

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY



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Office of the Commissioner

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November 1, 2007

Alcohol
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State Fire
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Governor Tim Pawlenty
State of Minnesota

The Honorable Linda Higgins, Chair
The Honorable Thomas Neuville
Senate Public Safety Budget Division

The Honorable Michael Paymar, Chair
The Honorable Steve Smith
House Public Safety Finance Committee

The Honorable Mee Moua, Chair
The Honorable Warren Limmer
Senate Judiciary Committee

The Honorable Joe Mullery, Chair
The Honorable Paul Kohls
Public Safety and Civil Justice Committee

Dear Colleagues,

Enclosed please find the Homeless Pilot Project Grants Final Report as prepared by the Office of Justice Programs, a division of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. The purpose of the report is to document the use of grant funding and the effectiveness of three Homeless Pilot Project grantees. We submit this final report to you Pursuant to Laws of Minnesota 2005, Chapter 136, Article 8, Section 27, Subdivision 3.

The primary purpose of these grants is to reduce the use of public safety and correctional resources in response to the community of homeless and to connect people experiencing homelessness with housing and services. An additional objective of the pilot projects was to develop cooperative, collaborative relationships between local police departments and service providers.

The Department of Public Safety views this correspondence as satisfying the reporting requirements as provided in the Laws of Minnesota 2005, Chapter 136, Article 8, Section 27, Subdivision 3.

If you have any questions or concerns related to this report, please don't hesitate to contact me or Jeri Boisvert, Director of the Office of Justice Programs at 651 201-7305.

Sincerely,

Michael Campion, Commissioner

cc: Laura Kadwell, Director of Ending Long Term Homelessness
Legislative Reference Library

Homeless Pilot Project Grants: Final Report to the Minnesota Legislature

November 2007

Prepared by the Office of Justice Programs
Minnesota Department of Public Safety

Homeless Pilot Project Grants Final Report

Executive Summary

From October 2005 through June 2007, The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS), Office of Justice Programs (OJP) oversaw the programming of three Homeless Pilot Project grantees: *People Incorporated* (Hennepin County), *The Police-Homelessness Outreach Program* (Ramsey County), and *Churches United Ministry* (St. Louis County). Total grant funding awarded equaled \$390,000, with individual programs providing an additional \$206,806 in matching contributions.

The purpose of these pilot project grants was to reduce the use of public safety and correctional resources in response to the community of homeless; to promote stronger communities through street and shelter outreach; and to connect people experiencing homelessness with housing and services. An additional objective of the pilot projects was to develop cooperative, collaborative relationships with local police departments.

Homeless Pilot Project grantees recently completed their two year pilot period. Collectively they have served 354 persons experiencing homelessness. Of the 218 actively receiving services at the end of the grant, 65 percent had obtained stable housing. Additional services offered by the programs included access to benefits, medical care, chemical and mental health treatment, and case management.

Program participants were 70 percent male, and three-quarters (73%) were between 36 and 55 years of age. The greatest racial groups served were American Indian/Native Alaskan (33%), African-American (33%), and White (31%). Most program participants were identified and recruited by street outreach workers and law enforcement at 39 and 31 percent, respectively. An additional 12 percent were participating based on self or peer referral.

Feedback from the pilot program staff reveals cooperative partnerships with police departments and municipal groups. Police have been described by project staff as committed to the projects, responsive to issues impacting the community of homeless, and open to expanding their knowledge through cross-trainings and homeless focus groups. Together they have identified the highest risk homeless persons and implemented cooperative interventions. Challenges have primarily related to engaging police at all levels of the organization, the limited availability of officers, homeless persons as a low priority for police, and the tenuous historical relationship between police and persons experiencing homelessness.

Data collected from the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) illustrates a decrease in arrests for program participants. Prior to programming, 87 percent of program participants had been arrested at least once as compared to 33 percent who have been arrested one or more times during the program (note 10% of participant data is missing in this category). Likewise, detoxification center admissions data illustrates that 70 percent of program participants had one or more admissions to detox before programming versus 45 percent with one or more admissions during programming. By both measures, reliance on correctional and emergency services appears to be decreasing while participants are in programming.

