

# Spotlight Series: Transitional Housing-Rapid Rehousing Joint Component Project

When the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) launched in 2016, one of its key housing strategies was the Transitional Housing-Rapid Rehousing (TH-RRH) joint component project. TH-RRH combines the CoC Program's Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing components into a single project. Many communities find that this project model is particularly useful for youth and young adults (YYA) experiencing homelessness, since it can provide the intensive support of TH while still facilitating greater self-sufficiency through the RRH portion of the project.

## Different Models under YHDP

Through YHDP, communities in Rounds 1, 2, and 3 have experimented with three different models to implement their TH-RRH projects:

- Site-based TH paired with scattered-site RRH
- Scattered-site TH paired with scattered-site RRH (different unit)
- Scattered-site TH paired with scattered-site RRH (same unit)

## Site-based transitional housing paired with scattered-site rapid rehousing

When implementing this TH-RRH model, CoCs utilize a building in the community for the transitional housing portion of the project. When a youth or young adult in transitional housing has made clear that they are ready to move to permanent housing, project staff work with them to identify a unit in the community where they would like to be permanently housed and use the rapid rehousing portion of the project to assist the YYA.

### Key Components of a YHDP-Funded TH-RRH Project

No minimum length of stay in the TH portion

Maximum period of assistance in TH is 24 months and 24 months in RRH

YYA *do not* have to utilize both portions of the project, and can reside in only the TH or only the RRH

Project budget should have enough funds to pay for TH and RRH for all participants

Project must participate in coordinated entry and HMIS

Must follow written standards developed by the CoC to determine who will be prioritized for assistance

## Benefits

- Can provide crisis housing quickly with readily available units
- Can more easily serve minors, due to child welfare partners who may have licensing requirements that are easier to meet in a site-based approach
- In difficult rental markets, transition time between unsheltered homelessness and permanent housing can be beneficial
- Can foster community among YYA housed together at the site

## Challenges

- Under-utilization can be an issue if the site's configuration and location do not match what YYA want
- More expensive to operate site-based TH, which has higher staffing costs
- May be more difficult to house youth with certain criminal backgrounds (e.g. sex offenders) in site-based TH

## Scattered-site transitional housing paired with scattered-site rapid rehousing (different unit)

When implementing this TH-RRH model, CoCs utilize scattered-site units in the community for the transitional housing portion of the project. A project may elect to use this model when it has a landlord partner in the community who is willing to rent their units for the TH portion, but the project wants to retain youth choice in the rapid rehousing portion and allow YYA to choose their unit within the community. When a youth or young adult has made clear that they are ready to transition to permanent housing using rapid rehousing assistance, project staff work with them to identify another unit in the community where they would like to be permanently housed.

## Benefits

- Can provide crisis housing quickly with readily available units, while providing flexibility to choose long-term permanent housing

## Challenges

- Under-utilization can be an issue if the site's configuration and location do not match what YYA want

## Scattered-site transitional housing paired with scattered-site rapid rehousing (same unit)

When implementing this TH-RRH model, CoCs utilize scattered-site units in the community for the transitional housing portion. When a youth or young adult has made clear that they are

ready to transition to permanent housing using rapid rehousing assistance, project staff work to transition the lease with the landlord to the youth or young adult.

### Benefits

- By remaining in the same unit throughout their project enrollment, the YYA is able to gain stability
- Housing search with the recipient/subrecipient and YYA occurs only once, at the beginning of their project enrollment

### Challenges

- If a housing search is conducted with each new project enrollment, finding a unit can take more time than in other models because the recipient is required to search for a new unit for the TH or RRH unit

#### Community Snapshot: Snohomish County, WA

During its YHDP planning process, the Youth Action Committee and its partners identified a gap: there was no dedicated youth shelter in the community. Because of this, youth were on the streets and were hard to contact to conduct a housing search. The partners believed TH-RRH could bridge this gap.

Partnering with an agency that was able to provide expertise in housing search and RRH, the subrecipient Cocoon House leased two apartments for the TH portion of the project, and helped YYA apply to other apartments for the RRH portion.

To manage the scattered-site TH, Cocoon House staff utilized a crisis housing agreement that detailed “high support and high standards.” It also created a part-time peer support position to support life skills with all YYA.

Initially, planners were concerned that YYA might not make the move from TH to RRH, but they have found that most YYA move to an RRH unit within 30 days. “Every week we check in, and keep the urgency going,” says the Cocoon House program manager, “and give YYA space to struggle and do well.”

Snohomish County has found that collaboration is key. The success of its program has been contingent on effective relationships among community partners. Starting with the partnership between the agency conducting the housing search and the agency conducting the case management, it has spread to other community partners who provide education and employment connections to YYA, as well as other mainstream resources.