



RESEARCH REPORT

# Supportive Housing Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool

Development, Validation, and Results

*Martha Burt*

*Joshua Leopold*

*Mychal Cohen*

*December 2018*



## ABOUT THE URBAN INSTITUTE

The nonprofit Urban Institute is a leading research organization dedicated to developing evidence-based insights that improve people's lives and strengthen communities. For 50 years, Urban has been the trusted source for rigorous analysis of complex social and economic issues; strategic advice to policymakers, philanthropists, and practitioners; and new, promising ideas that expand opportunities for all. Our work inspires effective decisions that advance fairness and enhance the well-being of people and places.

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Supportive Housing Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool</b>	<b>1</b>
Background	1
Purpose of the SHOCAT	3
Developing the Supportive Housing Organization Capacity Assessment Tool (SHOCAT)	3
Examining Existing Organizational Assessments	3
Identifying Domains and Items for the SHOCAT	4
Writing and Testing the SHOCAT	5
The Contents of the SHOCAT	6
The Screener	6
SHOCAT Parts, Criteria, and Items	7
The Rating Scale	8
Scoring the Items and Criteria	9
The Comments Function	10
What Got Left Out of the SHOCAT	10
Results	11
How Are Responding Organizations Involved in PSH?	11
Assessing the Internal Consistency and Reliability of the Criteria	12
SHOCAT Scores	16
A Testcase for Using SHOCAT Results	18
How the SHOCAT Has Already Been Used	20
Self-Assessment	20
Evaluation	20
Communitywide Assessment	21
Conclusion	21
<b>Appendix A. Items Not Included in the Final SHOCAT</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Appendix B. Item-to-Total Correlations</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Appendix C. Responses for All SHOCAT Items</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Notes</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>About the Authors</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Statement of Independence</b>	<b>60</b>

# Acknowledgments

This report was funded by the Los Angeles office of the Corporation for Supportive Housing and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. We are grateful to them and to all our funders, who make it possible for Urban to advance its mission.

The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Urban Institute, its trustees, or its funders. Funders do not determine research findings or the insights and recommendations of Urban experts. Further information on the Urban Institute's funding principles is available at [urban.org/fundingprinciples](https://urban.org/fundingprinciples).

As with all projects of this nature, we could not have developed the Supportive Housing Organization Capacity Assessment Tool (SHOCAT) without the contributions of many people.

We owe the existence of this project to the Los Angeles office of the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH-LA) and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation. Wanting to understand how well the efforts of the 88 Communities Strong Initiative were succeeding in taking high-quality supportive housing to scale in underserved areas within LA County, they contracted for and funded the work, respectively. Bill Pitkin and Andrea Iloulian of the Hilton Foundation have been supportive throughout, offering insightful comments and maintaining interest as the lengthy process of tool development played out. At CSH-LA, our project officers, first Danielle Wildkress and then David Howden, helped guide the project's direction and development, with support from Cheryl Winter and Debbie Thiele. Gabriele Hooks, Mee Heh Risdon, and Brigitt Jandreau-Smith of CSH also helped us narrow our focus and avoid duplicating other existing measurement tools. Andy Perry helped lead efforts to test the SHOCAT with organizations in each of Los Angeles's eight service planning areas (SPAs).

Early in the project we received essential input from people with extensive supportive housing experience to help us identify the elements that the SHOCAT must measure. These included Tonya Boykin and Monique Davis of the Skid Row Housing Trust, Los Angeles; Stephanie Hampton and Janice Kimball of the Housing Authority of the County of Salt Lake, Utah; Stephanie Klasky-Garner of LA Family Housing, Los Angeles; Marilyn Kresky-Wolff of Open Arms Housing, Washington, DC; Tod Lipka of Step Up on Second, Los Angeles; Mollie Lowery of Housing Works, Los Angeles; Molly Rysman, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, formerly of CSH-LA and Skid Row Housing Trust; and Greg Shinn of Mental Health Association Oklahoma.

We also had long conversations and received excellent feedback from Carol Wilkins and Brooke Spellman, consultants with decades of experience working to stimulate adequate supplies of high-quality supportive housing and examining its effectiveness through numerous evaluations. They were a part of the team evaluating the overall initiative in Los Angeles County with Abt Associates, Inc.

The four organizations participating in CSH-LA's Supportive Housing Laboratory—Clifford Beers Housing, Hollywood Community Housing, LINC Housing, and PATH Ventures—were the earliest testers of very early versions of the tool. They gave us vital feedback about the experience of using it, the appropriateness and clarity of its content, what we were missing, and how using it had affected the way they worked.

Throughout, the project received great interest and support from the Housing First Partners Conference and the National Alliance to End Homelessness. Both organizations offered us a platform to present first our ideas and subsequently some preliminary results at their national conferences, in Los Angeles for the Housing First Partners Conference and in Washington, DC, in 2016 and then in 2017 for the National Alliance to End Homelessness. These presentations gave us the opportunity to reach many permanent supportive housing (PSH) practitioners, funders, and Continuum of Care (CoC) representatives, whose interest and encouragement kept us going. Many participants in these conference sessions were also good enough to volunteer to test different versions of the tool. The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), within the Department of Health and Human Services, also helped us recruit respondents through their listserv. Without them there would be no SHOCAT.

Finally, numerous people at the Urban Institute contributed to this project from beginning to end. Early on, we consulted with Rob Santos to understand the finer points of instrument development and what we should try to include in our methods. Nathan Dietz from Urban's Center on Nonprofits also helped us early on to identify existing tools that measured general nonprofit agency functioning and to determine that a tool to measure PSH capacity specifically did not already exist. Jasmine Simington and Abigail Baum assisted with data collection, analysis, and reporting.

# Executive Summary

**Permanent supportive housing (PSH) is the combination of subsidized housing and case management to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. PSH has gained in popularity as studies have shown it is the preferred housing arrangement for people with disabilities. It also promotes housing stability and can reduce emergency room visits, hospitalizations, jail stays, and other costly services (Burt, Wilkins, and Mauch 2011; Perl and Bagalman 2015).**

The goal of this project was to create an instrument that measures organizational capacity to develop and operate high-quality supportive housing. It grew out of work by the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and other Los Angeles foundations, nonprofits, and governments to end and prevent chronic homelessness using a multipronged strategy that included grants and technical assistance to develop capacity to build and operate supportive housing in underserved areas of Los Angeles County. As no tool existed to assess whether the investment in capacity building was indeed creating greater capacity, the Hilton Foundation funded the Corporation for Supportive Housing's Los Angeles office (CSH-LA) to hire a firm to create one. CSH-LA contracted with the Urban Institute for this purpose.

The result is the Supportive Housing Organization Capacity Assessment Tool (SHOCAT). The SHOCAT can serve three purposes: organizational self-assessment, organizational evaluation, and communitywide system capacity assessment. The tool is currently being programmed by CSH into an online assessment. We will update this report with a link to the tool when it is ready.

## Developing the SHOCAT

To develop the SHOCAT, we examined existing assessments on nonprofit organizational capacity and PSH. We then interviewed people knowledgeable about supportive housing about important domains to include and indicators of a high capacity supportive housing provider. Writing specific items came next, followed by pretesting, revising, and more pretesting. Ultimately, close to 90 organizations tested one of the versions of the SHOCAT and provided feedback that led to the final version.

# SHOCAT Contents

The SHOCAT includes six parts; most parts contain four criteria; and each criterion contains 5–12 items. The parts are as follows:

- A. General organizational functioning
- B. Developing supportive housing units
- C-Offering scattered-site housing
- D-Doing property management
- E-Offering supportive services
- F-Partnering

Part A’s four criteria are (1) attitudes and values relevant to supportive housing, (2) community standing, (3) organizational performance and quality improvement practices, and (4) financial and data capabilities.

Parts B, C, D, and E each contain the same four criteria: (1) focus on the hardest-to-serve population; (2) special practices geared to the nature of the population; (3) staffing; and (4) funding.

Part F’s two criteria are (1) working with partners with whom the organization has formal arrangements, and (2) working with agencies associated “by assignment.”

**Answering scale.** Items are statements about the respondent’s organization. Respondents give their organization a score indicating the level at which they believe their organization meets the criterion: 4 = mostly or completely; 3 = moderately; 2 = somewhat; or 1 = little or not at all.

## Results

Eighty-eight organizations completed either the beta test or the final SHOCAT; their responses are the basis of our analysis of results.

The primary result of this project is the SHOCAT itself: a tool with strong face validity for measuring key aspects of supportive housing provider capacity. SHOCAT criteria have strong *internal consistency* as measured by item-to-total correlations that meet or exceed norms for measuring instruments (0.4 or above). The criteria also have excellent *reliability* as measured by Chronbach’s

coefficient *alpha* of 0.7 or above. In addition, respondents perceived the SHOCAT items to be appropriate descriptions of how organizations offering supportive housing should look—that is, the items have *face validity*.

The SHOCAT yields scores for each part and criterion as well as an overall score. A criterion score is the sum of responses to all items in the criterion divided by the number of items. A part score is the sum of its criterion scores divided by the number of criteria. The overall score is the average score across all parts. The pretesting results showed that respondents rated themselves highest on financial and data capabilities (e.g., publishing detailed financial statements by line of business and monitoring internal cash flow), and lowest on community standing (participating in professional organizations, sharing best practices, and advocating for PSH development). Respondents scored highly on being mission-driven and supporting clients' needs, but less well on their understanding of local real estate markets or their ability to successfully develop and support PSH in new neighborhoods. Average scores were highly similar for development, scattered-site management, property management, and supportive services.

## Using the SHOCAT

The SHOCAT has already been used for self-assessment, evaluation, and communitywide description in Los Angeles, and it appears to be useful in all three ways.

### Self-Assessment

Respondents reported that doing the SHOCAT as a group identified areas of disagreement on internal capacity. This sometimes led organizations to changes in priorities or efforts to improve areas of weakness.

### Evaluation

The four organizations participating in CSH-LA's Supportive Housing Laboratory took the SHOCAT twice, one year apart, permitting measurement of changes in their capacity scores between rounds. Scores in some areas went up but scores in other areas went down, either because of changes in the supportive housing landscape or because respondents became more aware of organizational limitations.

## Communitywide Assessment

In Los Angeles County, CSH-LA uses the SHOCAT to assess the capabilities for developing supportive housing units and supporting its tenants in eight geographical areas, which together cover the entire county. The results were used to inform technical assistance needs to support the implementation of Los Angeles County's coordinated entry system.

## Conclusion

The SHOCAT is the first tool specifically designed to measure the capacity of organizations to provide high-quality supportive housing for the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population. Results indicate that the SHOCAT offers a reliable and internally consistent measure of key components of supportive housing. Feedback from respondents suggests that the SHOCAT is a useful tool for self-assessment that can generally be completed in under an hour and can be used with success for program evaluations and community-level assessments.



# Supportive Housing Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool

## Background

Permanent supportive housing (PSH) is the combination of subsidized housing and case management to help people with disabilities live independently in the community. PSH has gained in popularity as studies have shown it is the preferred housing arrangement for people with disabilities. It also promotes housing stability and can reduce emergency room visits, hospitalizations, jail stays, and other costly services (Burt, Wilkins, and Mauch 2011; Perl and Bagalman 2015).

