Evaluating Philadelphia's Rapid Re-Housing Impacts on Housing Stability and Income

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Rapid Re-housing approach seeded by American Recovery Reinvestment Act

- 2008 Fiscal Recession a policy window for ending homelessness
  - $1.5 billion invested into Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing across the US – unprecedented investment
  - HPRP infused large amounts of cash into the homeless service system, creating fast flowing new service approach
  - HPRP challenged and changed institutionalized patterns embedded in nation's homelessness service system

- 2013 Current Reality - Investment in Rapid Re-housing influenced a paradigm shift in the way communities respond to homeless households in shelter, changing professional norms /policy mandates (HEARTH Act)

Philadelphia's Federal HPRP Award

- Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the City of Philadelphia received $21,486,240 HPRP funding over three year period to assist persons at risk of becoming homeless or those who were currently homeless
- Philadelphia sub-contracted with 5-7 providers to administer HPRP funds – providing direct financial and housing stabilization assistance to households that were homeless *but for* assistance
- Rapid Re-housing funded time-limited rental assistance, security/utility deposits, credit assistance….moving households quickly into housing out of emergency shelters/transitional programs
- Philadelphia's rental assistance provided for 12 month period

Philadelphia's RRH Results

- Provided $11.2M in Rapid Re-Housing assistance. ($7.2M direct assistance)
- 1,385 households were housed
- Average amount of assistance per HH = $6,000 over an average of 12 months
- Recidivism rate of re-entering shelter = 13% tracking households from October 2009 thru July 2013

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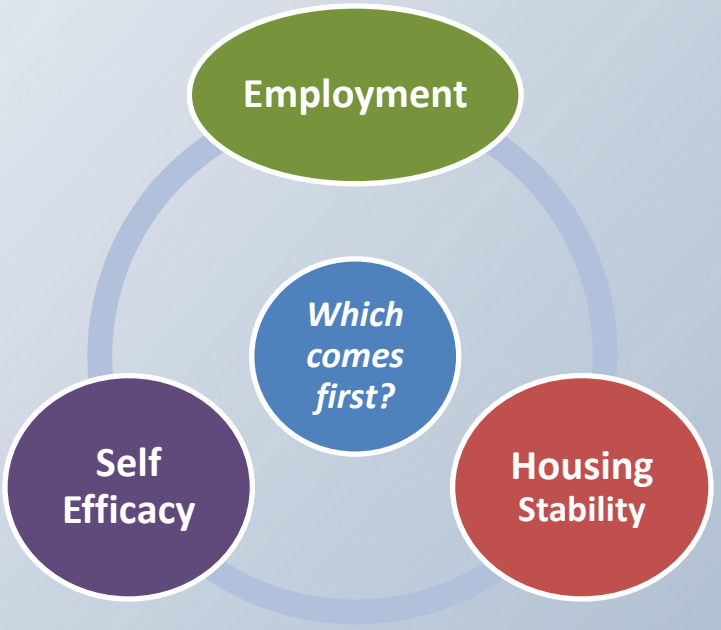
Philadelphia RRH Impact Evaluation Primary Research Questions

1. What effect does time-limited housing assistance have on housing stability?

2. What effect does time-limited housing assistance have on labor market participation?

3. What effect does the amount of RRH housing assistance have on income and housing outcomes?



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To determine causal effects of RRH, must answer the counterfactual…..

What if RRH never happened? What would have happened to these same households?

To answer the counterfactual, similar comparison groups must be established.

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HMIS Data

- **HMIS is a unique national administrative dataset** - - allows localities to construct statistically robust research designs
- With HMIS datasets, we can:
  - Create balanced comparison groups
  - Identify treatment / intervention effects
  - Implement quasi-experimental designs that help answer the counterfactual

PSM is a balancing method to estimate causal treatment (RRH) effects

PROPENSITY SCORE MATCHING IS A STATISTICAL METHOD THAT CREATES TWO GROUPS THAT LOOK THE SAME.

