



County of San Diego

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TO: Supervisor Nora Vargas, Chairwoman
Supervisor Terra Lawson-Remer, Vice Chair
Supervisor Joel Anderson
Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe
Supervisor Jim Desmond

FROM: Kimberly Giardina, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Health and Human Services Agency

UPDATE ON ENHANCING SAFETY AND SERVICES AT NO PLACE LIKE HOME AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

The No Place Like Home (NPLH) State program was created to develop permanent supportive housing for people in need of mental health services and who are experiencing homelessness, chronic homelessness, or are at-risk of chronic homelessness. People who are experiencing homelessness and have a serious mental illness (SMI) diagnosis are linked to NPLH units via the regional Coordinated Entry System (CES). CES is an evidence-based strategy that focuses on housing and service coordination designed to link individuals or families experiencing homelessness to the most appropriate housing solution based on their needs.

As an Alternative Process County grantee, the County of San Diego (County) provides funding (via deferred loans) for the construction, acquisition, and/or rehabilitation of permanent supportive housing that serves NPLH eligible tenants. Additionally, through County Behavioral Health Services (BHS), the County must commit to providing access to necessary behavioral health supportive services for no less than 20 years. The County may also provide a Capitalized Operating Subsidy Reserve (COSR) for developments that are not able to secure Project Based Vouchers. The COSR may be used to subsidize eligible operating expenses for NPLH assisted units at a development.

Since 2020, the County has provided NPLH funds to 21 developments across the County. Seven have completed construction and now provide affordable housing and services to County residents. This funding has enabled the County to significantly expand capacity to permanently house people experiencing homelessness with behavioral health conditions, adding 192 new units paired with services across the county. Data is tracked and reported annually to the State and indicate positive outcomes for residents. For the last reporting period, more than 92% of residents in NPLH units countywide had remained in their housing unit for more than a year.

On April 9, 2024 (5), the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) approved the following actions to enhance support for people with serious mental illness who are living in permanent supportive housing units funded by the NPLH program:

- Implement a pilot program to increase services for residents with serious mental illness living in the four affordable housing developments with NPLH units in North County to include enhanced clinical support seven days per week.
- Ensure all personnel on-site receive Mental Health First Aid training and be trained on how to refer people to 24/7 behavioral health crisis response resources.
- Develop a two-part plan to 1) ensure visitors are checked in and out which allows on-site staff to have awareness of who is on the property, and 2) assess current staffing needs to ensure at least one staff member who has the Mental Health First Aid training is on-site at all times.
- Report back to the Board within 90 days with an update on the plans for the four developments in North County that have NPLH units.
- Report back to the Board within six months with an update on progress, outcomes, and a plan to implement these changes countywide.

In response to these Board actions, a 90-day update via memorandum was provided on July 18, 2024. Today's memorandum includes the six-month update on progress, outcomes, and a plan to implement these changes countywide.

The Board directed initial efforts to be piloted at the following affordable housing developments in North County: Windsor Pointe (Carlsbad), Valley Senior Village (Escondido), Greenbrier Village (Oceanside), and Santa Fe Senior Village (Vista). Windsor Pointe and Valley Senior Village are both fully occupied, Greenbrier Village began leasing up new residents in September 2024, and Santa Fe Senior Village is currently under construction.

Update on Enhanced Clinical Support at NPLH Developments

As an initial step in pilot implementation, staff has explored funding opportunities to add enhanced clinical support seven days per week and maximize the level of services and hours of case management services and referrals to residents. Expansion to seven day a week services is estimated to cost nearly \$700,000 annually and is not reimbursable to Medi-Cal; therefore, would result in additional County cost. Funding has not yet been identified to support such increased service levels at this time. Any new General Fund resources required may result in budget reductions in other programs. Staff will continue to explore funding opportunities to enhance clinical support at the four North County NPLH developments and countywide, which may be available through opportunities such as behavioral health payment reform.

On a parallel track, an array of existing behavioral health services and other comprehensive supports funded by County BHS, including the Tenant Peer Support Services (TPSS) program, are proactively being made available to residents within the NPLH developments to enhance resident well-being.

