Integrated Health and Housing: Establishing Partnerships to Promote Aging in Place

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Objectives

- How to identify collaborations and partnerships for effective service provision
- How to establish and maintain collaborations and partnerships for effective service provision
- Empowering residents to help sustain partnerships
- Explore new options and models for supportive services in affordable senior housing

The People We Serve

- 26,000 Residents, with
- Over 10,000 being children < 18 years old; and,
- Over 6,500 Seniors, aged 55 +
- Over 50% of all households indicate that one or more members are disabled
- Over 12,000 Households in the City & County of Denver
- 6,800 Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers, with 21,500 families on Wait List
- 5,500 Units of Senior/Disabled, Family and Mixed Income Communities owned and managed by DHA, with 13,500 families on Wait List
- 81% of all households earn less than $20,000 annually
Needs of the Aging Population

Based on Denver Housing Authority’s (DHA) annual Health and Aging Survey, service gaps identified for seniors were:

- Clothing and food banks
- Medical supplies
- Money management
- Help applying for benefits
- Assistance with prescription management
- Transportation
- Hearing, vision and dental resources
- Community resources
- In home care
- Legal assistance
- Accessing health care
- Care coordination

Partner Collaborations are Key

Partnerships are essential for providing aging in place services.

- Advance and sustain opportunities for aging population;
- Avoid reinventing the wheel;
- Avoid costly overhead start up costs;
- Leverage existing programs to meet the needs of the evolving population;
- Assist in resident retention and aging in place.
Partnerships
Key components to strong partnerships

- Leadership;
- Common interests and goals;
- Shared purpose;
- Effective means of communication.

Partnerships
Identifying collaborations and partnerships for effective service provision

- LOCAL PARTNERS: Connect with small local organizations (churches, libraries, rec centers, neighborhood associations, etc.);
- RESIDENT PARTNERS: Use resident leaders and groups to sustain and build partnerships (Local Resident Council);
- GOVERNMENT PARTNERS: Establish relationships with city (City Council, Mayor, City Boards and Commissions, etc.);
- NON-PROFIT PARTNERS: Connect with non-profits, federal/state/local entities, and organizations that serve similar populations;
- PARTNER WITH YOURSELF: Partner with property management and/or establish a non-profit arm to increase grant opportunities and partnerships.

Local Partners
Connecting with neighborhood establishments is the first step in developing lasting community relationships.

- Churches
  - Food banks, clothing drives, holiday assistance, volunteer base
- Libraries
  - Mobile book centers, technology classes
- Rec Centers
  - Senior fitness programs, gathering spaces for community meetings
- Schools
  - Intergenerational programs, volunteer base
- Neighborhood Associations
  - Connections with the larger community
Resident Partners
Residents are your best community advocates in building and sustaining partnerships.

- Identify resident leaders
  - Establishing Ambassador programs
- Establish Local Resident Council Boards
  - Assist in HUD grant applications
  - Allow residents, management, and coordinators to partner to meet needs
- Survey residents to understand needs in the community
  - Health and Aging Survey
- Partner with LRC’s and resident leaders to meet the needs of the population.

Resident Council Board (RCB) and Local Resident Councils (LRC)

- The Resident Council Board (RCB) is the governing agency of all DHA’s LRCs. RCB Executive officers, in partnership with Resident and Community Services (RCS), assist LRCs with organization, oversight, and implementation.
- The RCB holds city-wide meetings for DHA residents and LRC officers six times a year.
- Local Resident Council’s are the foundation for community building and provide a monthly forum to represent one’s community.
- LRC’s can be HUD grant recipients, working collaboratively with service coordinators to meet the needs of the community.
Government Partners
 Align with local, state, and federal agencies to meet the needs of the population.

- Connect with your city:
  - Identify city council members
  - City Boards and Commissions
- Form relationships with Community Resource Officers (CRO):
  - Open the lines of communication with police.
- Encourage engagement in
  - Health and Aging Survey
- Partner with LRC’s and resident leaders to meet the needs of the population.

