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2024

Statewide Symposium in Support of Service Members, Veterans & Their Families

April 17-18 | Phoenix, Arizona

arizona coalition
for military families





Challenges & Barriers

Session 2

Unhoused Again: Preventing a Return to Homelessness



Facilitators



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Northern Arizona VA Healthcare System





Agenda

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Key Tools for Data Informed Decision Making

Joe Acevedo

NAVAHCS

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Unsheltered Veteran Homelessness

Jocelyn Muzzin

SAVAHCS

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Homelessness Diversion and Using Natural Supports

Tim Laskowski

USVets/Prescott

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The Return to Unsheltered Homelessness

Rachel Krausman

PVAHCS



Key Tools for Data Informed Decision Making

Joseph Acevedo

Northern Arizona VA Healthcare System



Key tools for data informed decision making

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Homeless Operations Management Evaluation System (HOMES)

Coordinated Entry (BNL)

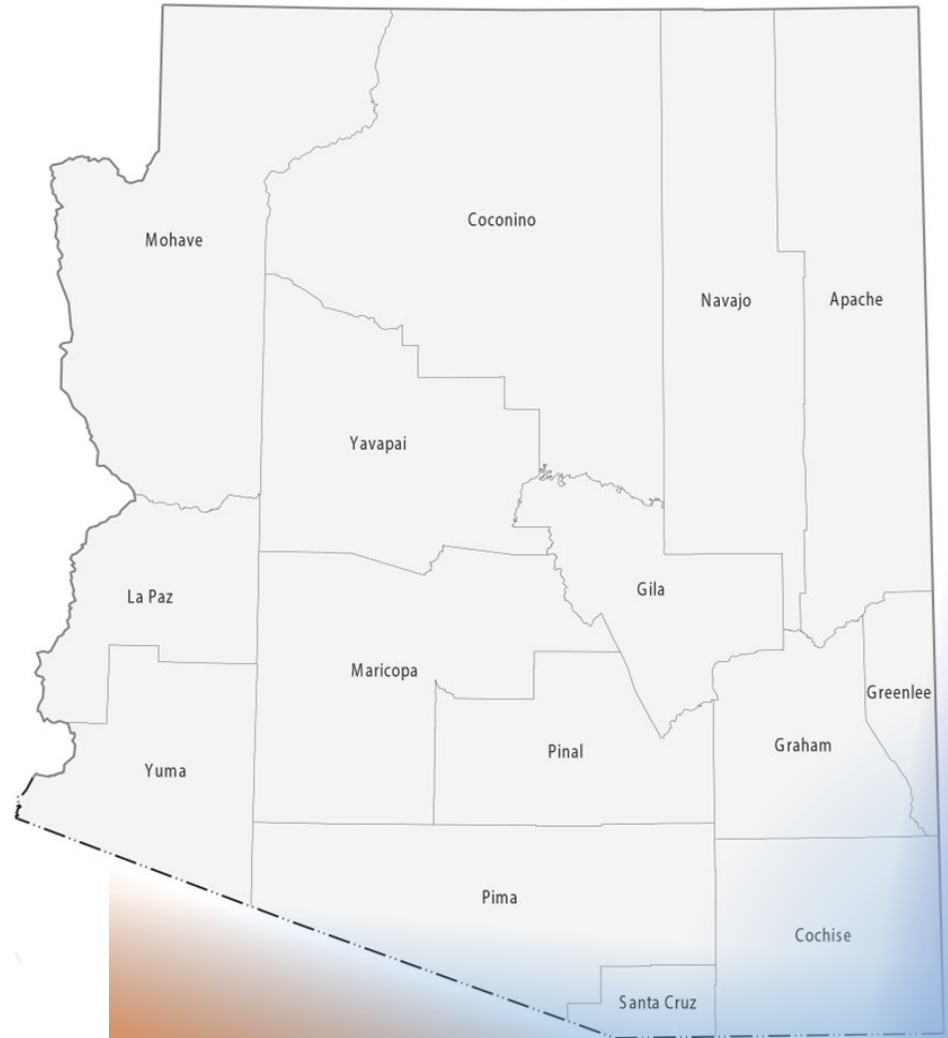
VA

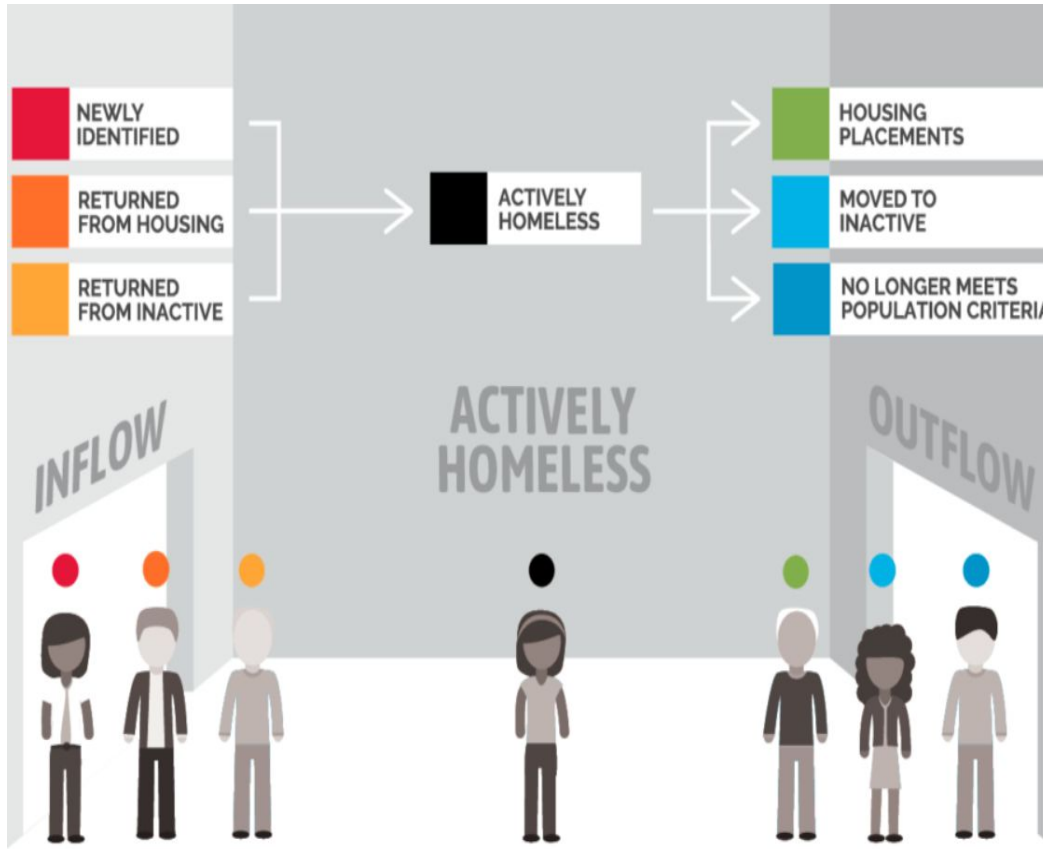


U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

ARIZONA HOMELESS MAP

- Northern Veterans Administration HealthCare System (Balance Of State)
- Phoenix Veteran Administration (Maricopa)
- Southern Arizona Veterans Health Care System (Pinal)





Coordinated Entry (COC)

Inflow entering system

(BNL)

Institutions

Inactive to active

Outflow exiting system

Resources Reduces

Homelessness

Permanent housing / Long

Term Stay

SSVF shallow subsidy

VHA Homeless Programs National Goals

- VA has committed to permanently house **41k** for **2024**.
- **38k** homeless Veterans & addressing unsheltered homelessness **2023**.
- **2023** resulted in **46,552** was **122.5%** over goal.
- Veteran homeless or experiencing housing instability

Call (877) 424-3838.



Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

Balance Of State (BOS) “ A Rural Lens”

BOS Veteran Dashboard | Tableau Public

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/hmisaz/viz/BOSVeteranDashboard/Information>



Data and Housing Links

- www.HUD.gov
- www.VA.gov/homeless
- www.housing.az.gov
- www.PCH.net
- <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/hmisaz/viz/BOSVeteranDashboard/Information>
- <https://app.powerbigov.us/groups>





Unsheltered Veteran Homelessness - Tucson/Pima County


Jocelyn Muzzin, LCSW

Coordinated Entry Specialist

Southern Arizona VA Healthcare System



Fiscal Year 2024 VA Housing Goals

- Place at least 41,000 Veterans experiencing homelessness into permanent housing.
 - Ensure that at least 95% of the Veterans housed in FY 2024 do not return to homelessness during the year.
 - Engage with at least 40,000 unsheltered Veterans to help them obtain housing and other wraparound services.
- 

2023 PIT Count – Tucson/Pima County

- 60% INCREASE in the number of persons experiencing homelessness between 2018 and 2023
- 300% increase in the number of persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness between 2018 and 2023
- 4% DECREASE in the number of US military veterans experiencing homelessness between 2018 and 2023
- 47% INCREASE in the number of US Military Veterans experiencing Unsheltered homelessness between 2018 and 2023.



SNOFO Award

- HUD Awarded Tucson/Pima County providers 7.8million to address Unsheltered homelessness.
 - Multidisciplinary Outreach Team
 - 150 units of Permanent Supportive Housing
 - Focus on Encampments



2023 Tucson Needs Assessment

“No Judgement Here”


- 389 surveys completed with people experiencing homelessness.
 - [2023-Homeless-Needs-Assessment-Tucson-AZ.pdf \(tpch.net\)](#)
 - SIROW – Southwestern Institute for Research on Women
 - Garcia Family Foundation
 - OPCS
 - City of Tucson
- 

Figure 19. Has Respondent Stayed in an Emergency Shelter in the Past?

(n=389)