Developing and running supportive housing is a challenging business because it involves multiple, often uncoordinated, systems and housing people with complex needs. Financing supportive housing typically requires raising public funding to subsidize construction and maintenance, cover ongoing operating expenses since tenants can pay very little in rent, and provide supportive services. These funds are usually assembled from multiple sources, each with its own rules and reporting requirements. For rent subsidies and supportive services, funding must often be renewed annually, creating an ongoing burden for providers even after a project is fully occupied. Supportive housing providers need to do whatever it takes for as long as it takes to help tenants with chronic behavioral and physical health conditions and long histories of homelessness find and maintain housing. Developers, property managers, private landlords, and specialized supportive services organizations are all part of the equation that makes sure tenants thrive, pay their rent, take care of their housing, and are good neighbors.

Fortunately, supportive housing has reached a state of maturity in which many organizations have decades of experience with the required development, management, and service provision. These organizations have established best practices and advocacy groups and researchers have developed tools to measure fidelity to those practices.

Taking PSH to scale can create challenges in several ways. As communities look to expand the availability of supportive housing, they need to know if their local network of developers, property managers, scattered-site housing managers, and service providers have the capacity to translate new funding opportunities into additional high-quality units of supportive housing. Experienced supportive

housing providers may struggle to expand their portfolio of projects and either spread themselves too thin or take on too much financial risk, exposing themselves to bankruptcy or drastic restructuring (Nichols, Spencer, and Trinh 2011). New developers may get into the supportive housing business as additional funding becomes available. These developers may not have the attitudes or expertise to deliver projects that include all the necessary components of high-quality supportive housing.

Further, numerous studies have found a great deal of variation in supportive housing models and the types and intensity of services they provide (Benston 2015; Dickson-Gomez et al. 2017). Some of these programs may stretch the limits of what should be considered supportive housing. For example, a recent evaluation of Missouri's Show Me Healthy Housing demonstration found that only one of the four funded projects included a permanent rental subsidy and dedicated supportive services for supportive housing tenants (Leopold et al. 2018). Without these components, tenants risk losing their housing. Thus, efforts to take PSH to scale must account for quality control and fidelity to the model.

This project's aim is to define and measure the concept of organizational capacity to develop and operate high-quality supportive housing. It grew out of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation's Chronic Homelessness Initiative in Los Angeles. Through this Initiative, the Hilton Foundation worked in collaboration with other local philanthropies and county and city governments to end and prevent chronic homelessness. They used a multipronged strategy that included grants and technical assistance to develop capacity to build and operate supportive housing in underserved areas of Los Angeles County. As part of this initiative, the Hilton Foundation funded a technical assistance effort by the Los Angeles office of CSH (CSH-LA) called the Supportive Housing Laboratory. Through the Lab, CSH-LA worked intensively with four organizations to help them create new projects in service planning areas (SPAs) that have traditionally been more difficult environments for building supportive housing.<sup>1</sup>

However, neither the larger initiative nor the Lab came up with any way to assess whether the investment in capacity building was indeed creating greater capacity. Members of the evaluation team from Abt Associates discussed this difficulty with Hilton Foundation staff regarding the overall initiative even before the Lab was funded; they suggested developing a tool to measure changes in organizational capacity.

CSH-LA contracted with the Urban Institute to evaluate the success of the Lab with the understanding that there was no readymade tool available to measure an organization's capacity to create and operate high-quality supportive housing. Developing and testing such a tool—the Supportive Housing Organization Capacity Assessment Tool (SHOCAT)—became the major focus of our evaluation.

# Purpose of the SHOCAT

The SHOCAT was created to assess the capacities of organizations **to develop supportive housing units and ensure that tenants could maintain their housing**. The idea for the SHOCAT was to capture the specific experiences, expertise, and capacities of organizations that allow them to consistently provide high-quality supportive housing. The tool serves three main purposes:

**Self-assessment.** Organizations can use the SHOCAT to assess their capabilities, looking at the organization comprehensively or at one or more of its specific activities. The SHOCAT can help an organization identify areas of activity it could profitably strengthen and reassess themselves over time to measure improvement.

**Communitywide assessment.** The SHOCAT can be used to document the supportive housing capacity of a whole community. A Continuum of Care or other planning body can gather assessments from many separate organizations and examine them with an eye to where the community's network of services needs strengthening and where investment might do the most good. Repeated assessments can show improvements in the capabilities and quality of the whole community's network of supportive housing providers.

**Informing investments.** Funders can use the SHOCAT to decide which supportive housing organizations to fund and for which purposes and to document the impacts of their investments in the form of improved organizational functioning.

## Developing the Supportive Housing Organization Capacity Assessment Tool (SHOCAT)

### Examining Relevant Organizational Assessment Tools

To develop the SHOCAT, we first examined existing nonprofit rating tools. This gave us a sense of overall content as well as the various formats that the SHOCAT could take. When we began this project in late 2014 and early 2015, no tool existed that focused specifically on capacity for supportive housing. At that time, one could find several generic tools to assess the capabilities of nonprofit organizations, such as the Marguerite Casey Foundation's Organizational Capacity Assessment, McKinsey's Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT), and the TCC Group's Foundation Core Capacity Assessment Tool (FCCAT) (McKinsey and Company 2013).<sup>2</sup> These tools were all designed to assess the

general organizational functions that might be found in any nonprofit organization. There was nothing focused specifically on an organization’s capacity to house people who had experienced chronic homelessness.

As we started our work, other CSH offices were also in the process of designing a tool based on CSH’s Dimensions of Quality Supportive Housing (DOQ), which focuses on specific supportive housing projects, not on entire organizations.<sup>3</sup> CSH-LA asked the Urban Institute to develop a tool to reflect the capabilities of whole organizations with varying experience, from those with dozens of supportive housing projects to ones just considering getting involved in supportive housing.

In addition to examining several generic organizational capacity tools, we also looked at several other assessment mechanisms. These included two CSH tools (the Dimensions of Quality assessment and the financial assessment that CSH uses when considering loan applications) and the Los Angeles County Home for Good’s “Standards of Excellence” (2014). In reviewing these instruments, we wanted to understand the various domains they covered, how they structured their content, and their level of specificity. We were also interested in their psychometric approach—whether they asked questions or made statements, and the wording and structure of the scales they used to register responses.

We determined that none of the existing tools we examined would yield information about a whole organization’s capacity to create and sustain supportive housing for high-need populations, including people experiencing chronic homelessness. They assessed other things very well, such as competence in handling financial affairs, strategic planning, or personnel policies. But none addressed specific supportive-housing policies and practices for an entire organization.

## **Identifying Domains and Items for the SHOCAT**

Having determined that no existing instrument would measure what we were being asked to measure, we began the task of identifying aspects of an organization’s functioning that would be considered essential markers of “good supportive housing.” We wanted the SHOCAT to assess each component that supportive housing incorporates—developing new units, managing the use of apartments scattered throughout the community, property management, and transitional and ongoing supportive services to help people get and keep housing—and distill the essential markers of good practice for each.

To identify those essential markers, we first interviewed nine practitioners whom we knew to be highly experienced in the different components of supportive housing, including developers of single-site properties, agencies doing scattered-site supportive housing, agencies offering supportive services,

and, to a lesser extent, property managers. Most practitioners we interviewed, were based in Los Angeles. We asked the people we interviewed to think of the needs of people experiencing chronic homelessness and living with complex, interacting health and behavioral health conditions. Given this population, we asked, “what organizational characteristics would tell you that the organization really knew what it was doing about supportive housing and was doing it well?” We held similar discussions with officials of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, staff from CSH, and several consultants with long experience with many aspects of supportive housing.

## **Writing and Testing the SHOCAT**

We took the information from these interviews and our knowledge of supportive housing operations based on a several decades of involvement in the field and started writing items for the SHOCAT. The four organizations in CSH’s Supportive Housing Lab piloted the first version of the SHOCAT, after which we interviewed those participating to get their feedback on the tool in general, the process they used to complete it, wording issues with existing items, and ideas that were missing or items that seemed irrelevant or redundant. The final version of the SHOCAT, presented later in this report, emerged after several more rounds of writing, testing, rewriting, rearranging, discussing with funders, researchers, and practitioners, incorporating feedback, and performing a final beta test.

For the beta test, we developed an electronic version of the SHOCAT using Qualtrics. Going electronic shortened the average total time involved for an organization from several hours to under an hour. It also ensured more accurate completion of relevant sections based on the components of supportive housing an organization does.

Organizations used a variety of approaches for completing the SHOCAT. Most organizations required the input of several people to complete the tool, as the components it measures are usually spread among different sections, divisions, or offices. The person who knows the most about how the organization approaches scattered-site housing is usually not the person who knows the most about its information technology capabilities, for example.

Some organizations brought together in a single face-to-face meeting the different people the executive director felt were best able to cover the array of topics in the SHOCAT. Executive directors of other organizations divided up the different parts and sent them to the people best able to answer them, then reviewed the results before submitting them. Once the SHOCAT was available electronically, the latter was the most likely approach.

For the beta testing we recruited participants through conference presentations at the Housing First Partnership Conference in Los Angeles in March 2016 and the 2016 and 2017 National Alliance to End Homelessness conferences in Washington, DC. We also recruited participants through the National Alliance to End Homelessness listserv and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) listserv. CSH-LA also recruited organizations in Los Angeles County to participate as part of its work with the United Way to assess the capacity and technical assistance needs of providers in each of Los Angeles’s SPAs.

Following the beta testing, we further refined and shortened the SHOCAT and recruited additional respondents from Los Angeles County supportive housing organizations to take the final version.

## The Contents of the SHOCAT

The SHOCAT includes an introductory section in which the organization describes itself, including its location, when it began doing PSH, staff size, its population focus, and other lines of business the organization is involved in. Next comes the screener, which provides information about organizations’ involvement in each PSH component and determines which parts of the SHOCAT are relevant for the organization. The programming logic for the SHOCAT then uses this information to bring up the appropriate survey parts and skip the rest. Then come the rating scales that make up the bulk of the SHOCAT. Finally, there is a scoring section that summarizes the respondent’s answers to the SHOCAT scales and provides a comparison with the average scores of organizations included in the beta test and final version.

### The Screener

The screener asks a standard set of questions about each of the four components of PSH—development, scattered-site housing, property management, and supportive services. The questions cover each possible way that an organization could relate to each component.

Each question has six potential responses, from which respondents select only one. The PSH unit development section of the screener reads: What does your organization do with respect to developing new PSH units (actual construction or rehabilitation of units)?

- a. My organization develops new PSH units and does not partner with any other developers.

- b. My organization partners with one or more other organizations that develop new PSH units but does not do any actual development itself.
- c. My organization does both—we develop some new PSH units ourselves and partner with other organizations that do PSH development.
- d. My organization does not develop new PSH units, nor does it have formal partnership arrangements with developers. Our staff work with PSH tenants once they are housed. If the organization that developed the property is still involved with its buildings once they are occupied, my organization’s staff work collaboratively with that organization’s staff to promote the best interests of the tenants.
- e. My organization is considering or planning to develop new PSH units, either on its own or in partnership with another developer but has not done so to date.
- f. My organization does not have anything to do with developers or PSH unit development.

Similar screener sections cover managing scattered-site PSH, doing property management, and providing supportive services. Respondents that answer “a,” “c,” or “e” on the screener are directed to complete the relevant part of the tool while those parts are filtered out for respondents that select “b,” “d,” or “f.”

## SHOCAT Parts, Criteria, and Items

Based on how respondents answer the screener questions, they are routed to the relevant content areas of the SHOCAT, called “parts.” The SHOCAT has six main parts, each containing multiple criteria as displayed in table 1.