Government Partners: Denver Days
Denver Days is an initiative Mayor Michael Hancock created to help neighbors get to know neighbors and get involved with their communities. DHA’s communities collaborate in this effort every August.

- Every year DHA’s residents work with their Service Coordinator, Property Manager, Community Partners, and the City of Denver to host Denver Day Events.
- Denver Days is an opportunity for the residents to connect with their entire neighborhood.
- Past Events have included:
  - Movie screenings in the park
  - BBQ’s
  - Yard sales
  - Block Parties

Non-Profit Partners
Avoid reinventing the wheel by leveraging existing programs to meet the needs of the population

- Local non-profits:
  - Identify organizations working towards similar goals and aligning missions.
  - Establish mutually beneficial relationships with local agencies.
    - Urban/community garden organizations
    - Health and wellness groups
    - Food and nutrition assistance
- Partner with national non-profits
  - Identify national organizations serving similar populations
    - Volunteers of America
    - Catholic Charities
    - United Way
Non-Profit Partner: Health

Health + Serve E - Empower T - Transform

- Since 1988, HealthSET has been providing free health checks, advocacy and extensive follow-up care to low-income seniors in the Denver Metro Area.
- HealthSET fills a gap in service for a population often forgotten and who frequently fall through the cracks of the healthcare and social service systems.
- HealthSET provides monthly health clinics and client advocacy at 9 DHA properties.

Non-Profit Partner: Dental

- Senior Mobile Dental provides mobile affordable dental services to Seniors 60 and older who qualify under the OAP grant.
- DHA has hosted weekly dental clinics available to all DHA residents and the larger community. Nearly 200 DHA residents have been cared for by Senior Mobile Dental.
- Services Provided:
  - Denture repair
  - Extractions
  - Cleaning
  - Deep denture cleaning

Non-Profit Partners: Food Bank

- The Senior Mobile Food Bank allows residents to pick their food. This is a new approach for food banks – having a decision to select the foods they like versus pre-packaged.
Non-Profit Partners: Gardens

- Garden at Hirschfield Tower
- Garden at Mt. View/Eliot

Non-Profit Partners: Commodities

- The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) is a USDA program designed to improve the health of low-income people at least 60 years of age, by supplementing their diets with nutritious foods.
- Working with Food Bank of the Rockies, commodities boxes are distributed monthly at all of the senior/disabled buildings.
- Eligible seniors receive a monthly food box consisting of non-perishable protein, milk, juice, cereal, canned or dried fruits and vegetables, and cheese. Nutrition education and recipes are also included in the food boxes.

Partnering with Yourself

- Property Management:
  - Regular Updating between Housing Managers and Resident Services staff regarding move ins, resident issues, etc., is critical to meeting the needs of residents.
  - Welcome Neighbor – Provides agency, neighborhood, and program orientation to new residents.
  - Criminal Activity Tracker – Residents report criminal activity to DHA and DHA tracks and provides information on trends and outcomes.
  - Resident Achievement Program – Recognizes residents for meeting significant goals.
  - Senior Ball – The Senior Ball is a night on the town, with dancing, dining, socializing, and fun! Events like these are significant in that they reduce social isolation which improves emotional health.
Resident Services and Housing Management Collaboration

Welcome Neighbor Training

Partnering with Yourself: Senior Ball

- Every year, with the support of many community partners, DHA hosts the Senior Ball to celebrate our aging population.
- 200 residents attend the event for an evening of dancing, eating, contests, prizes, and fun!
- The Senior Ball is an opportunity for residents to connect with one another outside of DHA.

Partnering with Yourself

- Internal partners share the same mission.
  - Establishing a non-profit:
    - As the need for these services is increasing, traditional funding sources are decreasing dramatically.
    - Increase grant opportunities - As a quasi-public entity, housing authorities are limited in ability to pursue certain grants.

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As the population ages, we need to change the way we build housing and provide supportive services to meet changing needs.

DHA is currently designing and developing St. Anthony’s Senior Housing in Denver and is:

- working with a partner to provide an adult day care center and focusing on design features to support people aging in place such as wider doors and lower counters.