Obstacles to effective service provision from the view point of program staff are primarily related to the lack of available housing, especially for persons with multiple challenges such as chemical addiction, mental health needs, and criminal records. Barriers to care include homeless persons' lack of health care benefits, identification, and stable housing to manage medications and health. Staff express that more funding and resources are needed to meet case management demands, to cover transportation and medication costs, and to conduct community building activities.

Three additional homeless grants are being funded by the Office of Justice Programs from October 2007 to June 2009. Two incumbents, *The Police-Homelessness Outreach Program* (Ramsey County) and *Churches United Ministry* (St. Louis County), will continue to receive support. A new program, *St. Steven's Human Services*, will serve Hennepin County. Each program will receive approximately \$98,000. While there is no required financial match for the second grant cycle, all grantees are providing both cash and in-kind contributions to their projects.

Homeless Pilot Project Grants Final Report

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS), Office of Justice Programs (OJP) in collaboration with the Ending Long-Term Homelessness Advisory Council and the Minnesota Department of Human Services Office of Economic Opportunity awarded funding to three Homeless Pilot Project grantees. The goals of these programs were selected as consistent with the grant objectives of: "reduc[ing] the use of public safety and correctional resources and promot[ing] stronger communities through street and shelter outreach that will connect people experiencing homelessness to housing and services." Grant recipients were supported from October 2005 through June 2007 by the Homeless Pilot Project funds.

Pursuant to Laws of Minnesota 2005, Chapter 136, Article 8, Section 27, Subdivision 3, the Office of Justice Programs submits the following Annual Report on the effectiveness of the Homeless Pilot Project programs and use of grant funding:

USE OF FUNDING:

A total of \$390,000 in grant funding was awarded to the three pilot projects. Grant funding was used by the projects for the following purposes:

Personnel Costs	\$275,710 (71%)	Supports 4.5 staff
Contract Services	\$ 66,698 (17%)	Primarily for mental health services and evaluation assistance
Direct Assistance	\$ 20,874 (5%)	Identification cards, hygiene supplies, bus transportation
Staff Expenses	\$ 6,110 (2%)	Mileage, office supplies and cell phones
Overhead	\$ 20,608 (5%)	

In addition to the funding for the projects that is provided by the grants, agencies provided \$206,806 in additional support in the form of matching contributions. The matching contributions primarily supported personnel costs and direct assistance to homeless individuals, including the cost of temporary shelter while program participants were awaiting a housing placement.

GRANT RECIPIENT PROGRAM SUMMARIES:

Hennepin County: **People Incorporated** (\$189,838)

People Incorporated aimed to decrease homeless contacts with police and emergency medical services through active, front-end community outreach. Program staff had daily contact with persons experiencing homelessness through a street outreach team that strove to facilitate transitional and permanent housing, and to provide for the physical, mental, and chemical health needs of the homeless community. This program also established a point person who worked cooperatively with the Minneapolis Police Department to address law enforcement contacts and code enforcement issues. In part, grant funding added a psychiatrist and a registered nurse to the outreach team to serve hard to reach persons and increase the number of treatment services available to this population. Through proactive measures that addressed mental and chemical health, People Incorporated aspired to decrease contacts with police and hospitals, and increase clients' retention of permanent housing.

Ramsey County: **South Metro Human Services: Police-Homeless Outreach Program** (\$82,248)

South Metro Human Services sought to utilize grant funding to add a worker to their ACCESS team serving the homeless population. This Police-Homeless Outreach Program worker (P-HOP) specifically developed an active, on-going collaboration with the St. Paul Police Department and was located within a police department sub-station. In this manner the police and P-HOP worker could respond rapidly and effectively to issues between the police and persons experiencing homelessness. In addition, this position involved cross-training between the ACCESS team and law enforcement, and participated in collaborative coalitions and alliances. This

