



Innovations in Criminal Justice Summit
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Seattle 1811 Eastlake Project

Program Start Date: 2007

Website: <http://www.desc.org/1811.html>

Evaluation/Research:

<http://jama.ama-assn.org/content/301/13/1349.abstract>

Information: The 1811 Eastlake project, which began in 2005, was created to stabilize chronic public drinkers who were living on the streets and stop them from endlessly cycling through emergency rooms, jails, and other crisis institutions, and reduce the amount of taxpayer money spent on them. 1811 Eastlake is a place where "pre-recovery" individuals can be safe and encouraged to receive treatment, and focuses on reducing the public health, economic and social impacts of this population living on the streets. In most US cities, people with behavioral health disabilities die on the streets far more frequently than any other subset of the homeless population. Before they die, they use large amounts of taxpayer-funded services in our healthcare and criminal justice systems.

Working with King County Mental Health Chemical Abuse and Dependency Services Division and the Public Health Department, DESC and other partners the project identified a list of 388 chronic homeless individuals who were high utilizers across multiple systems including emergency response systems, Harborview Hospital, jails, and sobering services. Working from the list, the project did outreach to locate such persons and offered them housing and services without requiring them to cease drinking.

The project developed a 75 unit residential building to house these individuals. Known as 1811 Eastlake, the building provides 24 hour -7 day a week staff support for its residents including chemical dependency counseling, nursing support, meals, and general supervision. The objectives of the project are to help residents achieve housing stability, reduce residents' use of the city's crisis response system, reduce public nuisances caused by them, and encourage residents to seek alcohol treatment.

The project limits alcohol use and prohibits its consumption in public areas both in and outside the building. Alcohol consumption is restricted to resident rooms, and visitors are not permitted to come in the building and drink. On site staff continually supports and encourages residents to reduce alcohol consumption, hopefully leading to abstinence. Prohibiting alcohol consumption by residents entirely would make the project unable to attract the very people it is designed to serve, but behavioral thresholds are enforced for the sake of staff, resident, and neighborhood safety.

A JAMA reported study found that the program saved taxpayers more than \$4,000,000 over the first year of operation. During the first six months, even after considering the cost of administering housing, the study reported an average cost-savings of 53 percent -- nearly \$2,500 per month per person in health and social services, compared to the costs of a wait-list control group of comparable homeless persons. The study also found reduced drinking and drinking to intoxication by program participants that increased over time with some residents attaining sobriety.