With all shelter entries 10/09–05/12, created look-alike comparison groups

Logistic regression creates a propensity score based on the probability of each household receiving RRH, matched on observable covariates in the prediction model: (all variables found on HMIS)

- disability
- monthly income at shelter entry
- married
- gender
- SSI/SSDI status
- age
- # times previously in shelter
- family size
- completed high school or GED
- shelter entry date

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PSM creates matched comparison groups with similar characteristics

Variable	RRH Treatment (1169 Households)	Non-RRH Comparison (1286 Households)
	Mean	Mean
# times in shelter	2.13	1.85
Monthly income @shelter entry	$735	$808
Family Size	2.25 /household	2.27/household
% Married	6.1%	5.4%
% male	42.3%	40.4%
% female	57.7%	59.6%
% complete HS	53.5%	56.7%
% 18 – 25 years	22%	24.3%
% 26 – 59 years	73.1%	74.2%
% 60 plus years	4.9%	4.4%
Disabling Condition	31%	33%
Receiving SSI_SSDI	25%	24%

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Return to Homelessness Findings

Chi-square Results (1.00=RRH group)

treatment * RECID Crosstabulation

			RECID .00	RECID 1.00	Total
treatment	.00	Count	780	506	1286
		% within treatment	60.7%	39.3%	100.0%
	1.00	Count	1010	159	1169
		% within treatment	86.4%	13.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	1790	665	2455
		% within treatment	72.9%	27.1%	100.0%

39% of Non-RRH households returned to homelessness

13.6% of RRH households returned to homelessness

Odds Ratio = 1.4, the odds of returning to homelessness were **40%** higher for households that *did not* receive RRH when compared to households that received RRH.

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Return to Homelessness Risk Factors

Using logistical regression, risk factors were assessed for PSM households on the return to homelessness outcome

- Only risk factor for Return to Homelessness =
  # of times household in shelter
- Only protective factor =
  Being married
- Factors that had no difference for Return to Homelessness:
  - # months received RRH
  - HS diploma/GED completion
  - Age
  - Gender
  - SSI or SSDI
  - Family size

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Explored RRH Impact on Employment - only # Months of RRH significant

Summary of Regression:

Coefficients:

(Intercept)	451.84448	852.93536	0.530	0.59642	
MonthsRRH	14.99054	5.36548	2.794	0.00532	**
Employmentincome.EntryRR	0.50783	0.04871	10.426	< 2e-16	***
GenderBinary	-56.15432	64.06055	-0.877	0.38096	
HSGradBinary	-88.69176	59.11898	-1.500	0.13392	
HHAge18_25	-10.93492	855.26430	-0.013	0.98980	
HHAge26_59	-85.38468	853.31761	-0.100	0.92032	
HHAge60plus	-318.05879	867.06909	-0.367	0.71384	
X..timesinshelter30days	-10.60221	19.21899	-0.552	0.58133	

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Findings - Employment Impacts

- Only the number of months RRH assistance received was found to be a significant predictor of income at exit.
- Findings show that every month of RRH results in an average increase of $15 a month in income.
- Further analysis showed that 0 to 3 months of RRH was not long enough to see income increase at exit

- **BUT**, **remember the counterfactual**…

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Rapid Re-housing Impacts
Policy Implications

Rapid Re-housing Programs

- decrease the likelihood of a return to homelessness
- may improve employment efforts (based on short-term income effects)
- ?move households more quickly out of shelter-?cost savings?

Mechanisms that might be causing improved labor

- stabilized housing accessed with time-limited housing subsidy
- households may move closer to employment opportunities
- households may move closer to family and/r positive social supports
- households may move closer to child care
- increased self-efficacy (RRH obliges staff to support self-efficacy)

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Design a Local RRH impact evaluation (study size matters)

1. Scan emerging RRH research results (robust methods?)
2. Define research questions
3. Researcher partnership
4. **Use HMIS to create similar comparison groups**
5. Run multiple approaches, analyze findings
6. Contribute findings to emerging RRH research