

CommonSpirit Health

# Homeless Health Initiative

Our country and the states in which our health system operates are suffering from an epidemic of homelessness. It has continued to be an extremely challenging and ever more pressing issue for communities as numbers continue to rise. In response to the growing crisis in California which saw the 2019 Point in Time counts rise significantly across many counties, Governor Gavin Newsom formed the Homeless and Supportive Housing Advisory Task Force to develop comprehensive recommendations based on best practices observed and input from local governments and constituents.

Dignity Health has shared the concern with our communities across California about the care and shelter of our vulnerable homeless population and know that connecting patients to adequate supportive services upon hospital discharge is a challenge experienced by hospitals nationwide. We face this challenge on a daily basis and work hard to assist any patient in need when medically cleared to leave the hospital, which may include food, clothing, transportation, and lodging options, and needed follow up medical care. Our mission is to provide basic human care to any patient that walks through our doors.

In 2019, CommonSpirit Health was formed by the alignment of Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI) and Dignity Health. As part of this alignment, CommonSpirit leadership and Dignity Health facilities in California launched the Homeless Health Initiative (HHI) to create a statewide strategy addressing the need to co-locate, coordinate and integrate health, behavioral health, safety and wellness services with housing and other social services, and help providers to connect individuals experiencing homelessness with these resources.

Hello humankindness.



Our mission is to provide basic human care to any patient that walks through our doors.

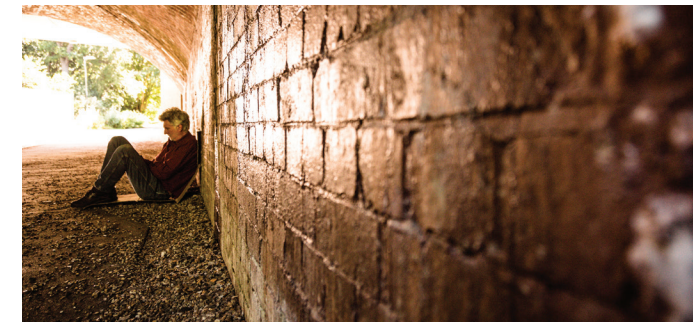


## Guiding Principles

- Recognize that the lack of stable and affordable housing negatively impacts health and that supporting individuals to exit from homelessness is a positive investment in health.
- Address the disproportionate health needs of people who are homeless.
- Emphasize prevention, including activities that address the social determinants of health – food security, transportation, child care, as well as housing.
- Provide innovative solutions to address the problem, including the use of new technologies and strategies.
- Serve as a catalyst for building capacity to address the need.
- Create lasting impact through long-term community sustainability and collaboration.
- Advance transformation of the healthcare system and of communities.

## Want to learn more?

Ashley Brand  
Director, Community and Homeless Health  
Dignity Health  
916.851.2197  
Ashley.Brand@DignityHealth.org



