

# ***About the Center for Health & Housing***

**MISSION:** The Center for Health & Housing is a community health resource that will provide 24-hour health and housing services for individuals and families.

## **GOALS:**

1. Prevent or quickly resolve health and housing crisis for individuals and families
  - Provide 24/7/365 outreach services to help people who need a safe place to go
  - 365-day a year, easy-access shelter and housing services for men, women, and families who cannot stay at other shelters (fathers with children, etc.)
  - On-site, 24 hour a day mental health care, substance use services (detox and recovery), and primary care open to the public
  - Offer immediate access to detox and mental health care, with support services, for people and families who are in crisis
  
2. Increase housing throughout Springfield/Sangamon County; decrease need for emergency shelter
  - 125 new units of community-based permanent supported housing throughout Springfield and Sangamon County by 2024
  - Develop properties to be used as safe, stable permanent housing
  - Reduce the number of people who stay in emergency shelter by 40% over the next five years, and reduce the amount of time people stay in emergency shelter by 50%
  
3. Create new, innovative partnerships that promote community health education, advocacy, employment, and development of housing resources
  - Expand access to AA, NA, and group resources that promote healing (trauma support groups, art therapy, counseling)
  - Collaborate to develop resources to meet health needs for people in the immediate neighborhood (school physicals/immunizations; access to primary care; health education classes; etc.)
  - Create career opportunities in health, social service, and law enforcement with hands-on training and internship programs
  - Develop community-based mentoring programs and peer-support services to help build relationships and daily living skills
  - Work with local, state, and federal government and agencies to promote housing development (urban and rural) and attract sustainable financial resources to health/housing programs

## **PROPOSED LOCATION:**

We have worked with the City of Springfield for several months to determine options for where a Center for Health & Housing could be located. The proposed site is 521 S. 11<sup>th</sup> Street (formerly used by DCFS). This building requires the least amount of renovations and is the best option for operational and financial sustainability.

If the building is approved, Helping Hands will vacate our shelter at 1023 E. Washington and we would also eliminate the need for a seasonal overflow shelter.

The cost to purchase and renovate the building is approximately \$3 million. Negotiations with partners, including preliminary commitments of sustained financial support, are occurring. We are pursuing both public and private funds to renovate and sustain the Center for Health & Housing.

## **PARTNERS:**

Helping Hands of Springfield  
The City of Springfield  
SIU Department of Psychiatry

Memorial Health System  
Memorial Behavioral Health  
\*HSHS St. John's Hospital (awaiting confirmation)  
Central Counties Health Centers  
SIU Family and Community Medicine  
Springfield Police Department

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

The foundational principles of the Center for Health & Housing are:

- 1) Housing is a basic need that must be met before other issues can be addressed. This is a "housing first" approach that emphasizes rapid-rehousing, permanent supported housing, and homelessness prevention/diversion as services offered without barriers or pre-conditions (sobriety, income, etc.) to access help.
- 2) To be effective, the Center must be a "good neighbors" that fills gaps in services and meets identified needs in a safe, effective manner. Mental/physical healthcare, substance use care (detox/sobering unit), intensive case management, street outreach, and emergency shelter must be easily accessible and coordinated to meet the needs both of people who are homeless, and anyone in the community who is in crisis.

### **SERVICES IN THE BUILDING:**

**Health Clinic:** Central Counties Health Centers (CCHC) currently operates a free, walk-in clinic three days a week at Helping Hands. This clinic serves anyone who comes in for care, and is used by individuals and families (including children). This service would be expanded, and with the support of SIU Family & Community Medicine, the plan is to make this walk-in clinic accessible 24 hours a day to anyone in the community who needs care. The clinic would be located on the first floor.

**Community Recovery Center (CRC):** The CRC is a unit specifically for people who are receiving care for substance use and/or mental health issues. If someone in the community needs help, they can come to the CRC and receive immediate care. This resource currently is not available in Springfield, but has been an identified community need for several years. It includes detox, therapy, psychiatric care, and support services to meet other needs (housing, employment, etc.). People in the CRC can stay there for up to 7-10 days as they stabilize to return home. The CRC unit is a separate area of the building that is secured 24-hours a day.

