle Housing Authority
- Tacoma Housing Authority
- Vancouver Housing Authority

Promoting Healthy Lifestyles



- Community gardens—in NYC since 1963!
- Encouraging exercise—ANUME in Chester
- “With Every Heartbeat is Life” —NIH

Partnerships with Health Centers: Health Fairs



- Vital health screenings
 - Wellness education
- Connections with local resources

Partnerships with Health Centers: Primary Care

- **San Diego:** Mobile Medical Unit
- **Chicago:** Mile Square Medical Center on Near West Side and TCA on the South Side
- **Cleveland:** Central Neighborhood Clinic (pediatric and women's health services)

Partnerships with Health Centers: Seniors

- More than 30% of public housing households have elderly heads
- Nearly half of those elderly heads of household are disabled; many others have chronic medical conditions
- **Oklahoma City:** Housing Authority partnership with Variety Care



Partnerships with Health Centers: Ending Homelessness

- Many housing authorities are engaged in local efforts to end homelessness
- Home Forward (Portland, OR): Bud Clark Commons, 130-unit development for formerly homeless individuals
- Local FQHC administers vulnerability assessment for placement at Bud Clark Commons and then provides ongoing medical care
- Co-developing wound care clinic



Case Studies

- Durham Housing Authority
- Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority



Durham Housing Authority

CLPHA

Demographics and Context

- Durham County, North Carolina's population is 282,641.
- Durham City comprises most of Durham County.
- Population by race:
 - 46% African American
 - 38% White
 - 13% Hispanic
 - 3% Other
- Poverty rate:
 - Durham County: 22.7%
 - North Carolina: 21.2%
 - United States: 15%

Durham Housing Authority (DHA)

Who we are:

- ~1,900 Public housing (PH) Units
- ~2,700 Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV)
- ~120 Affordable Units
- ~10,000 PH residents and HCV participants (21% of all low-income persons)

DHA Initiatives: Collaborative Efforts

- DHA has a Program Coordinating Committee comprised of 50 not-for-profit and public agencies.
- These agencies provide a variety of services, including health care related services, to DHA residents.
- They meet quarterly.

DHA Initiatives: Making the Connection

- Health and Wellness service providers, typically, will contact DHA's resident services department and offer to provide services to residents.



DHA Initiatives: Activities

- Among the services that DHA Health and Wellness partners provide to DHA Residents are:
 - Hypertension screenings
 - Diabetes (Types 1 and 2) Testing
 - Diet counseling /Tobacco cessation
- Partnerships are effective.



DHA Initiatives: Challenges

- Induce residents to think seriously about making lifestyle changes to improve overall health.
- Coordinate services provided by partners.



DHA Initiatives: Health and Wellness Partners

- Duke University School of Nursing (Chronic disease testing/Elderly)
- NC Central School of Nursing (Nutrition, CNA Program)
- Durham County Coop Extension (Well baby clinic, parenting advise)
- Durham County Dept. of Health (Individual and Family services)
- Sigma Health Services (Substance abuse/mental health counseling)
- UNC School of Medicine (STD and Exercise programs)
- UNI Health (Elder care, in home and at Center)
- Lincoln Community Health Center (Physical/mental health services)
- CAARE (Assist individuals and families with HIV/AIDS, case management, transitional housing, chronic disease testing and services for elderly/disabled)



Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority

Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NRHA)

Who we are:

- Largest redevelopment and housing authority in Virginia
- 15 assisted rental communities (3,700 households)
- Housing Choice Voucher Program (3,500 households)
- 5 regional project-based housing programs (preference given to formerly homeless and disabled residents)

NRHA Initiatives: Activities

- Community health center within a public housing community
- Asthma education grant
- Dental bus
- Community gardens
- Smoking cessation
- *'With Every Heartbeat is Life'*
- REACH grant
- Pest abatement activity
- Partnership with city's health initiative
- Health as part of our workforce development curriculum
- STEM-Health
- CPR classes

Neighborhood Community Health Center



NRHA Initiatives: Outcomes

- Swim program—
improved grades and
concentration in the
classroom
- REACH—adaptation of
health initiatives in our
resident communities
and agency



NRHA Initiatives: Outcomes

- Community health center—expanded hours and participation up by 40% in one year
- Community gardens—expanded to 4 family communities, 1 elderly community and 4 local schools



STEM kite-flying activity



NRHA Initiatives: Challenges

- Low participation from residents
- Funding restrictions can limit scope and duration of programs
- Having a well-educated, informed staff
- Establishing multiple points of entry for community involvement
- Engaging the entire household

NRHA Initiatives: The Approach

- Be consistent and persistent
- Incorporate incentives, when possible
- Identify opportunities for employment for residents
- Make sure programs fit the community demographic

Housing Authorities Need Health Partners

- Housing authorities are mission-driven organizations that seek to better life outcomes of residents
- Know that resident population is in poor health overall, and needs services to improve their health condition
- Many different access points for partnerships

Strategies for Overcoming Challenges to Partnering

- Start small—target your resources
- Identify your common goals/objectives
- Set clear roles and responsibilities
- Communication is key: encourage ongoing feedback mechanisms
- Maintain high expectations, but anticipate unforeseen obstacles to implementation

Best Practices for Partnering

- Collaborative planning processes
- Shared outcomes by which to measure performance
- Dedicated points of contact for coordination of the partnership
- Regular communication between partners
- Cross-training of staff

Thanks!

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