CommonSpirit Health

## Homeless Health Initiative





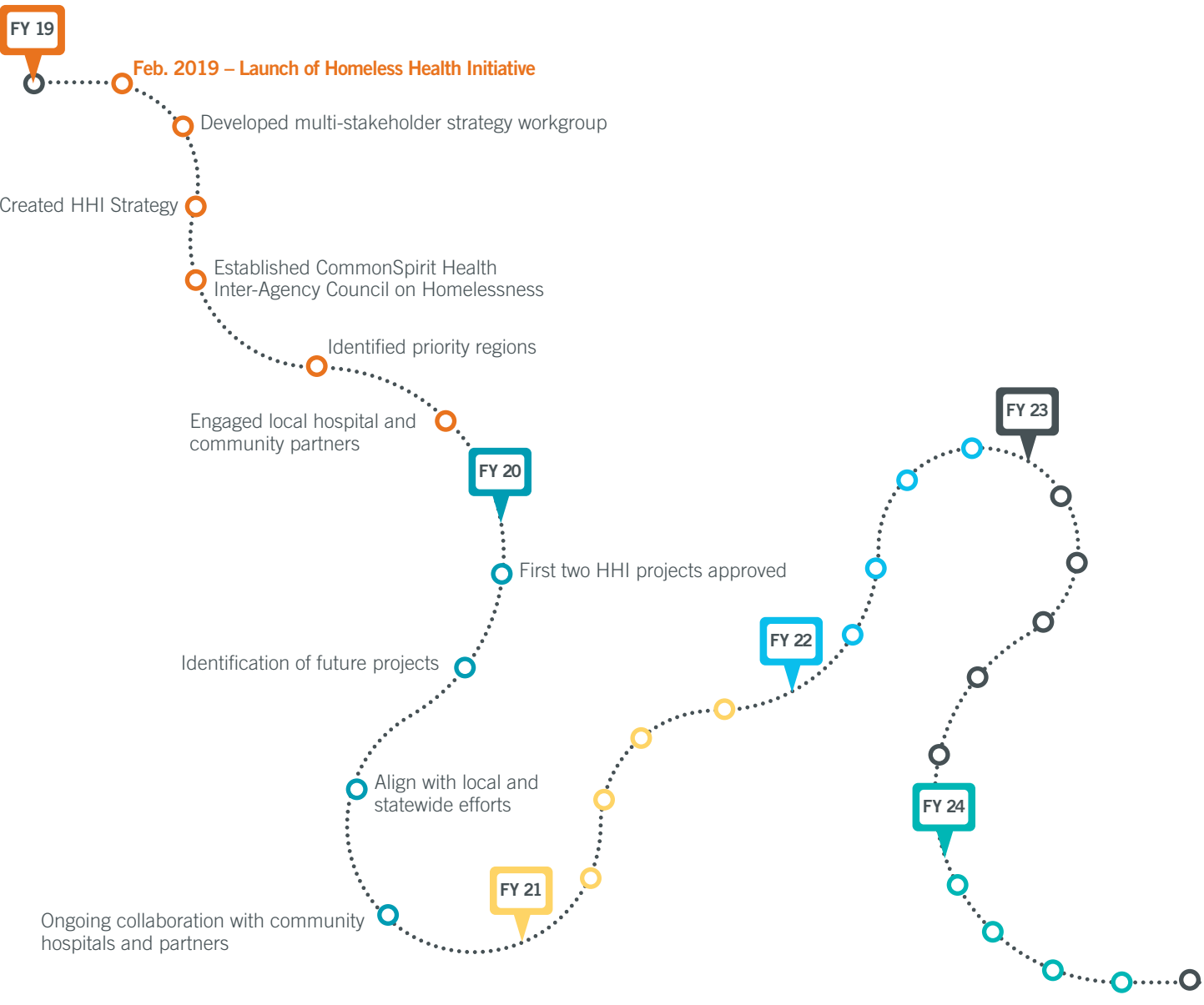
Homeless Health Initiative – Housing for Humankindness

Over the next five years, CommonSpirit Health leadership and Dignity Health hospitals will be working closely with local community partners including the homeless continuum of care, homeless service providers, government agencies, and others to identify opportunities to improve coordination of care and the health of those experiencing housing insecurities.

**Purpose:** Transform health and our communities by strengthening the continuum of care for those experiencing housing insecurities through innovation and partnerships, and with lasting impact.

**Goal:** Improve the overall health and well-being of people who are experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless.

Identified projects will be focused on enhancing the continuum of care and building capacity while also measuring the impact of housing on an individuals’ overall health and well-being.



Investments may include but are not limited to:

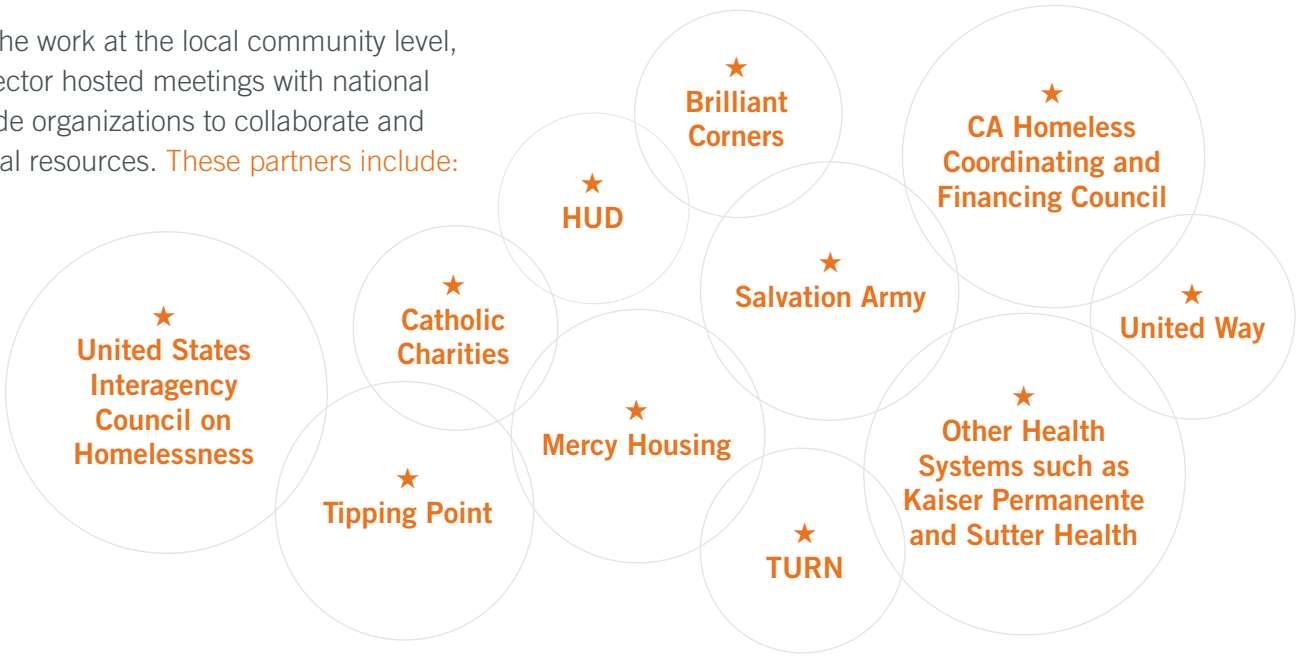
- Homeless Prevention
- Permanent and Affordable Housing
- Bridge and Interim Housing
- Emergency Housing
- Medical Respite/Recuperative Care
- Navigation
- Technology and Innovation