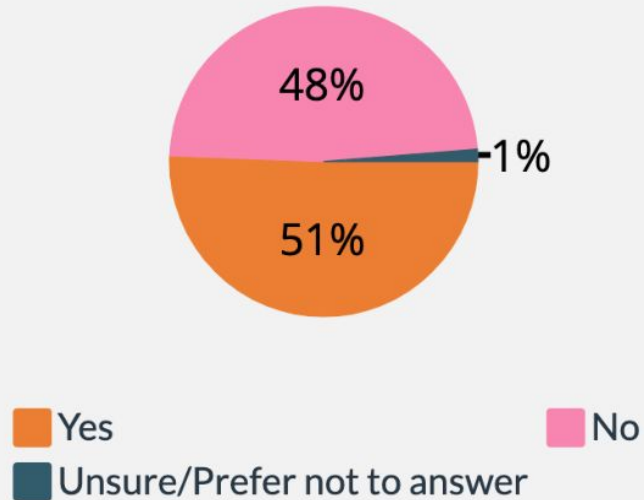
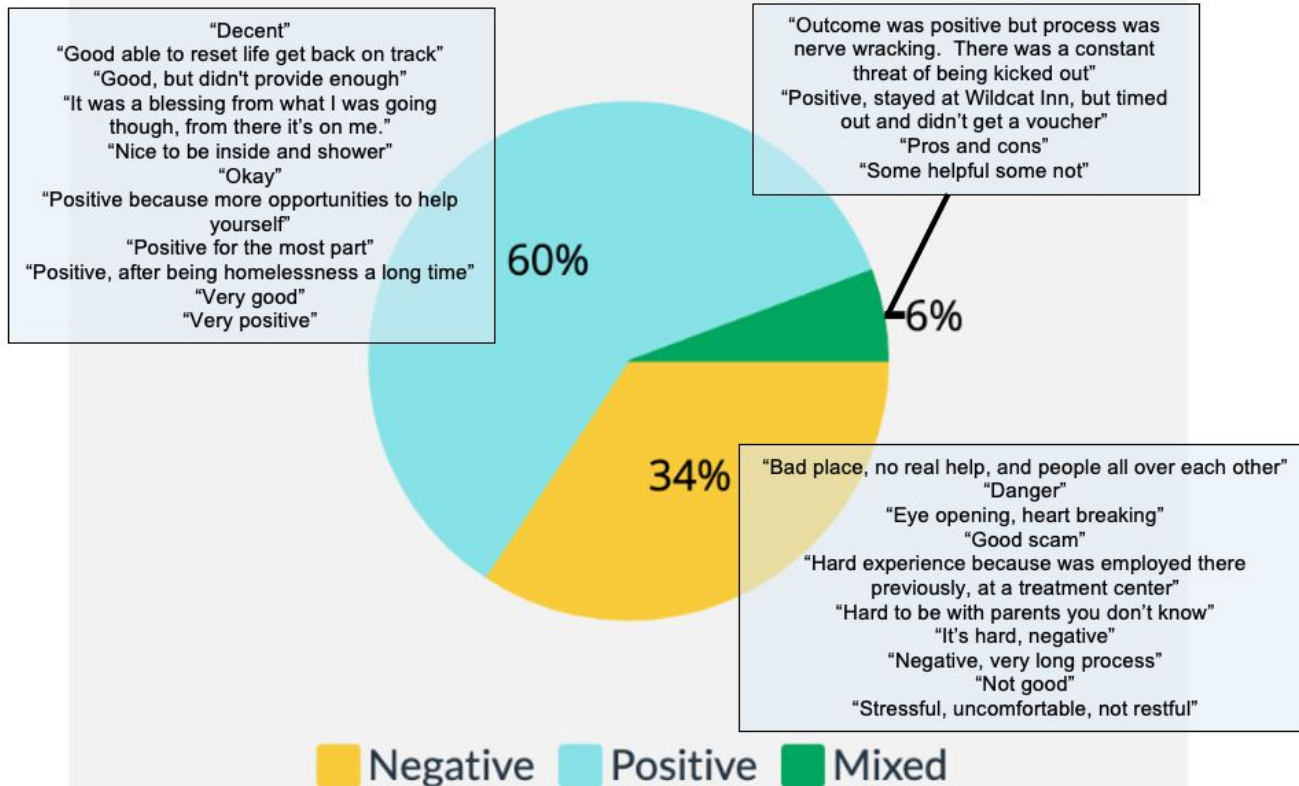


Figure 23. Respondent's Description of Experience in Emergency Shelter or Housing Program

Respondents who Stayed in Emergency Shelter or Housing Program (n=70)



Housing Central Command

- Goal: To move people experiencing homelessness directly from the street into housing
- Emergency management methodology
- System centralization and community-wide investment
- Focus is on housing placements
- Identify eligible households
- Identify eligible units
- Move people into housing



HCC strategies we are trying

- Landlord engagement training
- Centralized Landlord database
- Centralized Housing navigation
- Scheduled Landlord open houses
- Centralized furniture delivery





Homelessness Diversion and Using Natural Supports

Tim Laskowski

USVets - Prescott

HOMELESSNESS DIVERSION AND USING NATURAL SUPPORTS

Tim Laskowski
U.S.VETS/Prescott

What Is Diversion?

- Diversion is an intervention designed to immediately address the needs of someone who has just lost their housing and become homeless. Diversion is a client-driven approach; its goal is to help the person or household find safe alternative housing immediately, rather than entering shelter or experiencing unsheltered homelessness. It is intended to ensure that the homelessness experience is as brief as possible, to prevent unsheltered homelessness, and to avert stays in shelter.

BENEFITS OF DIVERSION:

less resources and money used

better for the client

the outcome often ends up with a more lasting solution when family and/or community is involved.

- A staff member trained in the techniques of Diversion initiates an exploratory conversation to brainstorm practical solutions for individuals to resolve their homelessness quickly and safely.