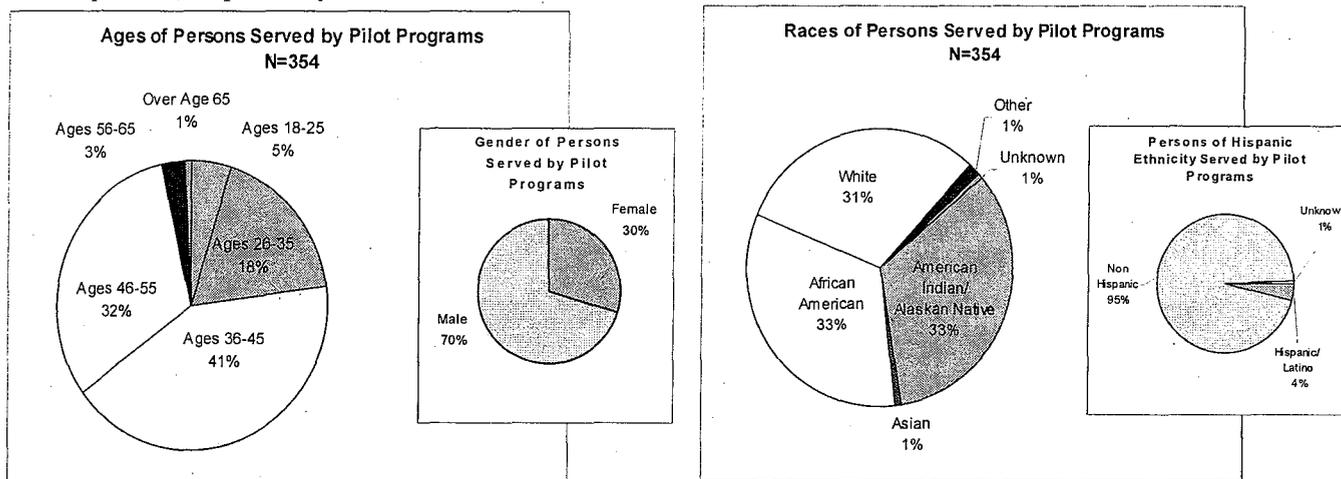
new worker also worked directly with the population of homeless who were least receptive to case management services or who were most often precluded from services and housing due to criminal records.

St. Louis County: Churches United Ministry, Duluth (\$131,725)

Churches United Ministry (CHUM) and the Human Development Center (HDC) partnered together, in cooperation with the Duluth Police Department, to create the Duluth Homeless Outreach Collaborative. CHUM operates emergency shelters, drop-in centers and street outreach, whereas HDC is the primary provider of mental health and 24 Hour Crisis Response Team services to Duluth's population of homeless. The collaborative sought to identify, with the help of the police, the homeless population that was most frequently in contact with law enforcement and target them for services. The goal was to divert these persons away from the court system and provide intensive case management in lieu of formal proceedings or consequences. Case management activities included assisting with applications for benefits and housing, securing appointments for mental and chemical health through HDC, and increasing personal skill development. The Collaborative also provided peer networking opportunities and activities for persons experiencing homelessness in the Duluth area to intensify community support systems.

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS:

At the end of the grant period, the three pilot projects served 354 persons experiencing homelessness in Ramsey, Hennepin and St. Louis counties. Participants experienced over 26,500 documented contacts with grantee outreach workers. Those served were 70 percent male, and almost three-quarters of participants fell between the ages of 36 and 55 years old. The homeless population is racially diverse, however American Indians/Native Alaskans, African Americans and Whites were the three largest groups represented in these programs at 33, 33, and 31 percent, respectively.