- **Parts.** Each part covers a different component of PSH.
  - » Part A covers issues basic to any nonprofit organization, such as mission, vision, community standing, financial, and data capabilities, with a PSH focus. Part B is for supportive housing developers. Part C is for organizations that manage scattered-site PSH. Part D is for PSH property management organizations, and part E is for agencies offering PSH supportive services. Part F, partnering, is applicable to all organizations doing supportive housing in collaboration with other organizations.

- **Criteria.** These are general categories of information we want to assess for each component of PSH. These are special practices related to the nature of the population, staffing, funding, community standing, and data capabilities.
- **Items.** Each criterion contains several items—statements describing high-quality PSH. The items are phrased as statements (e.g., “My organization does...”). Respondents then rate how well that statement describes their organization. For example, “Housing/serving the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population is a high priority for this organization.”

## The Rating Scale

People then rate their organization on each item, using a scale that says: “My organization meets the criterion:

- 4 = Mostly or completely
- 3 = Moderately
- 2 = Somewhat
- 1 = Little or not at all”

If the item is “My organization has a clear, consistent, compelling vision and understanding of what it aspires to become or achieve with respect to PSH for the hardest-to-serve population” and respondents feel this is only somewhat true, they would choose “2” on the rating scale. If they believe it is mostly or completely true they would choose “4” on the rating scale.

TABLE 1

The SHOCAT’s Parts and Criteria

Part and contents	Who completes?	Criteria
Part A: General organizational functioning	All organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attitudes and values relevant to supportive housing</li> <li>▪ Community standing</li> <li>▪ Organizational performance and quality-improvement practices</li> <li>▪ Financial and information technology capabilities</li> </ul>
Part B: Development	Developers of new supportive housing units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus specifically on the hardest-to-serve population</li> <li>▪ Special practices geared to the nature of the population</li> <li>▪ Staffing</li> <li>▪ Funding</li> </ul>
Part C: Scattered-site housing	Agencies offering scattered-site supportive housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus specifically on the hardest-to-serve population</li> <li>▪ Special practices geared to the nature of the population</li> <li>▪ Staffing</li> <li>▪ Funding</li> </ul>
Part D: Property management	Agencies doing property management for supportive housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus specifically on the hardest-to-serve population</li> <li>▪ Special practices geared to the nature of the population</li> <li>▪ Staffing</li> <li>▪ Funding</li> </ul>
Part E: Supportive services	Agencies offering stabilization and housing retention supportive services to supportive housing tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus specifically on the hardest-to-serve population</li> <li>▪ Special practices geared to the nature of the population</li> <li>▪ Staffing</li> <li>▪ Funding</li> </ul>
Part F: Partnering	Agencies with tenants/clients involved with one or more other agencies, whether through formal partnership agreements or by assignment (e.g., tenants assigned to units who come with their own service providers, or clients for whom an agency provides supportive services who are assigned to units in buildings with which the agency has no formal agreements).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Working with partners with whom the organization has formal arrangements</li> <li>▪ Working with agencies associated “by assignment”</li> </ul>

### Scoring the Items and Criteria

The rating an organization gives to an item is *the item’s score*. The *criterion’s score* is created by adding up all the item scores and dividing by the total number of items on the criterion to reach an average score. All items receive the same weight—that is, each item in a criterion contributes the same amount to the total score as any other item in the same criterion.

## The Comments Function

In addition to the columns that correspond to the ratings for each statement, the tool also offers the opportunity to make a comment. Respondents may use the comment space accompanying each item to explain, for instance, that the agency would love to provide a tenant-staff ratio of 10:1 and knows it is needed, but available funding makes this impossible. Or one could note that the organization's board of directors has not until recently included people with a specific focus on development, scattered-site housing, or supportive services, but the organization has just recruited some new members with that specific focus as part of a capacity development effort. These comments can be used by respondents to provide necessary context to external reviewers like funders or policymakers who will be reviewing their assessments.

## What Got Left Out of the SHOCAT

Developing the SHOCAT was an iterative process that took several years. Much of the original content did not make it into the final version. Some items were discarded after pretesting because they were not found to be relevant to what they were trying to measure. Other items were no longer applicable once we decided that the tool should be an online self-assessment. Appendix A includes the following discarded instruments and measures, as they may be useful to supportive housing providers, funders, or evaluators interested in doing a more in-depth assessment:

- **“Alternatives” sections.** Some organizations are not directly involved in components of supportive housing but work in partnership with other organizations to assure that each component is available. For example, a developer may work with a property manager and one or more supportive services providers but not do these functions itself, or a supportive services organization may work with a scattered-site housing program but not maintain its own portfolio of housing options.
- We developed **two “alternative” criteria** for each component, with the idea of asking an agency that worked with partners to describe (1) what they looked for in an agency they wanted to partner with to supply a particular component; and (2) how they worked with a partner agency to ensure delivery of that component. These still seem like good ideas, but too few organizations completed these sections for us to present them as ready for use without further pretesting and analysis. Instead, we included it as a standalone part of the tool as a section about an organization's capacity to partner voluntarily and when they are required to partner with an organization by a funder or regulator.

- **Written questionnaire.** We developed a written questionnaire that a reviewer or funder using the SHOCAT could use to learn more about what the SHOCAT scores mean for an organization. It uses open-ended questions asking organizations to describe how they approach staffing, performance measurement, challenges with tenants, and other aspects of PSH. It also requests documents such as the organization’s annual reports, strategic plans, and projected and actual budgets.
- **Funding application questions.** We also developed interview questions that we envisioned a prospective funder could use in an in-person or telephone interview with a supportive housing organization.
- **Vignettes.** We developed eight scenarios, taken from real-life experiences, of challenges that supportive housing organizations might face. We asked organizations to pick two to three scenarios (vignettes) and describe how they would respond to them.

Early on, we thought we should do a short version of the SHOCAT because the tool was on paper, long, and cumbersome. The hypothetical short version would incorporate only the “best” items. But as pretesting evolved, we dropped many items, and once we had an electronic version the required time commitment shortened and the difficulties of skipping to appropriate parts of the tool disappeared. Therefore, we dropped the idea of a short version as it seemed less warranted.

## Results

### How Are Responding Organizations Involved in PSH?

Table 2 shows how many respondents completed each part of the SHOCAT. All 88 respondents completed part A on general organizational capacity related to PSH. After that, part E, supportive services, had the most responses with 46, followed by part C, scattered-site management (35), and part B, development (33). We had the most difficulties recruiting organizations involved in supportive housing property management, part D, which had only 19 respondents.

The composition of our sample may have been influenced by our recruitment methods. All the organizations involved in implementing coordinated entry in Los Angeles that were surveyed as part of our SPA assessments are supportive service providers. The limited number of respondents involved in property management, however, may be indicative of a general lack of organizations that specialized in property management for supportive housing projects. In conducting our research, we heard this from

numerous sources. For the most part, developers that did not do property management themselves contracted with large property management companies that had the necessary certifications for low-income housing tax credit compliance, even though they might not make major accommodations when the properties they manage house supportive housing tenants.

In looking at the configuration of respondents, we found a great deal of overlap between organizations involved in supportive services and organizations involved in scattered-site management. It was also common for developers to be involved in property management or supportive services.

**TABLE 2**  
**Respondents by Part**

	A. General	B. Development	C. Scattered site	D. Property management	E. Supportive services
# of respondents	88	33	35	19	46
% of respondents	100	38	40	22	52

Source: Qualtrics data on SHOCAT responses as of April 30, 2018.

## Assessing the Internal Consistency and Reliability of the Criteria

Our goal in writing items for the SHOCAT and grouping them into criteria is for all the items in a criterion to “hang together.” The items in each criterion are intended to form a scale, that is, to measure the same thing. If the criterion is funding, all the items for that criterion pertain to raising money and handling it efficiently and effectively and are supposed to relate strongly to each other. If two scores are high the others should be high; if one is low, the others should be low. If the criterion is vision, all the items pertain to the clarity of the organization’s idea of its main purpose with respect to helping the hardest-to-serve people experiencing chronic homelessness get and keep housing.

In the terms of people who create measuring instruments (psychometricians), we want the items in a scale to be internally consistent and reliable. Internal consistency and reliability are two psychometric properties of a scale, by which its value is judged. We report two measures for each SHOCAT criterion—item-to-total correlations, which reveal internal consistency, and Cronbach’s coefficient alpha (Cronbach’s Alpha), which measures a scale’s reliability.

### ITEM-TO-TOTAL CORRELATIONS

Each item in a scale should correlate highly with the other items and with the total scale (criterion) score. Item-to-total correlations (ITTs) show the strength of this association. It takes the average score for all the items in a criterion and then correlates each item to that average score. Correlation values

run from 0.0 to 1.0. There is no definitive minimum acceptable value for ITTs; textbooks often give ranges instead, from 0.2 to 0.4. After that, “the higher the better” is a typical suggestion. A high ITT score indicates that the item is strongly associated with the overall criterion it is trying to measure. A low ITT score indicates the opposite. In addition to ITT scores, we also show *p*-values, which indicate the likelihood that the correlation between an item and the criterion score is a result of random chance rather than an actual relationship. A *p*-value of less than 0.05 indicates that the relationship is statistically significant, or highly likely to be real.

The ITT scores for every item in the SHOCAT are provided in appendix B. The criterion A1 is “attitudes and values related to permanent supportive housing” and item A1.1 is the statement, “[the] Organization has a clear, consistent, compelling vision and understanding of what it aspires to become or achieve with respect to PSH for the hardest-to-serve population.” Item A1.1 has an ITT score of 0.799, so a respondent’s score for its organization for this item is a very strong predictor of how it will score itself for the other 11 items related to attitudes and values. This relationship has a *p*-value of less than 0.0001, meaning there is almost no chance that we would see such a strong relationship through random chance.

For the most part, the ITTs are well above the threshold used to validate that an item is closely correlated to the overall concept it is trying to measure. Aside from the property management section, there are only two items that did not have an ITT score of at least 0.4 or *p*-values that were not statistically significant. These are item A1.12, an organization’s self-reported housing retention rates, and item C3.6, annual retention rates for supportive services staff. Unlike most of the other items, which are subjective, these items ask respondents to make a calculation and then report what range it falls into. These items might have low correlations with the criterion on which they are found because respondents had difficulty answering them and either skipped them or answered them incorrectly. It is also possible that our scoring categories did not accurately reflect the distribution of housing and staff retention rates of supportive housing organizations or that these items are not closely correlated to organizational capacity for our sample.

The ITTs were generally lower and less likely to be statistically significant for the property management part of the SHOCAT. This is in part because only 19 organizations in our sample do property management, of which only 16 responded to all items in part D. Two criteria in part D, D1 “attitudes and values” and D4 “funding”, each have items that are not significantly correlated with the overall criterion score. This may be symptomatic of a general lack of organizations specializing in supportive housing property management and a lack of knowledge about what organizational attributes are most relevant to providing high-quality property management in supportive housing.

Even though we dropped other items from the SHOCAT in earlier rounds of development based on ITT or Cronbach's alpha scores, we chose to keep the property management items for two reasons. First, these items measure important concepts that we are reluctant to omit (e.g., having enough in a reserve fund to perform needed repairs to properties). Second, we think that the items we developed may be significantly correlated with the criteria they are trying to measure, but our sample size is too small to detect statistical significance. The "law of large numbers" in statistics reflects the fact that as the number of respondents increases, the stability of summary measures increases—having many respondents makes it far less likely that one or two outliers can greatly influence the results. Among 159 items in the SHOCAT, only 7 have ITTs with  $p$ -values greater than 0.05; all are in just two of the four criteria that make up part D. Before dropping any of the 7 items, most of which have  $p$ -values that come close to statistical significance, we want to have at least twice the number of respondents to part D—meaning we want more organizations doing property management for PSH to take the SHOCAT. Without a larger sample, we cannot determine what individual items are critical to providing high-quality property management in supportive housing and what can be dropped.

