

Silicon Valley Triage Tool: Using Predictive Modeling to Prioritize Supportive Housing

In 2015 Destination: Home released **Home Not Found: The Cost of Homelessness in Silicon Valley**, the largest and most comprehensive body of information assembled in the United States to analyze the public costs of homelessness. A product of this study is the **Silicon Valley Triage Tool**. The Triage Tool is a new and highly accurate screening tool capable of predicting the high cost users in our public safety net system and allows communities to then prioritize them for supportive housing. Forecasting the future costs of homeless residents means critical, lifesaving interventions can be provided to the most vulnerable in our community. Using the Triage Tool means communities can spend less resources while achieving better outcomes.

Who does it benefit? Some homeless men and women are **more likely to have acute conditions** that require extensive use of public services. *These individuals may be in and out of jails, hospitals and clinics in cycles of crisis.* Public services come at high costs. Permanent supportive housing or housing first is a recognized intervention in addressing the costly social problem of chronically homeless. Since permanent supportive housing is a limited resource, *the number of people needing housing far exceeds the available housing supply.* Targeting the most costly and acutely distressed individuals has the double benefit of reducing overall public costs and providing comprehensive services to alleviate suffering for the individual.

How does it work? The Triage Tool relies on a robust database created by Santa Clara County with **detailed service and cost records across county departments for all of the 104,206 residents who experienced episodes of homelessness over a six year period.** This includes medical and psychiatric diagnoses, health care provider visits, specific periods of incarceration and social services. The database allows for a comprehensive view of the resources used by homeless individuals, giving a complete picture of the needs of those individuals. Public expenses for each person may then be ranked to predict future outcomes and provide housing interventions.

How Santa Clara County will use the tool. As a component of the County's coordinated network of supportive housing programs, the tool will help identify "high need patients" for further engagement. "High need patients" would be connected to an Intensive Case Manager and enrolled in a permanent supportive housing program. The case manager will continue to monitor the individual's progress, so they can offer additional services if needed and determine when the added support results in improved outcomes. *The County of Santa Clara intends to use the lessons learned from these efforts to improve public services as a whole, creating better service and outcomes for the homeless individuals served.*

Cost avoidance can be profound. There are 1,000 Santa Clara County homeless residents identified by the Silicon Valley Triage Tool as having the highest probability of being long-term high-cost service users. **These 1,000 homeless individuals use public services at an estimated cost of \$56 million a year.** After paying the cost of housing and supportive services, there is an estimated \$19,282 per person and \$19,282,000 combined yearly reduction.*

Pre-housing (\$56,366) – Post- housing (\$37,083) = Estimated reduction of \$19,282 per person per year after paying the cost of housing and supportive services

For more information about The Silicon Valley Triage Tool, please visit www.destinationhomesc.org.