DIVERSION CONVERSATION

- Exploratory
- Active listening
- Addressing barriers
- Looking beyond the current crisis
- Creative ideas/realistic options

Individuals identify housing options that are based on their own available resources rather than those of the homeless response system.



QUESTIONS TO ASK:



What was your last permanent living place? What happened? Is there a chance you could return? If so, what needs to be remedied?



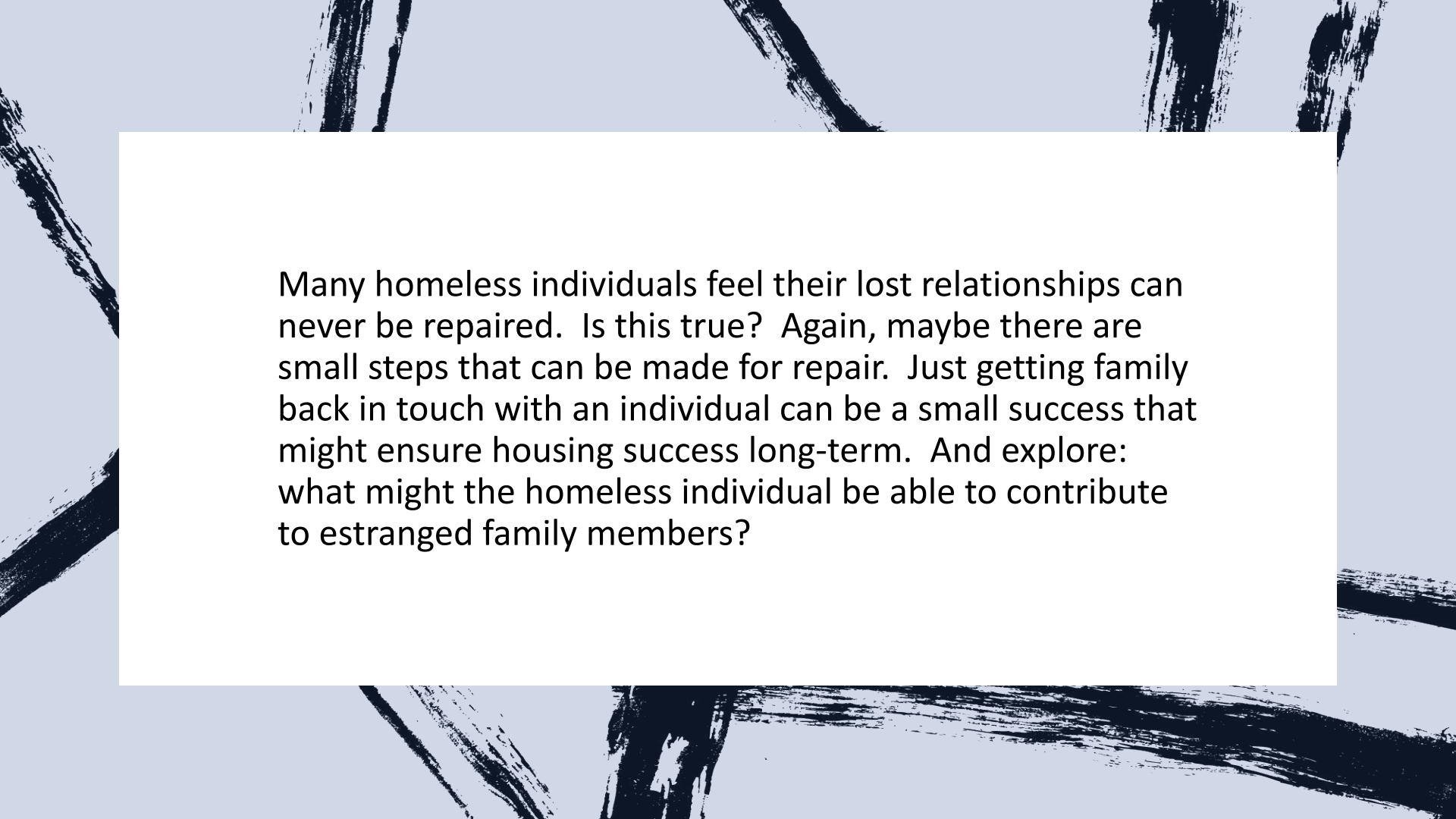
Who are your natural supports, family members? Where are they? Can they help? What needs to be done to restore relationships?