**Emergency Shelter:** The Emergency Shelter will be able to serve men, women, and families who currently are not eligible for shelter in Springfield or struggle to find shelter (fathers with children; families with a man and woman who need to stay together). The total capacity for shelter is 128 beds, which is the current amount available at Helping Hands and the Winter Warming Center combined. However, our shelter reaches this capacity only in extreme weather situations. We anticipate initially that we could see an average of about 75 people per night, and our goal is to reduce the amount of people who are chronically using shelter through permanent supported housing.

Of the 128 beds, 28 are reserved for families who need shelter, or others who may not feel comfortable in communal areas. They are in smaller rooms to provide security and privacy. These beds may be considered Bridge or Safe.

The model we will use for the shelter is two tracks:

**Bridge beds (Up to 46 beds).** Bridge beds are for people who are working or actively seeking a plan to be housed. They will have a service plan that holds them accountable for their goals, and that service plan may include employment, sobriety, and finding permanent housing. People in Bridge Beds will have access to their bed 24 hours a day, so they will not be forced to leave in the morning and will need to return to the shelter each evening. Each client will be working with an intensive case manager to ensure they are meeting the requirements of the program and progressing on their goals.

*Safe beds (Up to 54 beds).* Safe beds welcome people and families who need shelter but may not be ready or in need of a service plan. Clients can begin accessing safe beds at 5 p.m. and must be in before 9 p.m. They receive a meal and a bed, and have access to the Community Recovery Center, mental health care, peer support, and an intensive case manager to help them resolve their housing crisis. When temperatures are above freezing, safe beds will have restrictions on them to ensure clients are not misusing the shelter. When temperatures are below freezing, safe beds ensure that anyone who is out in the cold has a safe place to spend the night.

**Community Meeting Rooms:** The building will have several rooms that can be used for community groups and projects that wish to meet or conduct community health initiatives, events, or projects.

**Offices:** On-site staff will include intensive case managers to help Helping Hands clients, or anyone in the community, who needs assistance to secure permanent housing, employment, or other needs (birth certificates, IDs, Social Security, etc.). In addition, other organizations that wish to have a presence in the building could arrange to access space to share their services/resources with the clients.

**Security/Springfield Police Department (SPD):** The Center will have 24-hour on-site security to monitor the premises and ensure safety. In addition, the SPD will be given an office in the building to have police presence onsite. This plan will occur with the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) initiative currently in progress.

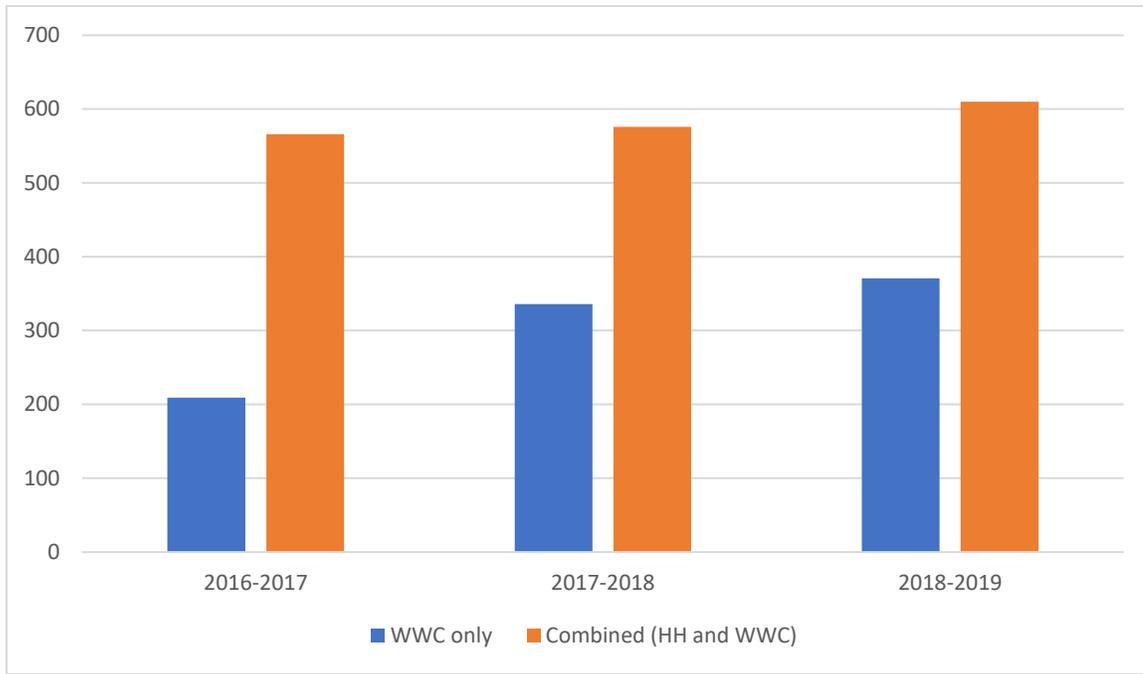
#### **POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS and NEEDS:**