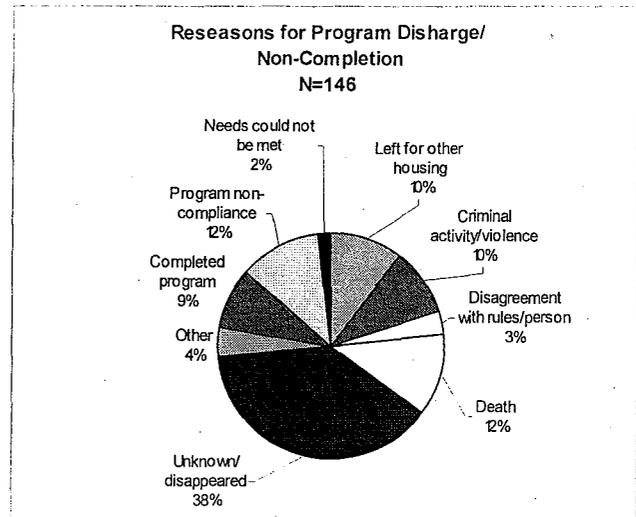
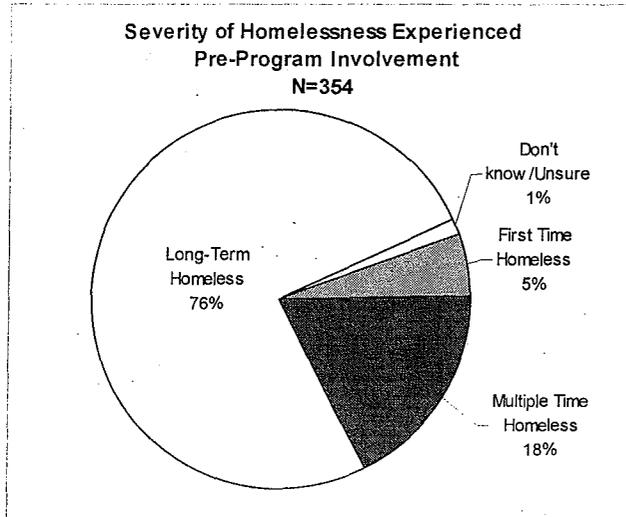


PARTICIPANT REFERRALS AND CHARACTERISTICS:

Participants for the pilot programs predominantly came from street outreach workers' efforts to engage the homeless community (39%) and from referral from law enforcement or the criminal justice system (31%). Other sources of participants were self or peer referred (12%), referral from social workers or counselors (9%) and referral from shelters or housing providers (6%).

Of program participants, 76 percent reported that they have experienced Long-Term Homelessness. For the purpose of these grants, long term homelessness has been defined as: "Homeless for at least one year, or homeless four times in the past three years." An additional 18 percent of participants reported experiencing multiple periods of homelessness that did not meet the formal definition of long-term homelessness. In this regard, it appears the pilot projects are correctly identifying and serving those who are experiencing chronic homelessness. At the end of the grant, of the 218 persons still actively receiving services, 65 percent had acquired "stable housing" as defined individually by each program.

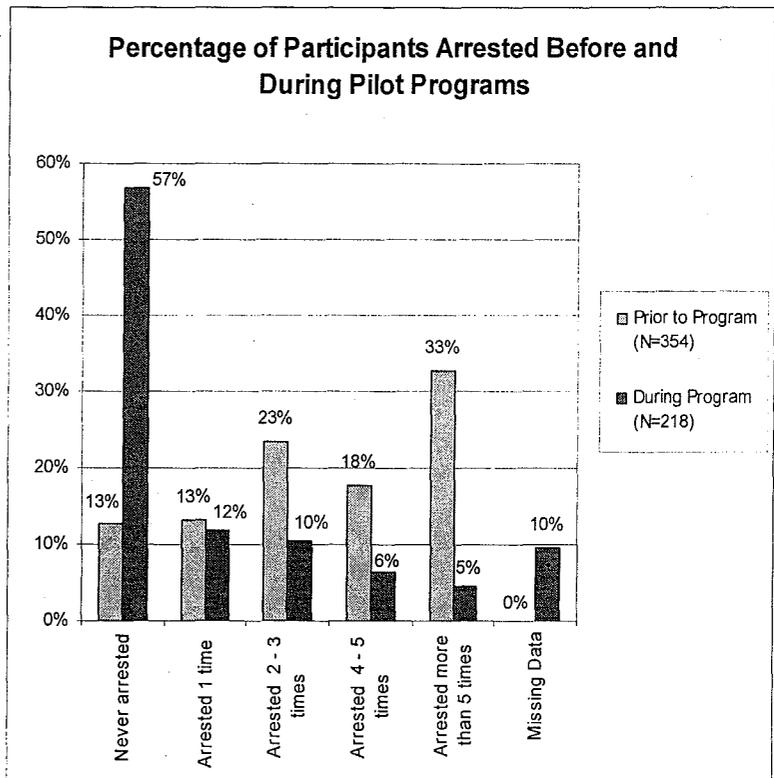
All programs have experienced a degree of attrition in retaining participants (N=146). Due to the transient nature of the homeless community, 38 percent of persons not completing the program are categorized as having "disappeared" or discontinued for "unknown" reasons. One of the second largest causes of attrition, death (12%), illustrates the risks to health and safety that are a reality for persons experiencing homelessness.

