What is C-SCHARP?
The Colorado Second Chance Housing and Re-Entry Program (C-SCHARP) is a comprehensive approach to prisoner reentry that increases the chances of recovery for identified people on parole with co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders by providing evidence-based practices both inside and outside of prison. Participants selected for the program and released on parole are ideally transitioned immediately into a housing unit (a “housing first” model). C-SCHARP uses an Assertive Community Treatment model to provide behavioral health and wraparound support to the parolee during transition. The C-SCHARP Program is a collaboration between the Colorado Department of Corrections (DOC), Division of Housing (DOH) and three community mental health centers: Aurora Mental Health Center (AUMHC), AllHealth Network (AllHealth) and Mental Health Center of Denver (MHCD). Each center provides participants mental health services, substance abuse services, housing assistance, and independent living resources in order to assist them with reintegration back into society.

Evaluation of C-SCHARP Program
An evaluation of the C-SCHARP program was conducted by the Evaluation team at the Mental Health Center of Denver. Data on program participants was collected on a quarterly basis to meet performance reporting requirements for the Bureau of Justice Administration (BJA) funding. Analysis of reporting data was conducted in order to understand whether the program met its stated goals.

Participant Characteristics
65 participants were referred from DOC to the CMHCs. Of these 65 participants, 55 were successfully transferred to CMHCs and received services through the program. The remaining 10 were either denied by the CMHC, did not engage with the CMHC, or returned to the criminal justice system before contact could be made by the CMHC. Participants identified as 53.8% female, 46.1% male. The age breakdown is age 20-29 12.3%, age 30-39 36.9%, age 40-49 29.2% and 50+ years 27.6%. Additionally, 40% identify as White/Caucasian, 26.1% identify as Black or African American, 4.6% as American Indian or Alaska Native, 27% Other race. Overall 31.2% of participants identify as Hispanic or Latino/a, while 64.6% have an unknown ethnicity.

Program Outcomes
Over 90% of program participants engaged in Co-Occurring services, Housing services, and Cognitive-based services, 88% engaged in Employment services, and 23.8% engaged in Educational services. 62% of participants reported that they had seen a primary care provider in the last year, and adhere to their treatment plan. 29% of the participants exited the program successfully, or are continuing to receive services through the CMHCs. However, for those participants who exited the program unsuccessfully, 50% exited due to court or criminal involvement, 18.7% as a failure to meet program requirements, and 18.7% due to other reasons.

Housing Outcomes
The average length of stay in the program is 204 days or roughly 6 months. During the course of the program 56% of participants maintained an independent home or apartment that was subsidized, 18% were transitonally housed in a treatment facility or program, 18% experienced homelessness as defined by staying with friends or living in a hotel, and 4% experienced homelessness defined as living on the street, in a vehicle, or in an overnight shelter.
**Systems Impact**

The graph below displays the number of jail days per individual over the two-year program cycle. While the change over time trends were not statistically significant, the downward trend of number of days for detox, jail, physical hospitalization and psychiatric hospitalization is notable. Generally speaking, the majority of individuals in the C-SCHARP program had zero jail days reported every quarter, however there were outliers that had large sentences that contributed to the overall group average. Similarly, for detox days and hospitalizations the majority of program participants reported zero, with a few exceptions.

![Graph showing number of jail days per individual over the two-year program cycle.](image)

**Analysis**

29% of program participants exited the program successfully or are continuing to receive services through their assigned community mental health center at the end of the program. For these participants the C-SCHARP program was a success. Their transition from the DOC back into the community was made more successful than individuals who did not receive services in the C-SCHARP program. Additionally, Colorado Department of Corrections reports that for individuals released from prison with co-existing disorders the three-year recidivism rate is 56.4%. For C-SCHARP program participants the recidivism rate was 25%. Of additional interest the C-SCHARP Cohort 1 recidivism rate was 27%, and we continue to see that participants in C-SCHARP have lower recidivism rates than those who are not in the program. Furthermore, since one of the main goals of the program is to provide housing for individuals leaving the criminal justice system it is important to...
recognize that over half of the participants achieved independent housing, and those that achieved housing in the form of a treatment facility were able to access the substance abuse services they needed upon release from prison.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this evaluation it is recommended that the C-SCHARP program further explore several areas of study in the future. The first area for growth is to solidify the transition from DOC to CMHC. DOC reports that 65 participants were released, and recommended to CMHCs for the program. However, only 55 participants were reported on by the CMHCs. Since we know that the 10 participants were either denied by the CMHC, did not engage with the CMHC, or returned to the criminal justice system before contact could be made by the CMHC it is recommended that the program define when an individual becomes a participant in the program. Determining if program participation begins at the point of referral, or when they become enrolled in services at a CMHC is advised. Furthermore, it will also be important to reiterate this decision to all CMHCs and DOC so that reporting follows the decided upon guidelines. Additionally, three areas of targeted further work should include exploration of housing environments, program engagement, and participant selection criteria. These areas of exploration should be examined in order to determine why the program is successful for some participants, but not others. Lastly, it should be noted that according to the Regional Administrator of HUD Region VIII the Denver metro area is experiencing a deficit of about 225,000 units of housing for those experiencing homelessness or those in extreme poverty (Burnes, 2016). Because the low income housing market was so strained from 2014-2016 C-SCHARP participants had difficulty finding a landlord, or apartment complex that would except the vouchers provided by the program. One possible recommendation moving forward would be to switch the voucher from a tenant-based to unit-based system. If participants were guaranteed not only a housing voucher, but also housing that would accept the voucher, housing outcomes might improve. Currently, MHCD and the City of Denver are engaged in the Social Impact Bond (SIB) Housing First project which will not target the C-SCHARP program participants specifically, but will target individuals with similar housing and case management needs. The SIB project utilizes single site as well as scattered site housing for identified program participants (Cunningham Pergamit Hanson & Kooragayala, 2016). It is recommended that the C-SCHARP program explore this possibility in order to address some of the difficulties obtaining housing identified in this program.

**References:**


Burnes, D., Dr. (n.d.). Housing and Homelessness: Orders of Magnitude Short (Issue brief No. 1).