Results for ITTs just described indicate that the SHOCAT criteria all have acceptable internal consistency, with most having high levels of internal consistency. These results suggest that the SHOCAT is doing what we hoped it would do—measure essential aspects of permanent supportive housing consistently and well.

#### CRONBACH'S COEFFICIENT ALPHA

Cronbach's alpha measures a scale's reliability, meaning how closely the items within a criterion relate to each other. This measure combines answers to every item in a scale and performs statistical manipulations to yield the final score. The standard for this measure is 0.8 or higher (range = 0.0 to 1.0). Cronbach's alpha can be run with either raw or standardized variables; we did both but report only the standardized results as they are only minimally different from those done with the raw variables.

Table 3 reports the standardized Cronbach's alphas for the SHOCAT's 22 criteria. The alphas reported make it clear that the criteria we created for the SHOCAT are highly reliable. Thirteen are above 0.90; 4 are between 0.85 and 0.899; 3 are between 0.80 and 0.849; and 2 are between 0.75 and 0.799. The two below 0.8 are for criteria in part D, which suffer from a low number of respondents, as explained above when discussing the item-to-total correlations. They should improve as more property management organizations respond to the SHOCAT.

TABLE 3

**Standardized Cronbach's Coefficient *Alpha* for the SHOCAT's 22 Criteria**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Number of items in the criterion</b>	<b>Standardized alpha</b>
A1. Attitudes and values relevant to supportive housing	12	0.920
A2. Community standing	6	0.929
A3. Organizational improvement practices	12	0.905
A4. Financial and data management	11	0.818
B1. Developer attitudes and values	5	0.907
B2. Special practices for the population	7	0.925
B3. Staffing	7	0.905
B4. Funding	12	0.921
C1. Scattered-site agency attitudes and values	5	0.909
C2. Special practices for the population	5	0.946
C3. Staffing	6	0.840
C4. Funding	5	0.916
D1. Property manager attitudes and values	9	0.795
D2. Special practices for the population	6	0.838
D3. Staffing	8	0.853
D4. Funding	5	0.753
E1. Supportive services agency attitudes and values	4	0.868
E2. Special practices for the population	8	0.922
E3. Staffing	8	0.886
E4. Funding	5	0.902
F1. Formal partnering (MOUs or equivalent)	9	0.951
F2. Working with agencies housing/serving your clients	4	0.899

Source: Qualtrics data on SHOCAT responses as of April 30, 2018.

Note: MOU = memorandum of understanding.

The internal consistency and reliability properties of the SHOCAT parts and criteria show that we have succeeded in our goal of creating an internally consistent and highly reliable capacity assessment tool specifically for organizations offering supportive housing to the hardest-to-serve component of the homeless population and, by implication, people living with conditions that are somewhat less disabling but still requiring considerable support to live independently.

We were not able to assess the external validity of the SHOCAT by validating an organization's SHOCAT scores against another independent measure of organizational quality. Neither were we able to systematically assess interrater reliability (whether different respondents from the same organization would provide similar ratings). We can, however, say that respondents perceived the items as appropriate for describing supportive housing operations, and thus that they have high *face validity*.

## SHOCAT Scores

We turn now to analysis of SHOCAT responses to describe respondents and illustrate ways that these responses can be used to pinpoint areas of organizational strengths and weaknesses. Finally, we describe several ways that SHOCAT results are already being used in the field.

Table 4 breaks down the statistics for the 22 SHOCAT criteria and for each SHOCAT part. The means for most SHOCAT criteria are between 3 and 3.5, meaning that the average organization that took the SHOCAT adheres to most criteria “moderately” or somewhere between “moderately” and “mostly or completely.” These averages mask a substantial range in organizational responses, though, with at least some organizations indicating that they meet the criterion only “somewhat” or “little, or not at all”—that is, they have scores of 1, or between 1 and 2, as their average response to one or more criteria. Any organization giving itself a score like this on a criterion might want to look more closely at that area of its functioning to see how it might make improvements.

For part A1, respondents felt that they moderately followed best practices related to the attitudes and values critical to providing high-quality supportive housing. Within this criterion’s items, respondents ranked themselves the highest on following harm reduction practices (3.58) and lowest on being able to respond to NIMBY (not in my back yard) objections to PSH (2.90) or on being able to raise private funds to fill gaps in operating or services income (2.55). Community standing (A2), which relates to taking leadership positions in the supportive housing field, received the lowest rating (2.78) of any criterion. Within this criterion, respondents were unlikely to feel that their top management staff took leadership positions in state or national PSH-related professional organizations (2.46) or were seen as leaders in the field (2.47). Using data and tenant feedback for organizational improvement practices (A3) was also challenging for many respondents. Respondents generally reported that they evaluated staff at least annually based on clear performance criteria (3.40), but they often did not use performance data to identify aspects of PSH that either needed considerable improvement or that should be dropped or contracted out (2.57). Financial and data management practices (A4) received the highest rating of the general capacity criteria. Respondents reported that they regularly produce detailed financial statements by their lines of business (3.61) and that they monitor internal cash flow statements and forecasts (3.66). The full responses for all items are included in appendix C.

TABLE 4

## SHOCAT Criteria and Parts—Summary Statistics

Part and criterion	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum
A1. Attitudes and values relevant to supportive housing	3.29	0.591	1.40	4.00
A2. Community standing	2.78	0.769	1.00	4.00
A3. Organizational improvement practices	3.01	0.533	1.75	4.00
A4. Financial and data management	3.41	0.379	2.50	4.00
Part A	3.12	0.450	1.93	4.00
B1. Developer attitudes and values	3.08	0.831	1.00	4.00
B2. Special practices for the population	3.19	0.697	1.00	4.00
B3. Staffing	3.30	0.651	1.71	4.00
B4. Funding	3.04	0.656	1.25	3.82
Part B	3.15	0.620	1.39	4.00
C1. Scattered site agency attitudes and values	3.12	0.814	1.40	4.00
C2. Special practices for the population	3.05	0.784	1.00	4.00
C3. Staffing	3.03	0.622	1.83	4.00
C4. Funding	3.38	0.694	1.60	4.00
Part C	3.09	0.594	1.60	4.00
D1. Property manager attitudes and values	3.34	0.444	2.33	4.00
D2. Special practices for the population	3.18	0.463	2.33	4.00
D3. Staffing	3.41	0.479	2.38	4.00
D4. Funding	2.79	0.697	1.60	4.00
Part D	3.14	0.427	2.27	3.96
E1. Supportive services agency attitudes and values	3.4	0.668	1.25	4.00
E2. Special practices for the population	3.37	0.536	2.25	4.00
E3. Staffing	3.34	0.555	1.57	4.00
E4. Funding	3.21	0.721	1.20	4.00
Part E	3.12	0.500	2.03	4.00
F1. Formal partnering (MOUs or equivalent)	3.30	0.669	1.22	4.00
F2. Working with agencies housing/serving your clients	3.23	0.675	2.00	4.00
Part F	3.22	0.639	2.00	4.00

Source: Qualtrics data on SHOCAT responses as of April 30, 2018.

Note: MOU = memorandum of understanding.

For attitudes and values (B1), developer respondents rated themselves high in their interest in working in neighborhoods that do not have an adequate supply of PSH (3.50), but rated themselves low in conducting outreach in neighborhoods where they have existing buildings or plans to build (2.86). For special practices (B2), they rated themselves high in the aesthetics of their buildings (3.59) and their proximity to transportation options (3.55) but low in involving prospective tenants, service providers, or neighbors in the design of their buildings (2.31). Staffing (B3) ratings were generally above 3.00, with the mission focus of management (3.63) and the ability of staff to support clients' needs (3.64) being especially high. For funding (B4), respondents were very knowledgeable about and experienced with the major sources of capital funding (3.71). They were typically not familiar with more innovative capital funding sources, such as joint ventures or social impact bonds (2.36). Many respondents also struggled

with having enough cash on hand to fund due diligence activities for properties they want to acquire (2.75).

Scattered-site PSH organization scores were between 3.00 and 3.50 for most items. The two items that were below 3.00 were having policies and procedures compatible with harm reduction policies for dealing with common tenant issues (2.82) and having staff with experience in the real estate market (2.26). Both areas are important for success in offering scattered-site housing, so organizations scoring below 3.0 might want to work on improving their capabilities in these areas.

As mentioned, the number of responses for property management (part D) is possibly too low to draw any conclusions. Respondents reported that their buildings are typically fully occupied (3.55), but that they generally do not fill vacant units within two weeks (2.08).

## A Testcase for Using SHOCAT Results

A prospective funder or policymaker could use the SHOCAT to delve more deeply into the areas within a criterion where an organization might have weaknesses or strengths. For example, table 5 provides the scores for the seven items in criterion B2, special practices for the population, from three actual respondents that develop PSH units. B2 items are as follows:

- B2.1. The organization practices strong and ongoing outreach to neighborhoods where buildings are or are going to be located; it holds meetings, gets to know neighbors, brings neighbors to existing buildings to see how they work, and engages in similar activities.
- B2.2. The organization involves potential tenants, neighbors, and service providers in designing the building to maximize creation of community.
- B2.3. The organization has a history of and clear commitment to continue involvement in the building once it is completed and is available to mediate between project partners.
- B2.4. The organization's supportive housing projects are located in good proximity to transportation options.
- B2.5. The organization's buildings include structural features that promote safety and community building (e.g., common rooms, community kitchens, outdoor spaces or gardens, information center for building activities).
- B2.6. The organization's existing buildings are aesthetically pleasing.

- B2.7. The current backlog of needed maintenance and repairs is minimal relative to the overall value of the organization's properties.

**TABLE 5**

**Using SHOCAT Item Scores to Identify Organizational Strengths and Weaknesses**

*Criterion B2. Special practices for the population of hardest-to-serve people*

	<b>B2.1</b>	<b>B2.2</b>	<b>B2.3</b>	<b>B2.4</b>	<b>B2.5</b>	<b>B2.6</b>	<b>B2.7</b>	<b>B2 Criterion score</b>
Developer organization 1	1.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.4
Developer organization 2	1.0	1.0	2.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	4.0	2.6
Developer organization 3	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.6

**Source:** Anonymized Qualtrics data on SHOCAT responses for three organizations.

The B2 criterion scores demonstrate that organization 1 incorporates many more special practices for the population into its operations than organization 3. Looking more closely at each item, all three organizations indicated on item B2.1 that they do little or no outreach to the community surrounding the site of a potential development, so item B2.1 does not help to differentiate among the three organizations.

Differentiation starts to show in item B2.2. Organization 1 “moderately” involves potential tenants, neighbors, and service providers in designing the building to maximize a sense of community while organizations 2 and 3 do this little or not at all. Responses to item B2.3 indicate that organization 1 “mostly or completely” remains involved in operating the building after tenants move in, organization 2 does this “somewhat,” and organization 3 does this not at all. In the remaining scores for B2 items, organization 2 begins to look more like organization 1, but organization 3 remains relatively uninvolved in special practices for the population.