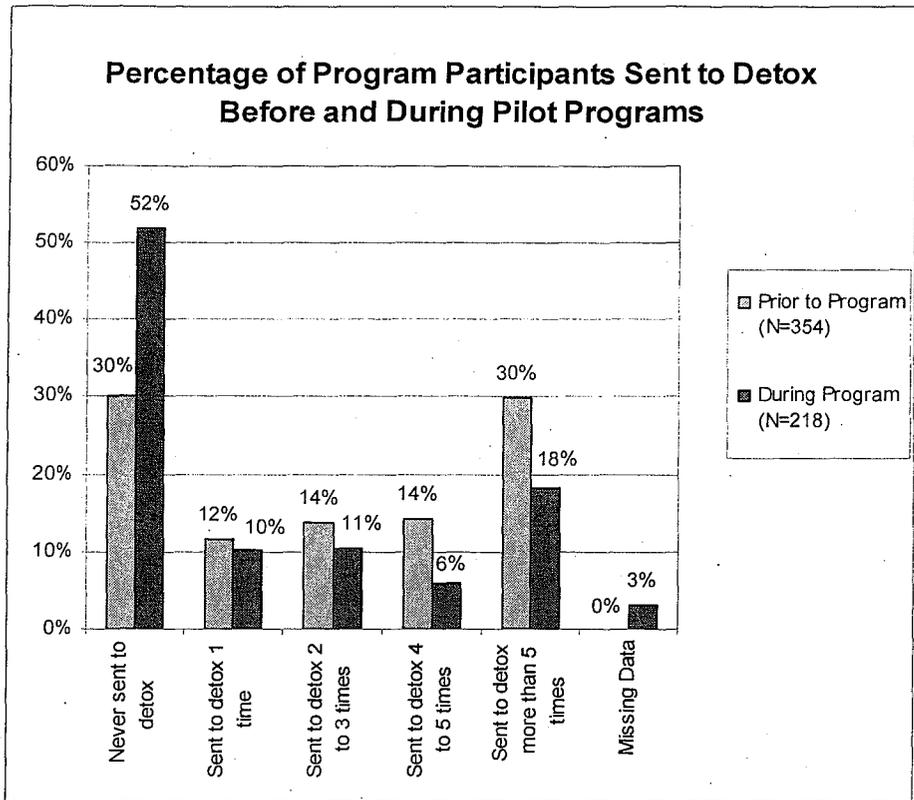


IMPACT UPON LAW ENFORCEMENT RESOURCES AND RECIDIVISM:

In addition to reducing long term homelessness, a main objective of the Homeless Pilot Projects was to reduce the use of correctional interventions and resources. To the extent possible, programs were intended to target persons who were having frequent contact with law enforcement. These contacts often resulted in use of detoxification services, hospitalization, criminal charges, court action, jail time, and probation services.

Data collected from the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) arrest records before participants began the pilot programs demonstrate that 87 percent of all participants had been arrested multiple times (more than once); 33 percent of all participants had been arrested more than 5 times before starting the programs. Data collected from the BCA during programming demonstrates that frequency of arrests has decreased such that 57 percent of the active participants at the end of the pilot had not been arrested at all during programming. Again, of those active participants remaining, 5 percent remain in the category of having been arrested 5 or more times during programming, down from 33 percent. This data suggests that a small percentage of homeless persons will continue to utilize law enforcement resources, but that most program participants have had fewer arrests since they began the program. Long term data on arrest rates post-programming are not yet available.