An individual can modify their request for help from family: if they can't provide housing or financial assistance, what can they provide? Transportation? Advocacy? Emotional support? Little ways to re-enter the individual's life?

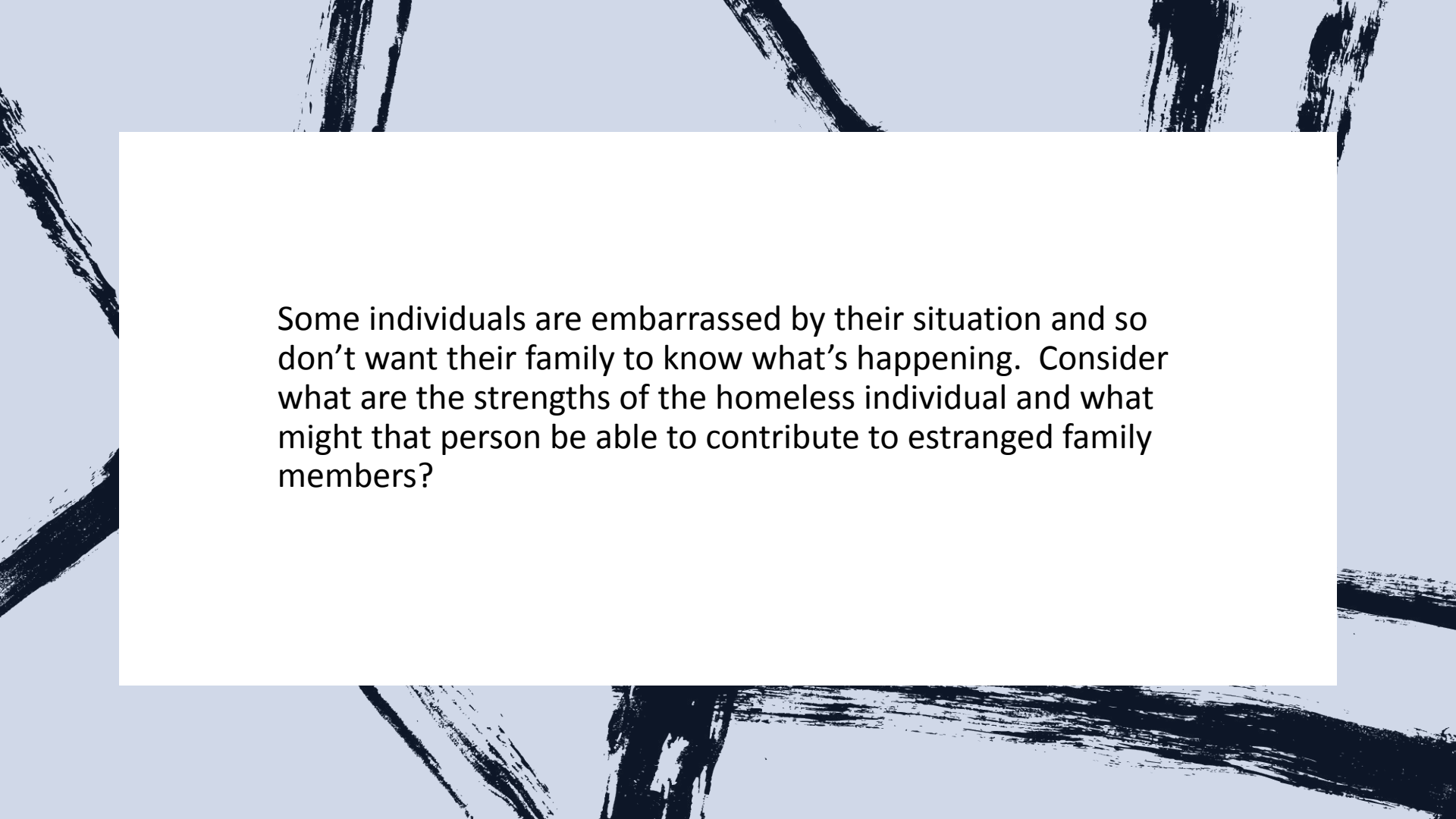
The goal is to not only prevent or shorten homelessness but also to ensure that a housing solution is realistic and long-term.



