

November 13, 2024

Dear Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program Colleagues:

The Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) HIV/AIDS Bureau (HAB) recognizes November as National Homelessness Awareness Month. This month is a time to reflect on the vital importance of safe, affordable, and accessible housing for people with HIV. As we recognize this month, we are reminded that housing is more than just a place to live; it is the foundation towards achieving positive health outcomes.

HRSA's Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program (RWHAP) provides a comprehensive system of HIV primary medical care, medication, and essential support services to more than 560,000 people with HIV each year. Additionally, the RWHAP serves a critical role in the intersection between HIV care and treatment and housing. Many RWHAP recipients provide housing support services for people experiencing temporary or unstable housing as part of their wrap-around services.

Housing is a proven and cost-effective intervention as it is attributed to preventing ongoing transmissions and reducing avoidable emergency and inpatient care.^{[1][2]} Research indicates that stable housing also has a direct and powerful effect on HIV incidence, HIV health outcomes, and health disparities. However, disparities still exist for several RWHAP populations of focus who experience disproportionately high rates of temporary or unstable housing, including youth aged 13-24 years, older adults, transgender clients, Black/African Americans, and Hispanic/Latinos. Additionally, when you look at viral suppression, significant disparities still exist for people experiencing unstable housing. As of 2022, data show that nationally 89.6% of RWHAP clients receiving HIV medical care reached viral suppression, and for RWHAP clients with stable housing, viral suppression is 90.6%. However, among clients experiencing temporary housing, viral suppression is 84.1%, and 77.9% among clients experiencing unstable housing.

HRSA HAB continues to support the housing-related needs of people with HIV. Recipients identified that a barrier to stable and permanent housing was the inability to support housing security deposits. In response, HRSA HAB released a [program letter](#) in June 2024 that clarified the use of RWHAP funds to pay for a RWHAP client's security deposit if a RWHAP

[1] Buchanan, et al. (2009). The health impact of supportive housing for HIV-positive homeless patients: a randomized controlled trial. *Am J Public Health*, 99 Suppl 3(Suppl 3): S675-80.

[2] Khanijow, et al. (2015). Difference in Survival between Housed and Homeless individuals with HIV, San Francisco, 2002–2011. *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved*, 26(3), 1005-1018

recipient or subrecipient has policies and procedures in place to ensure that the security deposit is returned to the RWHAP recipient or subrecipient and not to the RWHAP client. Additionally, HRSA HAB has initiated a RWHAP Part F Special Program of National Significance initiative titled *Supporting Replication (SURE) of Housing Interventions*. The SURE Housing initiative implements and adapts housing-related intervention strategies for people with HIV experiencing unstable housing. Also, HRSA HAB continues to support RWHAP interventions focused on reaching people with HIV experiencing unstable housing, including using models such as street medicine and mobile health clinics.

We invite you to join our next [HAB You Heard webinar](#) on November 20, from 3:00-4:00 PM ET when we will focus on how HRSA HAB is supporting RWHAP recipients to improve housing and HIV-related health outcomes.

Thank you for your continued efforts to provide HIV care and treatment services for people with HIV across the country. Together, through collective action and sustained commitment, we can accelerate our progress toward ending the HIV epidemic.

Sincerely,

/Laura W. Cheever/

Laura Cheever, MD, ScM
Associate Administrator
HIV/AIDS Bureau, HRSA