COORDINATED BEHAVIORAL CARE

CBC Insights

A Home that Lasts

Health + Hospitals, CBC and Community Partners Turn Housing into Lasting Stability

As healthcare continues to recognize the value of housing, we've been finding solutions. The goal isn't simply to house people, it's to help people become more stable over time.

Housing is the foundation of that stability. HELPS — Housing Engagement, Location, and Placement Services — has already connected 1,200 people experiencing homelessness to permanent housing and helped them once they move in. This briefing is about the second half of that work: what it takes to make a home last.

The Part of the Story No One Hears

Everyone celebrates getting the keys to an apartment— the photo, the phone call, the good news. But for someone who has experienced homelessness, the real test starts after. A housing placement either takes hold or quietly comes apart as the person is learning to navigate rent, utilities, benefits, a landlord, a lease, often for the first time in years.

Three weeks after Denise moved into her own apartment for the first time in six years, an electric bill showed up in her mailbox. It was higher than she expected. She didn't know if her rental subsidy covered it, or what would happen if she couldn't pay. So she didn't call anyone. She just set the bill aside, and started to worry.

How HELPS Works

In 2022, NYC Health + Hospitals' Housing for Health contracted with CBC to provide

Most housing programs step back once someone has keys; HELPS' placement and retention teams stay engaged, using a risk-informed approach that anticipates tenancy problems before they surface. A

Housing Engagement, Location, and Placement Services (HELPS) for H+H patients experiencing homelessness. H+H designed a single housing care management platform to keep all partners well connected and able to produce highly detailed individual and aggregate level reports. CBC began with four network agencies — Catholic Charities Neighborhood Services, Services for the Underserved, The Bridge, and WellLife Network and now works with WellLife and Services for the Underserved. The program has housed more than 400 people a year.

validated decision-support tool identifies each person's risks and strengths soon after move-in and matches them to a tailored support pathway. Monthly check-ins track finances, health, benefits, safety, and community connections, and staff coordinate directly with property managers on lease renewals and tenant assistance. The result: housing retention treated as a deliberate part of care, not an afterthought.

Helps Housing Retention Happens After Move-In

On move-in day, staff sit with each person to identify what they need right away — groceries, medical equipment, help around the house — because a home isn't livable without these basics. Then they stay connected, with formalized touch points at 30, 60, and 90 days, and again at 9 and 12 months.

And every check-in includes an action. A referral, a call with the landlord, a form filled out. It is never just a note in a file.

Back to Denise

When her HELPS worker called for the scheduled 30-day check-in, Denise mentioned the bill almost in passing. That one conversation connected her to a home energy assistance program that same week, and someone finally explained, clearly, how her rental subsidy actually worked. ***Six months later, Denise is caught up on her bills, confident about her budget, and no longer holds her breath every time the mail arrives.***

What This Looks Like at Scale

Denise is one person. HELPS has done this work for more than 1,200 people.

The Impact

99%

Housed with Long Term Retention

Multiply Denise's moment by every person, and a clear lesson emerges: housing placement is only the beginning. The work that follows—addressing small problems before they become crises, strengthening connections to care and community, and helping people navigate the realities of independent living—is what turns housing into lasting stability.

NYC Health + Hospitals Housing for Health

NYC H+H is the nation's largest public safety net health care system, serving over one million patients annually across its integrated network of hospitals, neighborhood health centers, long-term care sites, and home care services in the five boroughs of New York City. NYC H+H is New York City's largest health care provider to Medicaid patients, behavioral health patients, and the uninsured.

In 2025, more than 61,000 adult and 17,000 pediatric patients that rely on H+H for their care experienced homelessness, more than any other health care system in New York City. NYC Health + Hospitals' Housing for Health initiative recognizes that the chronic health issues of unhoused individuals cannot be treated without stable housing. The work focuses on four strategic areas: providing housing navigation services, operating medical respite beds, ground leasing hospital land for the development of affordable and supportive housing, and providing additional supports for patients in permanent housing. To date, this initiative has served more than 3,850 patients and more than 1,800 patients have been permanently housed.

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