- Diversion is not a strategy to be used only at the outset but ought to be kept in mind throughout our involvement with the individual.
- For instance, after diversion efforts fail to result in housing, an individual enters a shelter or transitional living. Now staff ought to keep exploring with the individual family and natural supports.



Many homeless individuals feel their lost relationships can never be repaired. Is this true? Again, maybe there are small steps that can be made for repair. Just getting family back in touch with an individual can be a small success that might ensure housing success long-term. And explore: what might the homeless individual be able to contribute to estranged family members?



Some individuals are embarrassed by their situation and so don't want their family to know what's happening. Consider what are the strengths of the homeless individual and what might that person be able to contribute to estranged family members?

FORMAL DIVERSION OPTIONS

Rapid re-housing

Transition in place

Housing vouchers

Shallow subsidy

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION



The Return to Unsheltered Homelessness

Rachel Krausman

PVAHCS

The Return to Unsheltered Homelessness

Why Veterans are returning to homelessness and the impact of mental health and substance use

Disclosure

- I am employed by Phoenix VA
- I am not receiving any funding for my presentation today
- I have no conflicts of interest to report
- Any views or opinions expressed during this presentation are my own and do not reflect those of the Department of Veterans Affairs or the US Government



Overview of VA Homeless Programs

- Community Resource and Referral Center (CRRC)
- Grant Per Diem (GPD)
- Housing and Urban Development, VA Supported Housing (HUDVASH)
- Compensated Work Therapy (CWT)
- Veterans Justice Program (VJP)



2023 Stats

- VA National goal to permanently house 38,000 Veterans
- Phoenix housed 971 Veterans
- 46 Veterans, returned to homelessness



Barriers to Housing

- Mental Health Diagnosis
 - 51%
- Substance Use
 - Alcohol addiction – 19.7%
 - Drug Addiction – 19.3%
 - Co-occurring drug and alcohol addiction – 6.9%
- Co-occurring Mental Health Diagnosis and Substance Use
 - 21.8%



Housing Tracks

- Self Resolve
 - Return to family
 - Gain employment and find housing
- Community Based Programs
 - Rental assistance for set time-frame
- HUDVASH
 - Voucher through the City



Returning to Homelessness

- Misuse of Transitional Housing sites
 - Rules related to sites
 - Number of uses
- Loss of Relationship(s)
- Loss of income
- Breach of Contract
 - Community Based Programs
 - Housing Authority
 - Apartment Complex
- Incarceration/Treatment



Impact of Mental Health and Substance Use on Veterans Returning to Homelessness

- Mental Health Diagnoses
 - Substance Use



Case Study

- 62-year-old Navy Veteran
- Mental Health Diagnoses: PTSD, Depressive Disorder
- Substance Use: Severe Alcohol Dependence
- Stably housed for ~ 6 months on a HUDVASH voucher
- Relapsed and agreed to inpatient treatment
 - Gave up housing voucher
- Got another voucher – stably housed ~8 months
- Apartment complex reported traffic at the apartment and was ready to evict
 - HUDVASH Case Manager was able to negotiate mutual rescission and rehoused Veteran where he remains today



Sources

- [Home | VHA Homeless Programs \(va.gov\)](#)





Questions?





Session Evaluation

We want to hear from you!