The following pages are a summary of data from Helping Hands of Springfield and is self-reported by clients during shelter intake. The “Winter Warming Center” is a 54-bed overflow shelter for adult men and women that is an initiative of the City of Springfield but is operated by Helping Hands. The WWC operates from November through March each year. “Helping Hands” is a 47-bed men’s shelter that is open 365 days a year.

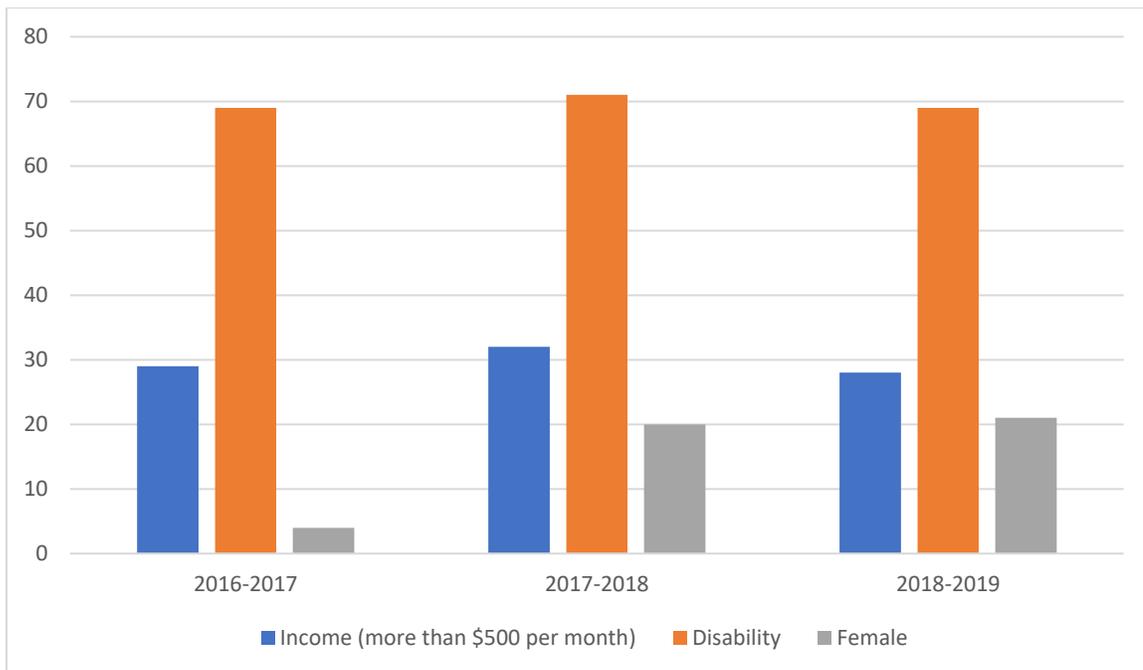
Our data shows us that not only do we have an increase in people seeking emergency shelter, we also have increases in populations that require more complex care, which are also key factors that contribute to chronic homelessness. The following charts demonstrate the increasing and changing needs of our clients.

Therefore, our services must focus on addressing “root causes” of homelessness (mental/physical health) and decreasing the rate of people who are chronically homeless/long-stayers in shelter. The Center for Health & Housing, including an expansion of permanent supported housing throughout Springfield and Sangamon County, is a strategy that can accomplish these goals.

**NUMBER OF CLIENTS (INDIVIDUAL INTAKES)**



**WWC CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS (PERCENTAGES)**



*SPECIAL POPULATIONS (WWC AND HH COMBINED; UNIQUE INTAKES)*

