



## Frequent Users of Jail, Shelter, and Mental Health Services

**Problem/Context** Cook County Jail is the largest mental health institution in the state of Illinois and it is the largest single site jail in the country. Due to an ongoing consent decree since 1976, Cermak Hospital provides mental health services in the jail and has developed into one the best jail-based mental health facilities in the country, with more than ten thousand discharges annually. Building on this strength, CSH is working collaboratively with the Cook County Jail, Cermak Health Services and others to launch a demonstration program focused on linking people with long histories of homelessness, mental illness, and incarceration to supportive housing.

**Target Population:** The demonstration program is targeted towards people who cycle between jail and incarceration. the approximately 10,000 people annually with serious mental illness cycling between homelessness and incarceration in Cook County Jail. Specifically, the target population will include people who:

- Have a demonstrated history of repeated homelessness upon discharge from jail
- Have been engaged by Cermak Health or the State Mental Health system at least 4 times
- Have a diagnosed serious mental illness of schizophrenia, bi-polar, obsessive compulsive or schizo-affective disorder.

*CSH aims to prove that the intervention of supportive housing can end the costly and tragic cycle of incarceration and homelessness faced by many people with mental illness in the Cook County Jail*

**Solution** : Leveraging JEHT resources, CSH aims to incentivize Department of Mental Health agencies to serve the difficult frequent user population by covering a gap in service funding upon release, including the necessary burst of initial support services. This service enhancement will be complemented by and integrated with other efforts, including:

- Targeted discharge planning and in-reach and engagement inside the jail and shelters
- Targeted rent subsidies, including 50 Section Rental Support Program (RSP) tenant-based vouchers and 50 project-based vouchers from the Chicago Department of Housing
- Service enhancement of \$6,000 per individual for intensive outreach and stabilization supports
- Long-term support services provided by DMH on CST (Community Support Teams)

Collectively, these efforts will provide a comprehensive, sustainable approach to providing supportive housing for these frequent users of jail, shelter, and mental health services

### Initiative Partners and Roles

- **Cook County Sheriff's Office** – Assist in coordinating release to providers, data integration with OMH
- **Cermak Health Services** – Provision of mental health services in jail and identification of target clients.
- **Chicago Mayor's Office/Re-Entry Initiative**- Support and coordinate city efforts to establish enhanced access to services
- **Chicago Department of Housing**- Provide rental support vouchers and manage approval process
- **JEHT Foundation** – Seed investment to finance service enhancements
- **Illinois Department of Mental Health**– Ongoing funding for supportive services and operating funding. Enhance and develop frequent user protocols through continued development of Data Link Project
- **CSH**- Administer service enhancement funding, assist with recruitment, oversight, and training
- **Community Service and Mental Health Providers** – Provision of supportive housing in the community.
- **Urban Institute** – Leading cost and systems evaluation