These SHOCAT scores are important as guides to where one would want to start talking about priorities and competing goals. For instance, would one always want to select organization 1 for funding to create the next PSH development, based on its high score on criterion B2? That would depend on how much a funder values outreach, creating community within and beyond the building, resident safety, or ongoing maintenance. Maintenance seems critical, which eliminates organization 3. Transportation is also critical for resident mobility and community participation, which points to organization 1; but there might not be public transportation in areas of the community where it is important to develop PSH and where organizations 2 and 3 are willing to work. Is it always good to have the developer involved in building operations after occupancy (item B2.3)? That might depend heavily on other qualities of the developer. Does the developer have a history of putting tenant interests first,

or is the bottom line and saving money always the priority? Finally, there is the factor of an organization's willingness and ability to change. The SHOCAT provides an organizational profile that can stimulate profitable discussions both within the organization and with potential funders and community planners.

## How the SHOCAT Has Already Been Used

To varying degrees, the SHOCAT is already being used in three ways: self-assessment, evaluation, and community assessment. Most of this is in Los Angeles at the behest of CSH-LA.

### Self-Assessment

During the early pretests, which used paper versions, we sought feedback from respondents about what approach they used, how much total staff time it took to complete the SHOCAT, and what they learned in the process, in addition to getting comments on item wording and redundant or missing topics. One of the most interesting findings in this feedback came from organizations that used either the “bring everyone together” strategy or the “review the whole thing once the parts are completed” strategy. Both led to reflection on topics where there was less than complete consensus, best expressed as “oh, you really think THAT?!” Identifying these areas of differing viewpoints led to discussions about their organization and occasionally to changes in priorities or efforts to improve areas of weakness. At least one organization participating in the CSH-LA Lab changed its emphasis on the technical assistance it desired from CSH after using the SHOCAT. Many organizations also volunteered to complete the tool as a self-assessment after hearing our conference presentations or hearing about the tool via the National Alliance to End Homelessness or SAMHSA listservs. We have no direct feedback from these organizations but assume that taking the SHOCAT produced similar responses when perceptions differed regarding the organization and its functioning.

### Evaluation

The SHOCAT was originally developed to help evaluate the effectiveness of CSH-LA's Supportive Housing Laboratory, which was part of the larger Los Angeles County 88 Communities Strong Initiative. The Lab provided capacity-building grants and technical assistance to four organizations to help them develop new supportive housing projects in parts of Los Angeles County that have traditionally lacked supportive housing. Participating organizations completed an early version of the SHOCAT toward the

beginning of the Lab via an in-person interview and then retook the electronic version of the SHOCAT a year later, letting us measure changes in their capacity scores between rounds. Our final report on the Supportive Housing Lab describes the changes we saw in organizations' SHOCAT scores after one year of participating in the Lab (Leopold and Cohen, forthcoming). Though scores in some areas went up, scores in other areas went down either because of changes in the supportive housing landscape or because respondents became more aware of organizational limitations.

## Communitywide Assessment

In Los Angeles County, CSH-LA is using the SHOCAT to assess the capabilities for developing supportive housing units and supporting its tenants in each of the county's eight SPAs. Los Angeles County has a countywide coordinated entry system, with lead agencies in each SPA and a host of affiliated agencies that list available supportive housing units to which the lead agencies refer potential tenants as they come through the coordinated entry system. CSH-LA asked each of those affiliated agencies to complete the tool, with the Urban Institute providing analysis of SPA-wide capabilities. Organizations in three SPAs completed the electronic beta test of the SHOCAT, with organizations in the remaining five SPAs completing the final electronic version. The results highlighted areas of strength and weakness within each SPA as well as disparities in organizational capacity in different parts of the county. These results were used to inform technical assistance needs to support the implementation of Los Angeles County's coordinated entry system.

## Conclusion

The SHOCAT is the first tool specifically designed to measure the capacity of organizations to provide high-quality supportive housing for the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population. We recruited almost 90 organizations to test the tool; our results indicate that the SHOCAT offers a reliable and internally consistent measure of key components of supportive housing. Feedback from respondents suggests that the SHOCAT is a useful tool for self-assessment that can be completed in a relatively short amount of time. It has also been used with success for program evaluations and community-level assessments.

Our sample is not nationally representative, so it is difficult to draw any general conclusions about the state of the supportive housing field from our results. For the most part, respondents felt that their organizations moderately followed best practices in supportive housing. Finding diverse, sustainable

funding streams for supportive housing development and property management was a challenge as was providing high-quality supportive housing property management. Now that the tool is publicly available through CSH, we expect that its utility for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers will grow as the number of respondents increases.

# Appendix A. Items Not Included in the Final SHOCAT

## Written Questionnaire

Supportive Housing Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization lead for this questionnaire (name, title, address, phone, fax, email): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Project Name (if questionnaire pertains to a specific project): \_\_\_\_\_

To support our review, **please** submit the following documents:

- Your mission statement
- Your most recent annual report
- Your current strategic plan
- An organizational chart for your Los Angeles line of business and your overall organization if you operate in other areas beyond Los Angeles
- For your three most recent supportive housing projects, an organizational chart showing partnering/collaborative arrangements for operations and supportive services provision
- Examples of formal partnership agreements/MOUs that your organization has between developers, service providers, and/or property managers to work with and support formerly homeless tenants living in SH
- Job descriptions and requirements for skills and attitudes for staff positions expected to work with formerly homeless tenants living in PSH
- Policies, procedures, and staff training materials specific to working with formerly homeless tenants living in PSH

- The members of your Board of Directors, along with their terms, areas of expertise, and experience with SH development/scattered-site operations/supportive service delivery in SH
- Projected and actual budgets for the two most recently completed fiscal years for your entire organization (can be audited accounting report)

**Please provide written responses to the following questions:**

- Describe a difficult situation involving a PSH tenant or tenants with multiple interacting chronic conditions and a long history of homelessness that required intervention by resident managers, service providers, or others. How did your organization handle it and what was the outcome?
- Describe your organization’s expectations for the staff-to-tenant or staff-to-client ratios needed to assure that clients/tenants with multiple interacting chronic conditions coming from long-term homelessness will have successful move-in, housing stabilization, and continuing occupancy experiences? How do staffing expectations differ, if at all, for clients in their first three months of tenancy, first year, and after their first year?
- Describe your organization’s approach to performance measurement and improvement.
  - » What aspects of your organization’s performance do you measure?
  - » How do you identify areas of your organization’s performance that need improvement?
  - » What do you do to improve performance in areas identified as weak?
  - » How do you monitor to determine if improvements have occurred, or if more is needed?
  - » How do your organizational leaders use program evaluation data to shape their decisionmaking?
- For 3 PSH projects that have been open/clients you have worked with for at least 24 months, provide tenant retention rates at 6, 12, and 24 months. Calculate these as “number of tenants still in residence at 6 months/all tenants who moved in during the last 3 years,” “number of tenants still in residence at 12 months/all tenants who moved in during the last 3 years,” “number of tenants still in residence at 24 months/all tenants who moved in during the last 3 years.”
- Describe your organization’s approach to handling each of the following core administrative functionalities, give examples of what goes well and what needs improvement. Give examples of procedures you have improved over the last 3 years:
  - » Financial Accounting—keeping track of money, keeping different funding sources separate, reporting to funders on how money has been spent, tracking actual outlays against budget projections, payroll, and accounting, etc.

- » Information Technology—interoffice communications, confidentiality, client tracking, system security, routine reporting, flexibility to respond to non-routine data questions, use for performance monitoring and evaluation
- » Compliance—with building codes, inspections, fees, reporting, etc.
- Describe the approaches your organization uses in recruiting, hiring, and professional development to assure that the appropriate skill sets and attitudes are in place among the staff who work with your PSH tenants. What understandings exist among developer, property management, and service provider staff to assure appropriate skills and attitudes? What initial and ongoing training do you provide, or arrange to be provided?
- Describe your organization’s services staff, including a services director, other staff doing direct services to your tenants if your organization has such staff, and monitoring/supervising capabilities, including knowledge of and experience with:
  - » Formerly homeless persons with complex and interacting conditions and circumstances
  - » Sources of funding that can cover the costs of health, behavioral health, and housing services related to stabilization and ongoing supports for formerly homeless persons with complex and interacting conditions and circumstances; describe the sources that have been and are being used by your PSH tenants/clients, whether they come through the developer or service providers, and those you know about but haven’t so far had any tenants/clients who use them
  - » Assuring that these funding sources will cover the needs of PSH tenants/clients (through arrangements with public agencies, facilitating the enrollment of tenants in Medicaid, or other approaches)
- It is not uncommon for budgets for running the housing component of PSH and/or providing supportive services to fall short of the funds needed to provide adequate staffing, even considering that public programs (e.g., Medicaid, rent subsidies) will be able to cover the costs of certain expenses such as health and behavioral health services and a proportion of the rent. What is your experience with investing equity and/or raising private funds to cover expenses that exceed the resources of publicly funded operating budgets and service provider contributions?

## VIGNETTES

Please select 2-3 of the scenarios presented in the following vignettes and describe how your organization would respond to it.

- A tenant in one of your buildings smokes in his unit, though the rules say he cannot do this. Each unit has a smoke detector, which is wired in to the fire department. Every time he smokes he

sets off the smoke detector, and the fire department arrives. Every time the fire department arrives and determines that the situation is what it deems a false alarm, it charges the building (and therefore your organization) \$1,500. This has happened 10 times already. What do you do?

- One of your tenants, who has a mental illness, is pacing the hallway outside his unit and muttering to himself. In doing so he disturbs other tenants, who call for help. A guard comes up to see what is going on and observes that the tenant in question has a small (less than 3 inches long), closed (no blade out) penknife in his hand. He calls 911, the police arrive, and handcuff the pacing tenant. At this point someone thinks to call the service provider. What would you want done in this situation? What policies, practices, and training do you think would have helped keep this situation from escalating, or from having the police called at all? Do you think the pacer's tenancy can be preserved? How? Would you want it to be preserved?
- One of your tenants, with a diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia, thinks his neighbors are attacking him. You have interviewed these neighbors several times in response to several complaints from the tenant in question and have not found evidence to support the tenant's fears. How do you think that building staff and service providers should handle this situation? What policies, practices, training, would you put in place to help balance the interests of all tenants involved in the situation?
- One of your tenants is a fire-starter. Most of the time she is fine, and no danger to herself or others. Her pattern is that when she is starting to feel the need for fire, which happens once or twice a year, she starts with a match or two. Staff can tell when she has started burning matches. How should this situation be handled?
- The funding for your building requires that all the PSH tenants have a mental illness and be clients of the public mental health department. Any agency contracted to provide mental health services with that mental health department may refer a client for PSH, and your contract says you have to take them if you have a unit available. The referring mental health agency is supposed to be providing mental health services to the tenants it refers, and that includes visiting your joint client in his/her home as needed and responding to your calls when you make them. In your newly leased-up building you have tenants referred by 7 different mental health agencies, some of which are private and some of which are mental health department clinics. Of the 7, 5 are responsive, doing what you expected them to do for your tenants, but 2 have never visited any client of theirs in your building. Further, when your tenants fail to show up for scheduled appointments at the offices of these 2 providers (which is very common among this population), the agencies terminate them as mental health clients, which also means they no longer have a right to occupy a unit in your building. You have had to evict 5 tenants in the past year as a consequence. What should you do?
- You have a newly completed PSH project for which you agreed to take only homeless transition-age-youth (TAY). It is now open and occupied, and you have an entire building full of street youth ages 17-22 who haven't lived in housing for at least a year, usually more, and have

multiple complicating conditions such as mental illness and substance use. The lease-up year for a new PSH building is always a stressful time, but this is beyond stressful. You, your property managers, and your service providers have your hands full! Should you have agreed to this occupancy configuration in the first place? If yes, what should your staffing pattern look like? What skills are needed? What should you do now, with the situation as it is?