Similarly, the pilot projects are intended to reduce the use of non-correctional placements that involve police contact. Admissions data from detoxification centers reveals that prior to starting the programs, 58 percent of participants had multiple admissions (more than one) to detox. Admissions data collected during participant programming demonstrates a decrease in the use of detox such that 35 percent of program participants required multiple trips. It is also notable that those using detox chronically (more than 5 times) has decreased from 30 percent to 18 percent, though they do not represent the same length of timeframe. There has also been a substantial increase in the number of

participants who have not required any use of detox during programming; from 30 percent up to 52 percent. This data supports project worker observations that chemical health services are an on-going need area for the population of homeless, but also supports participant reports that programming has motivated them to remain sober.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM IMPACT:

Quarterly, grant recipients were asked to provide narrative information about their programs' successes, challenges and collaborative opportunities. Additional narrative information was provided for this report based upon their interim report and final program evaluations. Information includes their quality of partnership with the police; perceptions about the program among program participants and partners; selected achievements; major obstacles to service provision; and what resources would help to better serve the community of homeless.

Relationships with Police Departments:

All programs expressed positive relationships with police departments that met or exceeded their expectations. Police have been open to creative problem solving and changing protocols on how they enforce codes and address nuisance behavior with the community of homeless. They have also used the pilot programs as a resource and communication link to the community.

Strengths of collaboration	Limitations of collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receptivity to the programs/commitment to collaborate/willingness to integrate efforts. • Positive relationship building between police and program staff/clear role delineation. • Cooperative identification of highest risk persons/tag-teaming police responses to problem persons and areas. • Opportunities for cross-trainings and ride-alongs with police to improve understanding of each other's perspectives and role in working with homeless. • Discussion groups between police and homeless persons are changing perceptions and stereotypes about one another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police have limited numbers of officers and time available to cooperate. • Difficulty engaging all officers, supervisors and stakeholders within some police departments. • Homeless citizens are low priority as compared to other issues for police. • Homeless community is distrustful of police/past negative experiences need to be overcome. • Transfer of information and data between pilot programs and police regarding use of citations and arrests can be slow/difficult.

Selected Collaborative Partnerships:

In addition to police departments, the pilot programs have been facilitating partnerships with other community resources and service providers. Collaborative partnerships have included: Court systems, detox centers, shelters and housing sources, business associations, faith-based charities, chambers of commerce, county commissioners, and community corrections departments. The pilot projects are also well represented on a variety of committees and task-forces including the Hennepin County Commission to End Long-Term Homelessness, the Greater Downtown Council (Duluth), The St. Paul Coalition for the Homeless, the Crime Prevention Task Force (Minneapolis), the Clean and Safe Team (Duluth Police), and the St. Paul Police/Provider Task Force.

Selected Program Achievements:

Much of the work of homeless outreach goes unrecognized, as change is often a slow, behind-the-scenes process. It is for this reason that grantees shared and emphasized some of their selected achievements that resulted in improved quality of life for participants and quality of collaboration with partners.

- Provided alternative housing that eased the impact of police enforcing "decampment" policies.
- Created a permanent crisis bed at a shelter as an "after-hours" jail alternative for police to use.
- Procured rental vouchers for participants through the MN Housing Finance Agency.
- Established a cooperative relationship with a hospital Chemical Dependency Unit for ongoing care.
- A police officer working with grantees and the homeless community was nominated for Officer of the Year within his department.
- Received 2006 Leadership in Ending Long-Term Homelessness Award in recognition of unique partnerships and collaborative efforts.
- Facilitated retreats and activities for participants to build community and improve social functioning.
- Developed alternative sentencing and diversion options with county attorneys and courts.
- Provided anecdotal evidence and police accounts of decreased crime in target areas.
- Collaborated with landlords to create homes run communally by homeless program participants.
- Assisted the navigation of social systems to procure General Assistance, MN Supplemental Assistance, Social Security, health insurance and food stamps.
- Created cognitive change in participants leading to the breaking of destructive cycles that perpetuated both homelessness and contact with the legal system.