FY 2019 Accomplishments

In early 2019, a multi-disciplinary strategy workgroup including community health, care coordination, operations, performance excellence, and the philanthropic foundation was created to develop the HHI strategy. In April 2019, the Director of Community and Homeless Health was hired to lead the initiative.

By the close of FY19, CommonSpirit Health established the Inter-Agency Council on Homelessness comprised of key leaders from both legacy Dignity Health and CHI. The HHI strategy workgroup prioritized rural communities in the central valley and north state for the first phase of the initiative. Meetings with hospital leadership, nursing, care coordination and community health leaders were conducted. In addition, the HHI director and others engaged community homeless service providers and the local continuums of care to better understand identified priorities and projects underway.

Along with the work at the local community level, the HHI director hosted meetings with national and statewide organizations to collaborate and tap additional resources. These partners include:



Hospital Grants and Services

Through the Community Grants, California hospitals awarded 30 collaborative projects focused on improving coordination of care for individuals and families experiencing homelessness by:

- Building partnership between hospitals and community service providers,
- Enhancing referral processes
- Expediting access to services including outpatient healthcare services (primary care, behavioral health and substance use)
- Incorporating navigation to minimize barriers and addressing additional social determinants of health.

In addition to grants, hospitals donated to community organizations focused on improving the homeless continuum of care and increasing capacity for available services. Dignity Health at the corporate level awarded additional funding through the Social Innovation Partnership program to community partners that looked to enhance services through innovation and technology.



FY 2019 Accomplishments, cont’d.

Community Investments

Three projects focused on addressing homelessness and affordable housing in Los Angeles, Shasta Lake and Redding were awarded in FY19:

**Abode Communities and Affiliates** has two new development projects providing a total of 163 units including the transformation of two long-vacant urban infill sites into a vibrant affordable and supportive residential development serving low-income seniors and seniors experiencing homelessness and a second development offering long-term affordability to low-income families experiencing homelessness.

**The Veterans Housing Development Corporation** is developing a new supportive housing facility for very low-income and homeless veterans and their families including 30 affordable apartment units and supportive services. Total project cost amounts to \$10.8M.

**Hill Country Community Clinic** is building the Center of Hope, a comprehensive place of wellness offering health care, mental health, addiction treatment, and dental services, along with 16 supportive housing units for transitional age youth (aged 18-24) students who are homeless. Total projects cost amounts to \$22M.



Future Focused



FY 2020 Progress

- Identified community champions and projects to support in both Merced and San Bernardino focused on increasing capacity for medical respite and bridge housing.
- Additional local and statewide projects have been recognized that address prevention, education, permanent housing, medical respite services and navigation
- Convened multiple meetings with key external and internal stakeholders to strengthen collaboration and recognize areas of greatest need
- Aligning of efforts with established best practices such as Flexible Housing Subsidy Pool in Los Angeles and scattered sight permanent housing in the rural regions.
- FY20 Community Investment Loan (through August 30th):
  - The Homeless Services Center is renovating a residential property efficiently located adjacent from the current campus into six permanent housing rental units to assist chronically homeless individuals who have transitioned from the Recuperative Care Center (RCC) out of homelessness.
  - The Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation will be acquiring and rehabilitating 86 units located in a historic building in San Francisco, providing certain upgrades to the existing units and to help stabilize rents of current occupants and working with the City’s agencies to maintain the rental stability of the building while converting 24 units to affordable rental units accommodating previously homeless individuals and families.

Total Amount Approved  
**\$9M**