

University of Massachusetts Medical School

Community Health Clerkship
Health Advocacy

HOMELESSNESS

Advocacy Organizations	
What are some Local organizations that do advocacy work?	HOPE, TPP, Community Healthlink
What are some State level organizations that do advocacy work?	Mass Housing alliance, PRRAC
What are some National level organizations that do advocacy work?	National Student campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness, PRRAC
What are some International organizations that do advocacy work?	BOND (British), COHRE (UK)
Advocacy Issue	
Looking at the State, National, and/or International level, at the websites or information from the organizations above, what is a major area of advocacy at this time? <i>Try to choose an advocacy issue that will in some way affect the local community.</i> Advocacy specifically refers to promoting legislation, policies or specific budgetary appropriations that positively affect a health issue. This may occur through decreasing barriers to accessing health services, providing an infrastructure conducive to effective health promotion programs, or directly increasing the resources and infrastructure of the public health system.	Advocacy issue that is going on at all levels is the housing first alliance. An approach that puts a primary focus on helping families and individuals to access housing. Their goals are to transition people quickly out of shelter housing and provide case management to prevent the reoccurrence of homelessness. This is an idea that a few cities have tried and been successful. A homeless individual wouldn't have to sober or clean to receive an apartment, but would be given support to improve their lives. This program would allow for less street homeless in all communities.
What specific law, policy or appropriation is being advocated for?	To allow for funding for Housing First
Who is doing the advocating? (Which organizations?)	Each state that wants to have a housing first program will advocate for the services. In MA, it would include state officials; representatives from other states were convened by a group of federal agencies in a Policy Academy to develop a statewide plan. Also partnered with them are Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness.
Who is being lobbied?	State officials
Whom will this issue affect?	Everyone in the community especially the homeless population
Were they or will they (in your opinion) be successful?	I think they will be successful because it worked well in the pilot cities and many of the state homelessness organizations are pushing for Housing first to be in MA
Why or why not? What do they need to be more successful?	Communities need to put more pressure on political leaders to make sure housing first doesn't fall through the cracks.

What are the consequences if they are not successful?	The housing problem will not change and there will still be an unsolved problem in the community.
If they are not successful, what other strategies can be used to achieve the same goal?	Create more homes were referrals can be made to place homeless individuals in them.
How can physicians and/or nurses be involved in this advocacy issue?	Bring more awareness to the community on the health implication of homelessness.