Feedback from Program Participants, Staff and Partners:

Feedback from program participants has revealed appreciation for the many services these pilot projects provided as well as the sense of belonging and community the programs have fostered. The following are accounts from participants, staff and partners describing the impact the programs have had upon lives:

Participants:

- “Imagine having everything you own in a bag with no idea where to go. You’re tired, sore and depressed... This program helped me feel a part of something.”
- “This program has given me a place to hang out, a chance to meet new people and helps me with food. It keeps me sober and helps me get business done.”
- “Being in the street outreach program is helping me cut down on my drinking and I’m not getting in trouble with the police as much as before.”
- “I would have never received benefits without you. I don’t understand how to get benefits; you really helped.”
- “I [now] have a place to live. I’m not homeless. Relieves a lot of stress and it’s helped me stay sober. I have mental health issues and my mental health is stable at this point.”

Staff:

- “Helen lived on the streets since age eleven, reportedly fleeing an abusive foster home soon after her mother’s death. She was involved in prostitution for 35 years, addicted to heroine and cocaine. As a [program] participant, she is housed, drug-free and is graduating from Breaking Free, a support program for women escaping prostitution and chemical dependency.”
- “Bob was a chronic drug user and dealer all his adult life. After connecting with [the program] he received his very first mental health assessment and treatment. He now takes medications for Bi-Polar Disorder, manages his diabetes, and was recently reunited with his family in another state.”
- Edwin, 67, has probably had 500 detox visits in his life. He moved into [program] housing for a while and found some stability. For a while he mentored a young crack addict, which helped him stay sober. Although he still has some detox visits he had definitely has a reduction. He has had no visits to detox in the last six months.

Partners:

- “At least 10 of the over 60 chronic offenders we deal with [in the program] have stopped offending, being incarcerated, processed in court, etc. This is clearly is a cost savings and the energy of police officers and prosecutors are being used more efficiently on other problems.” City Attorney
- “There has been a reduction in... public urination, disorderly conduct, loitering, littering and drunkenness.” Police Chief
- The target population “has benefited by options made readily available to them by the program that have also resulted in fewer trips to detox.” Downtown Patrol Officer

Additional Need Areas:

The following obstacles have been identified by pilot project administrators and staff as on-going barriers to service delivery or empowerment of the homeless community:

Housing:

- Limitations in available and affordable housing; need more housing resources.
- Criminal records preclude people from public housing access; have had to find other housing solutions.
- Few housing options available for persons with "multiple barriers" such as chemical addiction, mental health issues and criminal records. Eviction rates are high among this group.
- Few options for police to place homeless people "after hours" other than in jail or detox centers.
- Difficulty engaging landlords in agreeing to house high-risk population.
- Need additional subsidies for housing for people on General Assistance.

Staffing:

- Services are very time intensive; need more outreach and case management staff to meet needs.
- Police departments are short staffed, impacting the time and resources that can be devoted to this issue.
- It takes a long time and staff consistency to build trusting relationships with program participants.
- Not enough staff to meet the needs of all the people and areas the police have identified.
- Not enough hours available to meet all the psychiatric needs of participants.
- Desire to expand programming but no money to hire additional support.

Costs:

- Transportation costs are high to get people to appointments for medical and psychiatric care.
- Costs associated with procuring birth certificates and identification cards to get benefits and services.
- High demand from the community of homeless for sober activities, outings and community building. These activities are expensive to operate regularly.
- High cost of medications to address chronic physical and mental health needs.

Care:

- Few chemical and mental health treatment options available to this community.
- Wait time for chemical assessment and mental health treatment is long; participants' motivational window of opportunity is missed.
- Need additional subsidies to get those on General Assistance mental health care.
- Court system often does not embrace a holistic model that would allow for alternative sentencing.

FUTURE FUNDING:

The Office of Justice Programs will continue to support two incumbent programs, *The Police-Homelessness Outreach Program* (Ramsey County) and *Churches United Ministry* (St. Louis County) during a second grant cycle. In addition, a new program, *St. Steven's Human Services*, will serve Hennepin County. Each program will receive approximately \$98,000. Though there is no match required during the second grant cycle, all grantees are providing both in-kind and financial support to their projects.

The second grant period of the Homelessness Projects will extend from October 2007 through June 2009. As was the case with the pilot programs, these grantees will continue to submit quarterly progress reports to the Office of Justice Programs and will complete a final program evaluation.

Prepared by the Office of Justice Programs
Minnesota Department of Public Safety
November 2007