- A family in one of your PSH units, with a disabled child and a depressed mother, is having trouble with her former husband, who has beaten her in the past and threatened the child. The man comes by your building and tries to enter the family's apartment; sometimes the mother lets him in. Either way, he causes trouble and sometimes has had too much to drink. What policies and procedures should you have in place to handle this situation? What should your staff and service providers do?
- A family in one of your scattered-site programs has had no contact with their case manager in the two months since they have moved into their apartment, ignoring multiple phone calls, texts, and scheduled meetings. The mother informs the case manager that she needs \$100 today or the utility company will shut off her lights. How should the case manager and management respond?

#### ROLE-SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- If you are completing this questionnaire in your role as a supportive housing developer, complete questions in the supportive housing developers section.
- If you are completing this questionnaire in your role as an operator of scattered-site supportive housing, complete sections in the scattered-site supportive housing section.
- If you are completing this questionnaire in your role as a supportive services provider in supportive housing, complete sections in the supportive services provider section.

#### SUPPORTIVE HOUSING DEVELOPERS

If you are completing this questionnaire in your capacity as a developer of supportive housing, please also submit the following documents:

- The portfolio of PSH projects you have completed in the past 10 years, in Los Angeles and for your organization as a whole if you operate beyond Los Angeles, include the number of SH units for each project
- The schedule for at least one recently completed SH project in Los Angeles, from the time it was a "gleam in the eye" to the date fully occupied, and the projected and actual budgets for said project
- Résumés for key staff in Los Angeles currently involved in or expected soon to be involved in PSH development

And provide written responses to the following questions:

- What proportion of your annual net income for the past three years that has come from developer's fees?
- What is your major source of capital funding for your supportive housing developments? How would you finance a development if this funding source was not available? Give examples if possible.
- Describe your organization's development staff, and their experience in all aspects of PSH development, including knowledge of and experience with
  - » Acquiring funding from the sources that provide capital for developing PSH; describe the sources you have used, and those you know about but haven't used
  - » Assuring that the actual construction process goes smoothly and on schedule
  - » Ensuring adequate operating funds once the building is open; describe the sources you have used, and those you know about but haven't used
  - » Asset management—maximizing revenue from your properties

#### SCATTERED-SITE HOUSING AGENCIES

If you are completing this questionnaire in your capacity *as an agency that offers scattered-site supportive housing*, please submit charts showing the organization of your staff and activities involved in running your scattered-site projects, including all other organizations involved with scattered-site SH tenants and their roles.

And provide written responses to the following prompts and questions:

- Describe the ways you
  - » locate housing; recruit, contract with, and retain landlords, including whether this is done by dedicated staff with realty expertise
  - » work with clients to find housing that fits their needs;
  - » conduct move-in and stabilization activities;
  - » find funding for move-in related costs (security deposits, furniture, move-in kits)
- What are your policies for getting rent payments to landlords in a timely fashion (e.g., landlords are paid by the 7th of the month)? What are your procedures for making sure payments are on time? How consistently do you meet those goals?
- What percentage of your clients that are offered housing assistance successfully lease their own apartment? On average, how long does it take between being issued a voucher/rental assistance to lease-up?

## SUPPORTIVE SERVICES PROVIDERS

Agencies that *provide supportive services* should also submit charts showing the organization of your staff and activities involved in or expected soon to be involved in providing, delivering, arranging, or negotiating for, supervising, strategizing about supportive service delivery

And provide written responses to the following prompts and questions:

- Describe your ability to get paid for (a) services delivered in the community (i.e., not in your offices), (b) 3rd party interactions such as talking with health care providers about the client's care without the client being present, and (c) participation in multidisciplinary or multiagency meetings to create or pursue integrated services planning for clients.
- How do you ensure that your PSH tenants/clients have a medical home, primary care physician, get preventive health services, the behavioral health services they need, and guidance in activities of daily living? Provide data from a current project on what percent of your tenants have a primary care provider and received health care services, outside of an ER, in the last 12 months?
- What funding sources can you use to cover the cost of the housing/services you provide? Are you a Medicaid provider or working to become a Medicaid provider?
- Where do you deliver services: in your offices, in tenant homes, other places?
- What arrangements do you have in place for responding to calls indicating that one of your PSH tenants needs help, or is in a crisis?

# Funding Application

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization lead for this application (name, title, address, phone, fax, email): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Interviewers (name, title, organization): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Project Name (if application is for a specific project): \_\_\_\_\_

These questions are meant to be asked in a face-to-face or phone interview following submission of the applicant's written materials

## Questions for all applicants

- Describe the importance to your organization of (a) developing permanent supportive housing (PSH) or arranging scattered-site housing in the community for the hardest-to-serve long-term homeless population, and/or (b) providing housing stabilization and ongoing supportive services for this population. Indicate their place in your organization's mission statement, vision, strategies, and the focuses and competencies of your Board of Directors and executive leadership.
- Describe your organization's history of developing PSH/running scattered-site housing/delivering supportive services for the hardest-to-serve formerly homeless persons in [\_\_\_\_\_] specifically, or elsewhere if you have not previously worked in [\_\_\_\_\_].
- Describe your organization's experience housing and working with tenants with multiple interacting chronic conditions coming from long-term homelessness.
- Describe your organization's understanding of Housing First and harm reduction principles. Describe the ways that your organization demonstrates a commitment to these principles in the housing/services it provides. These should include the following:
  - » Your eligibility requirements
  - » Your eviction policies and practices
  - » Your policies and practices with respect to how certain situations (see attached vignettes) should be handled

- » The training and supervision you give your staff, and expect of partner organizations' staff, regarding these principles and practices
- Is your executive director or other senior staff seen as leaders in the supportive housing field, both locally and nationally? If so, provide examples of their leadership, such as: participation in trade associations and advocacy groups; working with partners to increase resources or reduce barriers to supportive housing for your tenants or clients; sharing best practices with partner organizations.
- Does your organization regularly ask itself whether you should drop some of the functions or lines of work you are doing? Have you ever stopped doing a function or line of work, either to hire someone else to do it (e.g., bookkeeping, property management) or to get out of it completely (e.g., stop serving a particular population)? Please describe the process your organization uses to examine the appropriateness of existing lines of work to your mission, vision, and capabilities, and how you make decisions to continue or change. Give at least one example.
- Describe your organization's approach to pursuing new opportunities for programming, funding, or target populations. How do you learn about these opportunities? How do you decide whether they are right for your organization? Give at least one example.
- How do you monitor staff performance? How frequently or routinely does this happen? What do you do to reward positive performance and stimulate improvement in less-than-adequate performance? What do you do with staff members that consistently do not contribute to the success of the organization?
- Describe the methods you use to obtain feedback from tenants about building operations or services, and how you use this information. Describe one or two instances in which tenant feedback (suggestions, satisfaction surveys, tenant councils) has stimulated significant changes in the way things work in your buildings.
- What are the major funding sources you rely on for your supportive housing projects? What are their strengths and limitations? Would you be able to carry on or expand your work if one of more of these funding sources went away? How? What are some funding sources that you are aware of in this area that you have not pursued or not successfully obtained? Why not?
- Describe your organization's experiences tracking potential new sources of capital/operating/ services funding and positioning your organization to take advantage of them, or decisions you have made not to do so.
- Describe gaps that you are aware of in your organization's development, operating, and/or services capabilities, and what you have been, are, or are about to do to reduce them.
- Describe the developers/property managers/service providers with whom you have partnered to provide your PSH tenants/clients with housing and supportive services. Indicate:

- » The types of clients they have housed/served in the past, and whether they have successfully served clients similar to the tenants you anticipate housing/serving in the future
  - » The types of housing/property management/supportive services they provide, and the frequency with which they interact directly with your PSH tenants/clients. Also, the ways they ensure that your PSH tenants/clients have a medical home, primary care physician, get preventive health services, the behavioral health services they need, and guidance in activities of daily living.
  - » The funding sources they are able to access to cover the cost of the housing/services they provide, including whether they are Medicaid providers or are working to become Medicaid providers.
  - » Where they deliver housing/services; for services, is it their offices, in tenant homes, other places; for housing, is it project-based or scattered site, and in what neighborhoods, in terms of their convenience and comfort levels for PSH tenants/clients?
  - » Arrangements in place for responding to calls indicating that one of your/their PSH tenants/clients need help, or is in a crisis
  - » How long your organization has been working with each of these organizations/companies/providers
- Describe how you approach agencies with which you want to partner, what you discuss, your expectations for the duration and depth of your partnering relationship, including
    - » How you select partner agencies, including how you determine that they will be a good fit for specific PSH projects and tenants
    - » Who in your organization serves as the main contact during discussions of partnering—the Executive Director? Services Director? Other?
    - » At what stage in the development process you identify service partners (if you are a developer] or are brought into discussions of design during development (if you are a service provider), and how frequently you meet with potential partners during development (if relevant) and during operations
    - » With whom in the potential partnering agency do these discussions take place?
    - » The financial arrangements you have made, or are willing to make, between partnering agencies, including any sharing of development fee, salaries of residential counselors, or other expenses
    - » [Developers and scattered-site programs only) How you describe to potential partners the types, levels, and frequency of service you want to be sure are available to your tenants

- » The level of performance you expect partners to achieve with respect to housing retention, at 6, 12, and 24 months after tenants move in.
- In situations where you don't get to choose some or all of your supportive housing partners (e.g., you are required to accept tenant referrals from a variety of service agencies or work with a specific property manager or developer) what have been your experiences with “partners” under these constrained circumstances? What do you do to increase the likelihood that these kinds of “forced partnerships” are effective?

## Developers

The following questions are only to be asked of organizations applying in their role as supportive housing developers. If the organization is applying as a supportive service provider, you have completed the interview. If the organization is applying as an operator of scattered-site supportive housing, skip to the next section.

- Describe your approach to building design, in terms of who is involved. What roles do persons similar to prospective tenants, neighbors, and service providers play in the design of the PSH projects (or affordable housing, if no previous PSH) you have done in the past, and expect to do in the future?
- In designing PSH (or other affordable housing, if no previous PSH), how has your organization incorporated design features that promote community building among tenants, and in the larger community of neighbors?
- What are your organization's expectations for continued involvement in building governance once lease-up is completed?
- How does your organization develop a sense of sharing and community inside and outside your PSH projects? How are neighbors, tenants, and service providers involved in the project's ongoing operations and governance?
- Describe your approach to winning community support for new PSH projects, in general and specifically in neighborhoods where you do not have prior development experience. Give a recent example of how you successfully developed a PSH project in a neighborhood you had not previously worked in.
- Describe the roles that neighbors, prospective tenants, and service providers had in the development process of a PSH project you've recently developed.
- Describe the role of property management companies in your PSH projects, or that of your own staff if your organization manages its own properties. For property management companies and/or your own staff, describe practices you have in place that assure that these companies will assign staff to your buildings who have the skills and attitudes to work with PSH tenants,

are committed to participating in cross-training and collaborative work with service providers, or that your own staff has the relevant skills, attitudes, and commitment.

### **Scattered-Site Housing Agencies**

- Describe the ways you locate housing; recruit, contract with, and retain landlords; work with clients to find housing that fits their needs; conduct move-in and stabilization activities; provide back-up for landlords, etc. Are your housing specialists/housing navigators, realtors or people with similar expertise in the rental market?

