

FUSE COLLABORATIVE

(Frequent User System Engagement)

Summary of a Report to the Joint Standing Committee
on Health and Human Services
January 1, 2022

Full report is available at

<https://legislature.maine.gov/documents?start=151&end=200>

Daniel Brennan, Director
January 27, 2022



MaineHousing
MAINE STATE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Enabling Legislation

LD 475: Resolve, To Create the Frequent Users System Engagement (FUSE) Collaborative to develop a plan to provide stable housing and community services to 200 persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness who are the most frequent consumers of high-cost services



Group Composition and Planning Process

FUSE Collaborative Members

Member	Affiliation	Representation
Daniel Brennan	MaineHousing	Director
Lauren Bustard	MaineHousing	Senior Director Homeless Initiatives
Jessica Pollard	Department of Health and Human Services	Commissioner's Designee
Jodie Johnson	Department of Corrections	Commissioner's Designee
Stephanie Primm	Statewide Homeless Council	Chair
Joel Merry	Maine Sheriffs' Association	Sagadahoc County Sheriff
Melissa Skahan	Northern Light Health	Emergency Health Services
Lee D'Attilio	MaineHealth	Emergency Health Services
Sarah Calder	MaineHealth	Emergency Health Services
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland	Municipal Officer
Aimee Brown	Riverview Psychiatric Center	Psychiatric Hospital
Leanne Robertson	Riverview Psychiatric Center	Psychiatric Hospital
Ben Strick	Spurwink	Community-based Behavioral Health Services
Meredith Smith	Community Health and Counseling Services	Community-based Behavioral Health Services
Cullen Ryan	Maine Continuum of Care	Board Chair
Josh D'Alessio	Penobscot County Health Center	Low Barrier Emergency Shelter
Oliver Bradeen	Milestone Recovery	Substance Use Disorder Program/Shelter
Erin Kelly	Preble Street	Permanent Supportive Housing
Donna Yellen	Preble Street	HOUSE Project (FUSE Pilot) - Portland
Carter Friend	York County Community Action Corporation	HOUSE Project (FUSE Pilot) - Sanford
Cheryl Harkins	Homeless Voices for Justice	Person with Lived Experience
Victoria Morales	Quality Housing Coalition	Legislator, Housing Service Provider

Meetings
The Collaborative met four times during the months of September through December 2021.



Background

Frequent Users System Engagement (FUSE) Approach:

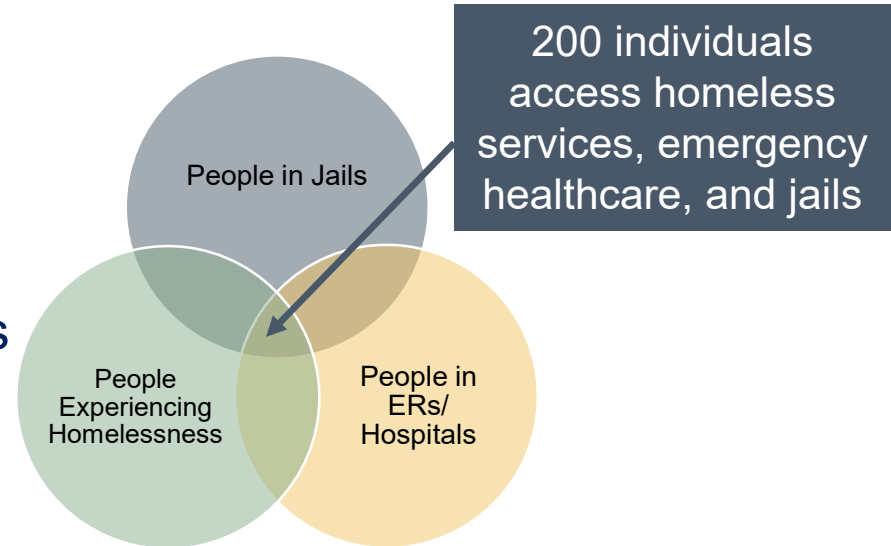
- Developed by Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)
- Combines:
 - Data driven population targeting,
 - Multi-stakeholder engagement, and
 - Targeted supportive housing



