

Recommendations

The following recommendations were developed by the Oregon HIV/AIDS housing needs assessment and plan Steering Committee. The Steering Committee based these recommendations on the findings of the needs assessment, which drew from information gathered in key informant interviews, consumer focus groups, consumer surveys, and document and data reviews.

Leadership

Addressing the critical issues identified during the course of the needs assessment and implementing the strategies of this plan will require leadership. The Steering Committee recognized the importance of diversifying and expanding leadership in the HIV/AIDS housing arena, but also that the Task Force is currently a focal point for undertaking this work. The following recommendation discusses leadership:

1. Continue regular meetings of the Oregon HIV/AIDS Housing Task Force. The statewide group will:
 - Distribute the *Oregon Balance of State HIV/AIDS Housing Plan* widely among relevant audiences.
 - Develop strategies to secure political support for the Task Force's initiatives.
 - Oversee implementation of the *Oregon Balance of State HIV/AIDS Housing Plan* recommendations.
 - Provide a forum for the exchange of data, information, best practices, and successes.
 - Allow for the exchange of information between state and local levels.
 - Work to decrease the stigma associated with HIV.

Relationship Building

People living with HIV/AIDS today are a diverse group. Many face challenges in addition to HIV, including mental illness, substance use issues, a history of homelessness, and involvement with the criminal justice system. The HIV/AIDS service system by itself cannot and should not meet the range of needs of people living with HIV/AIDS. Instead, coordination and collaboration between systems is vital to maximizing the use of all resources. The following recommendations relate to building relationships between the HIV/AIDS service system and other systems.

2. Pursue opportunities for coordination and collaboration with housing and service providers at the state and local levels. Relationship building between and among the following agencies and systems is essential in order to maximize limited resources and to best meet the needs of all people served by these agencies and providers, including those living with HIV/AIDS:
 - Oregon Health Services, Oregon Housing and Community Services, Adult and Family Services, Department of Corrections, Senior and Disability Services, and other state and local agencies
 - HIV/AIDS social service and medical providers
 - Housing providers
 - Mental health providers
 - Substance use treatment and recovery providers
 - Council for Independent Living
3. Provide education to a wide range of community members, including:
 - **State and local elected officials** through the dissemination of the plan and its findings
 - **Landlords and housing providers** regarding the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS, and how they can help meet this population's housing needs; provide education through various channels including conferences and trade organizations
 - **HIV/AIDS service providers** regarding housing topics, particularly affordable housing programs and vocabulary
 - **Consumers** regarding landlord-tenant law, Fair Housing law, tenant responsibilities, budgeting, and other topics supporting housing stability
 - **Other programs providing housing assistance** regarding people living with HIV/AIDS and their housing needs
4. HIV/AIDS service providers and advocates will participate in relevant local planning processes to ensure that people living with HIV/AIDS and their needs are represented. Planning processes should include those related to:
 - Community Action Programs
 - Continuum of Care and local Homeless Coalitions
 - Commission on Children and Family
 - United Way
 - Consolidated Plan

Program Initiatives

During the needs assessment process, specific needs along the HIV/AIDS housing continuum—including transitional housing and homelessness prevention—were identified. In addition, the Steering Committee recognized the need for dedicated staffing to fulfill the strategies identified in this plan. The following recommendations are new program initiatives.

5. Ensure resources for a housing coordination role, at a minimum at the statewide level. The housing coordinator will:
 - Maintain current knowledge of Oregon’s housing resources.
 - Educate people living with HIV/AIDS and service providers.
 - Develop relationships with housing providers and property managers.
 - Facilitate relationship building at the local level between AIDS service providers and housing providers.
 - Support local efforts to meet the housing needs of people living with HIV/AIDS.
6. Meet the housing needs of people living within HIV/AIDS in times of transition.
 - Identify and share successful models of providing service-enriched transitional housing.
 - Ensure that the need for supportive transitional housing opportunities for people living with HIV/AIDS is represented in relevant needs assessment and planning processes.
 - Develop transitional housing programs designed to meet the diverse needs of individuals and families.
7. Identify and secure funding to create a shallow rent subsidy program to provide a small on-going monthly stipend targeting people who are already housed as a homelessness prevention strategy.