# Appendix B. Item-to-Total Correlations

TABLE B.1

Part A: ITTs for Part A, General Organizational Functioning

A1. Attitudes and values		A2. Community standing		A3. Performance improvement practices		A4. Financial and IT	
Item	ITT	Item	ITT	Item	ITT	Item	ITT
A1.1	0.80	A2.1	0.82	A3.1	0.66	A4.1	0.44
A1.2	0.74	A2.2	0.88	A3.2	0.76	A4.2	0.51
A1.3	0.70	A2.3	0.78	A3.3	0.71	A4.3	0.46
A1.4	0.77	A2.4	0.80	A3.4	0.74	A4.4	0.65
A1.5	0.67	A2.5	0.84	A3.5	0.45	A4.5	0.56
A1.6	0.77	A2.6	0.74	A3.6	0.57	A4.6	0.68
A1.7	0.69			A3.7	0.63	A4.7	0.67
A1.8	0.80			A3.8	0.66	A4.8	0.68
A1.9	0.72			A3.9	0.75	A4.9	0.35
A1.10	0.62			A3.10	0.50	A4.10	0.44
A1.11	0.65			A3.11	0.74	A4.11	0.49
A1.12	0.42			A3.12	0.73		

Note: A1 N = 84–85;  $p < 0.0001$  for 11 items,  $< 0.006$  for item 4.12; A2 N = 86–87;  $p < 0.0001$  for all items; A3 N = 78–84;  $p < 0.0001$  for all items; A4 N = 82–84;  $p < 0.0001$  for 9 items, 0.0002 for item 4.3, and 0.0012 for item 4.9.

TABLE B.2

Part B: ITTs for Part B, PSH Unit Development

B1. Focus specifically on the hardest-to-serve population		B2. Special practices geared to the nature of the population		B3. Staffing		B4. Funding	
Item	ITT	Item	ITT	Item	ITT	Item	ITT
B1.1	0.84	B2.1	0.73	B3.1	0.74	B4.1	0.71
B1.2	0.79	B2.2	0.73	B3.2	0.50	B4.2	0.52
B1.3	0.90	B2.3	0.87	B3.3	0.81	B4.3	0.88
B1.4	0.71	B2.4	0.80	B3.4	0.88	B4.4	0.55
B1.5	0.79	B2.5	0.90	B3.5	0.85	B4.5	0.59
		B2.6	0.85	B3.6	0.71	B4.6	0.60
		B2.7	0.60	B3.7	0.66	B4.7	0.71
						B4.8	0.87
						B4.9	0.92
						B4.10	0.54
						B4.11	0.63
						B4.12	0.73

Note: B1 N = 29–31;  $p < 0.0001$  for all items; B2 N = 31–32;  $p < 0.0003$  for all items; B3 N = 31–32;  $p < 0.0001$  for 6 items,  $< 0.004$  for item 3.2; B4 N = 20–30;  $p < 0.004$  for all items.

TABLE B.3

## Part C: ITTs for Part C, Scattered-Site Housing

C1. Focus specifically on the hardest-to-serve population		C2. Special practices geared to the nature of the population		C3. Staffing		C4. Funding	
Item	ITT	Item	ITT	Item	ITT	Item	ITT
C1.1	0.88	C2.1	0.87	C3.1	0.75	C4.1	0.84
C1.2	0.84	C2.2	0.95	C3.2	0.77	C4.2	0.91
C1.3	0.74	C2.3	0.91	C3.3	0.80	C4.3	0.80
C1.4	0.80	C2.4	0.82	C3.4	0.58	C4.4	0.71
C1.5	0.71	C2.5	0.77	C3.5	0.72	C4.5	0.77
				C3.6	0.38		

Note: C1 N = 35;  $p < 0.0001$  for all items; C2 N = 33;  $p < 0.0001$  for all items; C3 N = 31–32;  $p < 0.0005$  for 5 items,  $< 0.03$  for item 3.6; C4 N = 31–32;  $p < 0.0001$  for all items.

TABLE B.4

## Part D: ITTs for Part D, Property Management

D1. Focus specifically on the hardest-to-serve population		D2. Special practices geared to the nature of the population		D3. Staffing		D4. Funding	
Item	ITT	Item	ITT	Item	ITT	Item	ITT
D1.1	0.47	D2.1	0.41	D3.1	0.46	D4.1	0.41
D1.2	0.59	D2.2	0.77	D3.2	0.70	D4.2	0.28
D1.3	0.68	D2.3	0.75	D3.3	0.79	D4.3	0.74
D1.4	0.68	D2.4	0.75	D3.4	0.53	D4.4	0.77
D1.5	0.35	D2.5	0.73	D3.5	0.70	D4.5	0.85
D1.6	0.69	D2.6	0.70	D3.6	0.51		
D1.7	0.42			D3.7	0.73		
D1.8	0.48			D3.8	0.65		
D1.9	0.36						

Note: D1 N = 18;  $p < 0.05$  for 6 items, 0.159 for D1.5, 0.144 for D1.9; D2 N = 18–19;  $p < 0.001$  for 5 items, 0.085 for D2.1; D3 N = 18;  $p < 0.05$  for all items; N = 16–18;  $p < 0.001$  for 3 items, 0.118 for D4.1, .273 for D4.2.

TABLE B.5

Part E: ITTs for Part E, Supportive Services Development

E1. Focus specifically on the hardest-to-serve population		E2. Special practices geared to the nature of the population		E3. Staffing		E4. Funding	
Item	ITT	Item	ITT	Item	ITT	Item	ITT
E1.1	0.81	E2.1	0.76	E3.1	0.78	E4.1	0.79
E1.2	0.74	E2.2	0.86	E3.2	0.82	E4.2	0.74
E1.3	0.77	E2.3	0.78	E3.3	0.79	E4.3	0.81
E1.4	0.73	E2.4	0.83	E3.4	0.82	E4.4	0.76
		E2.5	0.73	E3.5	0.63	E4.5	0.82
		E2.6	0.64	E3.6	0.60		
		E2.7	0.72	E3.7	0.54		
		E2.8	0.75	E3.8	0.56		

Note: E1 N = 29-31;  $p < 0.0001$  for all items; E2 N = 31-32;  $p < 0.0003$  for all items; E3 N = 31-32;  $p < 0.0001$  for 6 items,  $< 0.004$  for item 3.2; E4 N = 20-30;  $p < 0.004$  for all items.

TABLE B.6

Part F: ITTs for Part F, Partnering

F1. Formal partnering (MOUs, other agreements)		F2. Informal partnering	
Item	ITT	Item	ITT
F1.1	0.52	F2.1	0.76
F1.2	0.82	F2.2	0.67
F1.3	0.89	F2.3	0.89
F1.4	0.91	F2.4	0.89
F1.5	0.92		
F1.6	0.88		
F1.7	0.73		
F1.8	0.81		
F1.9	0.82		

Note: F1 N = 31-32;  $p < 0.003$  for all items; F2 N = 31-32;  $p < 0.0001$  for all items.

# Appendix C. Responses for All SHOCAT Items

TABLE C.1

**Criterion A1: Commitment to Providing PSH for the Hardest-to-Serve Chronically Homeless Population**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
A1.1 Organization has a clear, consistent, compelling vision and understanding of what it aspires to be come or achieve with respect to PSH for the hardest-to-serve population.	85	3.32	0.81
A1.2 Organization's vision is universally held by all staff and is consistently used to direct actions and set priorities	85	3.28	0.71
A1.3 Housing or serving the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population is a high priority for this organization	85	3.45	0.84
A1.4 Organization's board of directors includes members/committees with specific interest in serving this population; the Board promotes the organization's PSH activities	85	3.08	0.90
A1.5 Organization is committed to the Housing First principle of accepting tenants without prior requirements for sobriety, compliance with psychotropic medications, or "appropriate" behavior	85	3.45	0.70
A1.6 Organization is committed to the Housing First principle of limiting termination of tenancy to severe lease violations and only after strenuous efforts to resolve, and continuing services to assure housing stabilization in current or subsequent unit	84	3.49	0.70
A1.7 Organization is committed to use of harm reduction principles—maximizing housing retention and improving quality of life while taking steps to reduce the harm caused by risky behaviors, but not requiring abstinence	85	3.58	0.73
A1.8 Organization has a clear and accurate understanding of the level of services needed for this population and has a clear strategy for obtaining the resources needed to supply it, including, if needed, general fundraising to fill gaps in operating/services income, and a history of doing so. (A1_levserv)	85	3.16	0.88
A1.9 The organization has successfully handled NIMBY issues that arise with respect to its housing and services, and has policies and procedures in place to reduce the likelihood of a NIMBY response	86	2.90	0.97

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
A1.10 The organization's policy is to "do what it takes for as long as it takes" to assure housing stability for its clients, including long-term follow-up to help clients work through crises and retain housing.	43	3.53	0.70
A1.11 The organization has a long history of private fundraising, motivated by its understanding of supportive housing tenant needs and determination to fill gaps not covered by public funds with flexible monies obtained through private fundraising	48	2.55	1.10
A1.12 Retention rates* in the organization's supportive housing projects after move-in are at least 90% at 6 months, 85% at 12 months, and 80% at 24 months (meets the criterion = 4; 5% lower on one or more = 3; 10% lower on one or more = 2; more than 10% lower on one or more = 1)	45	3.40	0.78

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.2

**Criterion A2: Community Standing**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
A2.1 The organization's top management staff belong to and have taken leadership roles in PSH-related professional associations locally or regionally (A2_prof_loc)	85	2.92	0.93
A2.2 The organization's top management staff belongs to and has taken leadership roles in PSH-related professional associations at the state level, and nationally (A2_prof_st)	86	2.47	1.08
A2.3 The organization participates in activities to educate lawmakers and other local elected officials, its own and other board members, citizens groups, and other constituents about PSH through public speaking, tours, and other approaches (A2_educ)	85	2.88	0.87
A2.4 The organization is frequently sought after by other organizations as a partner for PSH projects (A2_pshpart)	85	2.85	0.96
A2.5 The organization contributes to building the PSH field by delivering training and presentations (through conferences, webinars, or other venues for educating others in the field) and by providing advice, mentoring, and support to other organizations that are new to PSH (A2_pshfld)	86	2.47	1.01
A2.6 The organization's top management staff consistently advocate for increases in capital, operating, and/or services funding (A2_advdc)	86	3.06	0.83

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.3

**Criterion A3: Organizational Performance and Quality Improvement Practices**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
A3.1 The organization engages in strategic planning at least annually to identify where it wants to be in 1, 3, and 5 years, and how it intends to get there. (A3_stratplan)	85	3.18	0.74
A3.2 Important decisions about programming and organizational direction, and strategic planning if the organization does it, are based on evaluation, assessment, tenant feedback, and similar data that it generates about its own activities (A3_progdec)	85	2.87	0.75
A3.3 Organization regularly reviews findings about best practices for PSH, as presented at conferences, published in journals, distributed through webinars, and other media, to incorporate into its planning processes Comments/Explanation (A3_bestprac)	85	2.75	0.92
A3.4 Organization uses internally-generated performance data to assess which of its PSH-related activities might need either considerable improvement or could be dropped or contracted out if another organization could more effectively do the work (A3_perfdat)	85	2.57	0.89
A3.5 All staff members are evaluated at least annually against clear performance criteria (A3_memeval)	85	3.41	0.72
A3.6 Staff at all levels understand and accept the review and improvement process, which is part of the organization's culture (A3_improv)	84	3.23	0.77
A3.7 Excellent staff performance is publicly recognized and rewarded (A3_perfrec)	83	3.01	0.84
A3.8 Structures are in place and used consistently across supervisors and divisions to improve poor staff performance or ultimately to dismiss staff who do not meet performance standards (A3_improv_poor)	83	3.09	0.72
A3.9 The organization routinely assesses tenants' quality of life through surveys, interviews, and suggestion/complaint procedures (A3_assessten)	83	2.98	0.84
A3.10 Organization's tenants/clients report high levels of satisfaction with housing and services offered by organization (A3_tensat)	81	3.25	0.65
A3.11 The organization offers tenants ways to contribute to key decisions about its services, such as tenant councils, tenant members of its Board of Directors, and other strategies for assuring tenant input (A3_tencont)	81	2.80	0.92
A3.12 Organization has a history of modifying its programs and practices based on tenant feedback, to improve tenant well-being and quality of life (A3_teenfeed)	76	2.89	0.81

