



Poster 18 – 2018 Nordic Implementation Conference

Multiple implementation players working together to implement Housing First in Denmark

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Background

Since 2009, the National Board of Social Services has worked with Danish municipalities on testing and implementing the Housing First principle as a means towards preventing and combatting homelessness. Housing First entails securing permanent housing and offering housing support through evidence-based methods as a first step towards supporting homeless citizens with complex social problems.

Project aim

Programme aims are

- That homelessness numbers have been reduced through prevention and support;
- That previously homeless citizens retain their housing and regain functional skills to the extent that they consider their lives independent and meaningful;
- That each municipality has the necessary organisational framework to support, and is working in coherence with, the Housing First principle and the recommended evidence-based housing support methods. This entails a focus on the provision of affordable housing.

Project methods

The National Board supports municipalities and homelessness shelters in reorganising their practices to support a Housing First approach. Among other collaborating partners are,

- The Danish national organisation for homeless people to ensure programme relevance;
- The Danish Prison and Probation Service and psychiatric hospitals to increase their focus on housing before release;
- University colleges to offer training in evidence-based housing support methods;
- Research institutions to document and evaluate the programme as well as to analyse problem areas and interventions.

Project results

Evaluations of the implementation of Housing First show that

- Housing First-based support has positive effects on citizens' housing retention.
- Most citizens are very satisfied with their support, and many see their housing situation as an important step towards positive change.
- Successful implementation depends on collaboration between all relevant municipal departments and other key players.
- Many municipalities and homelessness shelters wish to implement Housing First. However, Housing First support is still only made available to a limited number of their homeless citizens.

Preliminary or final conclusions/discussion

The presentation will elaborate on experiences gained in identifying and collaborating with key players in combatting homelessness. Emphasis will be made on the difference between early phases of the programme with extra funding for interventions and housing and later phases with little funding. What are motivational factors for engaging in such efforts? How do the different players collaborate and with which results? What are the challenges? Presenters will include collaborating partners.