Target Population

The target population includes those individuals who meet criteria for frequent utilization of crisis systems, including:

- Homelessness
- Low Income
- Behavioral Health Concerns
- Chronic Physical Health Conditions
- Frequent Emergency Room and/or Hospitalizations
- Frequent Interaction with Law Enforcement as well



Data and Purpose

- Nearly 40 communities across the country have used FUSE
- 30% of our resources are spent on 1% of our homeless population
- Cost per person will be reduced substantially! Why?
- People do better when they are housed
- We call this Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) – housing with supports, that results in stable housing and improvements in health
- Will allow our law enforcement and EMS personnel to be able to focus on the general public rather than the same small group of people



FUSE Outcomes in Other States

Connecticut Statewide FUSE program:

- \$7,800 annual cost reduction per person
- 92% supportive housing retention rate
- Significant decreases in overnight hospitalizations (68%) and ER visits (62%)
- 73% reduction in jail stays after one year
- A near total decrease in emergency shelter usage (99%) for the first 120 people housed through the initiative

Minnesota – Hennepin County FUSE program:

- \$13,000 in annual cost savings for Hennepin County per person
- 60% fewer arrests (with 45% having had 1 or no arrests)
- 700 fewer nights in jail (39% reduction)
- 1,704 fewer shelter nights (39% reduction)
- 85% remained housed after six months
- 90% avoided returning to shelter
- 80% avoided returning to jail

Michigan – Washtenaw County FUSE program:

- 81% housing retention rate
- 87% enrolled in primary care
- 46% zero ER utilization
- 56% zero inpatient hospital stays



What Has Worked in Maine To Date

Portland's Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- Since April 2015
- By name list effort
- 16 organizations have been working together
- As of November 2021, the group has housed 355 individuals, with a success rate of 90.3% in remaining stably housed.

WE KNOW FUSE WILL WORK!



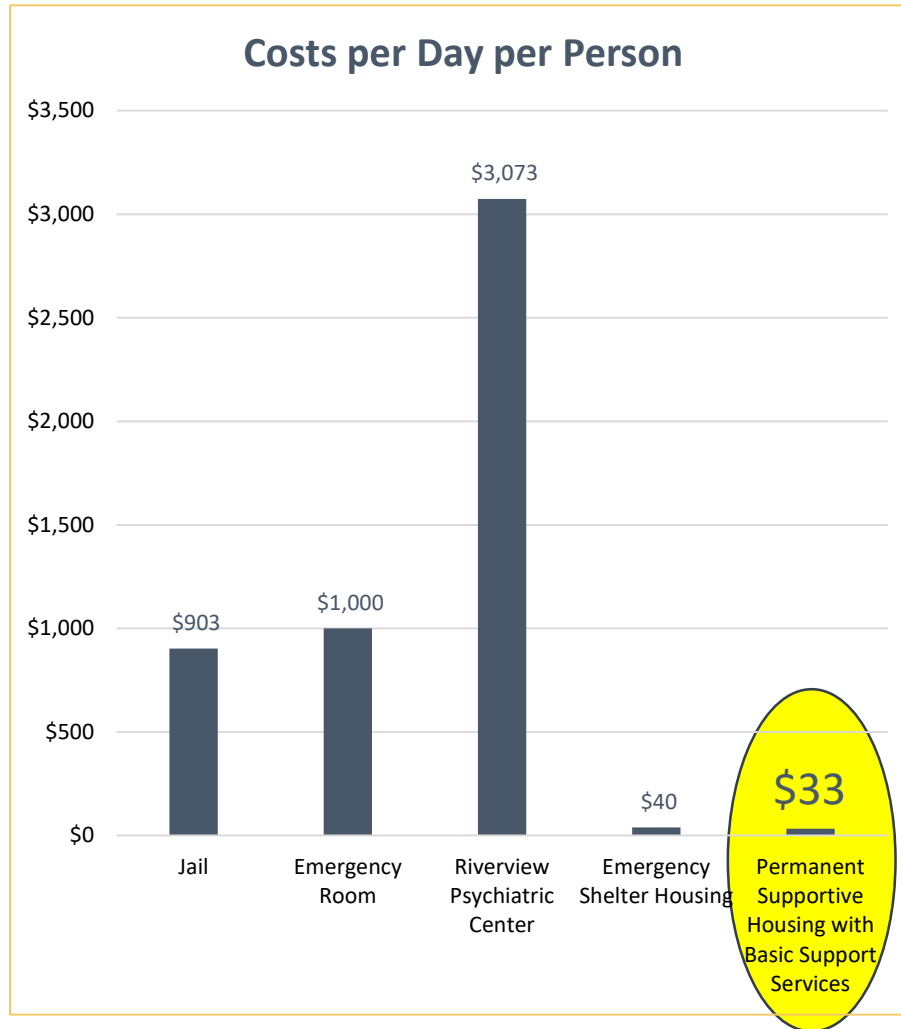
Long-Term Stayers, Housed vs Unhoused, Jail vs Hospital