Information related to County-funded TPSS services and hours at the four identified sites was previously provided in the July 2024 memorandum. To summarize those available County-funded services:

- At Windsor Pointe, earlier this year, County BHS expanded TPSS to provide 44 hours of service each week. The County has also worked with the developer to make additional funding available for on-site support through the COSR funding agreement.
- At Valley Senior Village, TPSS provides eight scheduled "office hours" each month in addition to providing individual engagement. TPSS actively engages tenants on an ongoing basis and helps connect them to referrals for outpatient clinic services, Strengths-Based Case Management (SBCM), Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), and additional community-based services as needed.
- Throughout the lease-up process currently underway at Greenbrier Village, TPSS engages with tenants prior to and through the move-in process to meet individual needs, which includes

navigating lease signings and gathering necessary documentation for income verification. This may involve helping tenants collect and organize various financial documents such as bank statements, benefit award letters, and pay stubs.

- While the lease-up process has not started at Santa Fe Senior Village, TPSS is already engaging with property management on best practices and preparing to support incoming tenants. TPSS will be ready to provide the same comprehensive move-in assistance and documentation support offered at Greenbrier Village during the lease-up process.

In addition to County BHS funded services, residents have access to voluntary resident services funded by the respective affordable housing developer. At Windsor Pointe, Interfaith Community Services is contracted to provide case management to all residents including linkage to community support programs, clothing, employment, food, mental health services, and conducts resident engagement activities. At Valley Senior Village and Greenbrier Village, Hope Through Housing provides the same resident services offered at Windsor Pointe. Once construction is completed at Santa Fe Senior Village, Hope Through Housing will provide resident services. These services are for all residents in the development and not exclusive of those residing in NPLH units. This collaborative approach is further enhanced by the County's significant expansion of behavioral health services across the region. Together, these efforts form a wide-ranging and interconnected support system, ensuring that residents have access to a diverse array of services tailored to meet their individual needs.

Immediate support for a behavioral health crisis is available 24/7 through the Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) and Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT) programs. An array of substance use and mental health treatment options are available to residents in need of care by calling the County's Access and Crisis Line at 9-8-8.

Update on Mental Health First Aid Training

County BHS is leveraging a contracted service provider to provide additional Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training for NPLH site personnel and residents. TPSS staff who support residents in the developments have already completed MHFA training as part of their County contracted obligations. MHFA learning topics include skills needed to recognize and respond to signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use challenges, as well as how to provide someone with initial support until they are connected through referrals to appropriate services, including 24/7 behavioral health crisis response resources.

The first MHFA training series was completed at Windsor Pointe in June 2024. MHFA training was offered to residents and all personnel on-site, including property management, case management, security, and maintenance staff. To further engage site personnel and residents and encourage participation in the trainings, BHS is working with the MHFA contractor to condense the training and provide incentives for resident participation. It is anticipated the revised training will launch in Fall 2024 at Windsor Pointe, Valley Senior Village, and Greenbrier Village. The training will also be provided at Santa Fe Senior Village once the lease up process is complete. Staff is continuing to explore funding opportunities to expand MHFA countywide across all NPLH developments.

Update on Visitor Check-in Policy

As reported in July, visitor/guest policies are established by property management and thus will vary by development. The County does not have the authority to dictate check in policies; however, it is responsible for ensuring compliance with State's NPLH Program Guidelines, which do not allow for restrictions on guests that are not otherwise required by other project funding sources or would not be common in other unsubsidized rental housing in the community. The County will continue to work with developers to ensure compliance with NPLH guidelines.

In addition to the State NPLH Guidelines regarding visitor/guest policies, the guidelines also require that tenants in NPLH-assisted units must sign a residential lease and have the same rights and responsibilities of tenancy as non-NPLH tenants.

For questions, please contact Kelly Salmons at HCDS via phone at (858) 694-4806 or email Kelly.Salmons@sdcounty.ca.gov; or Nadia Privara at BHS via phone at (619) 563-2700 or email Nadia.Privara@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Respectfully,



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c: Ebony N. Shelton, Chief Administrative Officer