March 2021 to October 2021 Data

In Cumberland County, over an eight-month period from March 2021 to October 2021, individuals who remained unhoused were over **20** times more likely to be in jail and almost **7** times more likely to be hospitalized than their peers who found stable housing.



Potential Cost Savings in Maine



Challenges to Overcome

- Lack of Adequate Housing Supply
- Barriers to Finding Available Housing/Landlords
- Insufficient Service/Treatment/Support Funding
- Difficult to Engage Clients



FUSE Opportunities

- Collaboration – State Agencies with Service Providers
- Federal HOME Funds (ARPA) - \$16M HUD Funding
- MaineCare Homeless Health Home Program – New/DHHS
- Long-Term Stayers Initiatives
- Maine Homeless Response System ReDesign (Built for Zero)



Recommendations

GOAL I: House 200 Individuals Meeting FUSE Criteria by December 2026

OBJECTIVE 1: Ensure a Variety of Housing and Subsidy Models

OBJECTIVE 2: Create 150 New PSH Units by December 2026

OBJECTIVE 3: Identify Short to Medium Term 'Bridges' to PSH



Recommendations

GOAL II: Ensure Long Term Support Services for the Population by December 2023

OBJECTIVE 1: Ensure Funding Mechanisms for Uninterrupted Permanent Support

OBJECTIVE 2: Ensure Engagement with Individuals that Incorporates Long-Term Work to Build Trust



Implementation Plan

PHASE ONE (Years 1 through 3)

Phase One will focus on the creation of new housing models/units and support services that match this populations' needs. There will also be a focus on incorporating FUSE activities into the recently launched regional Homeless Response Service Hub delivery system and working towards quality data to understand what strategies are effective and what needs to improve.

- Coordinate Efforts
- Establish Data Dashboards and Reporting Tools
- Develop Various Models of Housing for the FUSE Population - With a goal of a Minimum of 30 New Units Per Year
- Ensure Low Barrier Access and Continuity of Wraparound Support Services



Implementation Plan

PHASE TWO – EVALUATION AND SUSTAINABILITY (Years 4 through 5)

Phase Two will focus on continuation of housing development and implementation of new models of housing paired with wraparound support services.

It will also focus on evaluation strategies to determine which models produce the most successful outcomes for individuals. Less successful models will be adjusted as needed to improve outcomes.

By the end of Phase Two a cost effectiveness study should be completed to justify any new streams of funding attached to this initiative.



Suggested Legislation

- A bill that provides ongoing funding for the development and operations of a housing model similar to recovery residences for this population. This legislation should look to leverage existing local, federal and/or private grant funding to maximize the reach of the funding
- A bill that will create and fund a statewide network of 10 to 12 Intensive Case Managers within the Department of Health and Human Services to work directly with the FUSE population



Questions?

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