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.4

## Criterion A4: Financial and Data Capabilities

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
A4.1 The organization regularly produces detailed financial statements by line of business. (A4_finanstat)	83	3.61	0.64
A4.2 Organization has qualified accounting staff with low turnover, or contracts with qualified accounting firm it has worked with for at least 4 years (A4_acctstaff)	82	3.56	0.62
A4.3 If accounting is contracted out, organization has the technology and staff capable of overseeing the contracted work and assuring satisfactory performance (A4_contout)	61	3.15	0.96
A4.4 Organization monitors its internal cash flow statements and forecasts, manages its finances well (e.g., books balance, payments made on schedule) (A4_cash)	82	3.66	0.50
A4.5 Organization has <b>staff</b> qualified to assure that projects are compliant with funder reporting requirements, codes and inspections, administrative records and service delivery provisions (A4_staffcomp)	82	3.59	0.54
A4.6 Organization has the <b>technology</b> needed to assure compliance with funder reporting requirements, codes and inspections, record keeping, and service delivery provisions. (A4_techcomp)	82	3.33	0.77
A4.7 The organization has the technology to produce data beyond what is required to satisfy funders that gives it a good picture of the performance of the organization as a whole (A4_techdat)	82	3.04	0.81
A4.8 The organization has the staff, hardware, software, and networking capabilities to incorporate specialized software programs (e.g., Efforts to Outcomes; DonorPerfect, accounting and project management software) into its management (A4_specsoft)	83	3.08	0.85
A4.9 The organization gathers reliable data about its tenants/clients, that allow it to know who they are, the length of their tenancy, what services they are receiving or might need to receive, and their well-being and quality of life (A4_tendata)	83	3.39	0.66
A4.10 Organization produces audited financial statement within 6 months of close of each fiscal year. Financial audits provide an unqualified opinion with no material weaknesses or reportable conditions. (A4_audit)	82	3.59	0.58
A4.11 Organization has a low annual turnover rate of key accounting staff, such as the CFO or equivalent position (Less than 10 percent = 4, 10-15% = 3, 16-20% = 2, more than 20% = 1) (A4_turnover)	81	3.44	0.70

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.5

**Criterion B1: The Special Nature of the Population Is Reflected in the Organization's Development Activities, Projects, and Ongoing Involvement**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
B1.1 Developing supportive housing units for the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population is a major part of the organization's purpose (b1_hsts_purp)	31	3.23	0.92
B1.2 The organization's ED/CEO and/or Director of Housing Development have extensive experience developing supportive housing (b1_exprtdev)	31	3.06	1.03
B1.3 The organization has developed supportive housing in different neighborhoods and areas, including underserved areas of the community as well as in neighborhoods that offer opportunities for community integration and access to community resources (b1_devngh)	29	2.86	1.16
B1.4 The organization is interested in and willing to develop supportive housing in communities that presently do not have an adequate supply (b1_adsply)	30	3.50	0.82
B1.5 The organization has staff with skills at outreach and marketing for new developments (b1_outreach)	30	2.98	0.93

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.6

**Criterion B2: Building Community in and around Supportive Housing Projects and Neighborhoods**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
B2.1 The organization practices strong and ongoing outreach to neighborhoods where buildings are or are going to be located; holds meetings, gets to know neighbors, brings neighbors to existing buildings to see how they work, and similar activities (b2_loc)	33	2.82	1.01
B2.2 The organization involves potential tenants, neighbors, and service providers in designing the building to maximize creation of community (b2_comm)	32	2.31	0.97
B2.3 The organization has a history of and clear commitment to continue involvement in the building once it is completed and is available to mediate between project partners (b2_partner)	31	3.32	1.01
B2.4 The organization's supportive housing projects are located in good proximity to transportation options (b2_prox)	31	3.55	0.77
B2.5 The organization's buildings include structural features that promote safety and community-building (e.g., common rooms, community kitchens, outdoor space/gardens, information center for building activities) (b2_safety)	32	3.47	0.84

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
B2.6 The organization's existing buildings are aesthetically pleasing (b2_aesth)	32	3.59	0.76
B2.7 The current backlog of needed maintenance and repairs is minimal relative to the overall value of the organization's properties (b2_maint)	32	3.28	0.92

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.7

**Criterion B3: Staffing**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
B3.1 The organization's ED/CEO and/or Director of Housing Development is an established leader in developing supportive housing, and has a reputation for innovation and high-quality developments (b3_innov)	32	3.06	1.11
B3.2 The organization's ED/CEO and/or Director of Housing Development is an effective organizational leader, capable of motivating and directing staff to fulfill the organization's mission (b3_miss)	32	3.63	0.55
B3.3 The organization has staff devoted specifically to developing supportive housing (b3_devel)	32	3.13	1.10
B3.4 The organization's development staff has extensive experience acquiring sites, complying with zoning requirements, obtaining variances if needed; and getting construction done on time and on budget (b3_acqsite)	32	3.14	1.16
B3.5 The organization is fully aware of the special skills and attitudes needed by all staff working with supportive housing tenants, and has policies and practices in place to assure appropriate skills and attitudes among the staff of its partner agencies doing property management and services (b3_staffskill)	32	3.27	0.76
B3.6 The organization has staff with the competence to work well with partners in support of tenants, even if it does not do property management or supportive services itself (b3_suppten)	32	3.64	0.60
B3.7 Cross-training or systematic collaboration occurs with property management and supportive services staff to assure full understanding of roles, responsibilities, and policies. Periodic check-up sessions occur and new staff is oriented to building culture, roles and responsibilities. (b3_crosstrain)	31	3.24	0.72

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.8

## Criterion B4: Funding

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
B4.1 The organization has acquired and managed low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) funding for capital development, and knows its strengths, limitations, and requirements. (b4_lihtc)	30	3.02	1.29
B4.2 The organization has acquired and managed other major sources of capital funding for past, current, or future development (HUD-Supportive Housing Program; HUD-811, 202, project-based; veteran's, public housing authorities, CDBG, HOME, state or local public agencies, redevelopment, multi-family, other). Knows the strengths, target populations, limitations, and requirements of major sources. (b4_capfund)	31	3.71	0.69
B4.3 The organization keeps track of potential new capital funding sources and plans ahead to position itself to take advantage of what's coming up (b4_capfundnew)	32	3.31	0.97
B4.4 The organization has considered, or actually used, innovative capital funding sources such as joint ventures, social impact investment or bonds, etc., to move beyond tax credits as the major source of funding for new buildings (b4_capfundinnov)	32	2.36	1.17
B4.5 The organization has diverse funding streams and is not dependent on developer's fees to sustain or expand its operations (b4_funddiv)	31	2.87	0.76
B4.6 The organization has used commercial sources of funding (e.g., banks, renting commercial space) (b4_fundcom)	30	2.80	1.02
B4.7 The organization has enough cash on hand to cover the costs of due diligence activities for properties it wants to acquire before it receives pre-development or capital financing (e.g., inspections, appraisals, insurance estimates, environmental impact assessments) (b4_cash)	30	2.75	1.12
B4.8 The organization knows about and has obtained many of the major sources of rent or operating subsidies for past, current, or future projects (public housing authorities, VASH, HUD-Supportive Housing Program, 811, 202, other). Knows the strengths, target populations, limitations, and requirements of all major sources (b4_majrent)	32	3.55	0.80
B4.9 The organization keeps track of potential new sources of rent or operating subsidies and plans ahead to position itself to take advantage of what's coming up (Q60_14)	20	3.28	1.07
B4.10 The organization has plans for how it would sustain operations in each of its supportive housing developments upon the loss of any single funding source (b4_sustain)	32	2.73	0.90

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
B4.11 Organization's ratio of total debt to net assets is below 2.5 (NOTE: A ratio of 2.6-3.5 should have a score of 3; 3.6-4.0 should be 2; greater than 4 should be 1) (b4_totdebt)	20	2.90	1.02
B4.12 The organization repays its loans on or before the original payment date (b4_loanrep)	29	3.28	0.89

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.9

**Criterion C1: The Special Nature of Population Is Reflected in the Organization's Scattered-Site Supportive Housing**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
C1.1 Offering scattered-site supportive housing for the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population is a major part of the organization's purpose (c1_ss_hts)	35	3.00	1.08
C1.2 The organization's ED/CEO and/or Director for Housing has extensive experience arranging for scattered-site supportive housing (c1_ext_ss)	35	3.03	1.15
C1.3 The organization has arranged for scattered-site supportive housing in different neighborhoods and areas, including underserved areas of the community and areas that match the needs and preferences of program participants (e.g., options for housing in safe neighborhoods, outside of high-poverty communities) (c1_ss_ngh)	35	3.14	0.88
C1.4 The organization is interested in and willing to identify and offer scattered-site supportive housing in communities that presently do not have an adequate supply (c1_ss_adq)	35	3.16	1.14
C1.5 The organization has a reputation for retaining landlords and creating high landlord satisfaction (c1_rep_ll)	35	3.29	0.83

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.10

**Criterion C2: Special Practices Related to the Nature of the Population**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
C2.1 The organization has policies and procedures in place for its existing scattered-site supportive housing to address common problems that arise in ways that are compatible with housing first and harm reduction principles (e.g., "What if" policies for how to handle disruptions, lease violations, when to call 911 and what to do before calling or if someone has already called 911, handling conflict among tenants, or how to help tenants keep their housing after receiving a warning or eviction notice) (c2_harmreduc)	33	3.12	0.93
C2.2 The organization's staff are trained and monitored for adherence to these policies, and to assure adherence by service providers (c2_stafftrain)	33	3.00	0.94
C2.3 The organization has procedures in place that it uses to review these policies and related practices regularly and add/adjust as needed (c2_reviewpol)	33	2.82	0.95
C2.4 Cross-training occurs with supportive services staff to assure full understanding of roles, responsibilities, and policies; clarify and sustain relationships among those responsible for housing placement and retention,	33	3.03	0.81

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
landlord relationships, and other aspects of client support; periodic check-up sessions occur; and new staff are oriented to the organization's culture, roles, and responsibilities (c2_crosstrain)			
C2.5 The organization works with service provider partners to assure appropriate staff and/or to facilitate access to supportive services delivered by other organizations for the tenants it places in scattered-site supportive housing (c2_servprov)	33	3.26	0.90

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.11

**Criterion C3: Staffing**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
C3.1 The organization is fully aware of the special skills and attitudes needed by all staff working with supportive housing tenants, and has policies and practices in place to assure appropriate skills and attitudes (c3_skills)	32	3.44	0.67
C3.2 The organization has staff dedicated to landlord development and relations specifically for the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population; it maintains, improves, cultivates, and expands relationships with landlords (c3_ll_dev)	32	3.03	0.97
C3.3 The organization uses people with wide experience in the real estate market (e.g., a realtor or person with equivalent expertise) to recruit and work with landlords (c3_realestate)	31	2.26	1.09
C3.4 The organization seeks landlords willing to accept housing first and harm reduction principles, with sufficient service provider backup; staff has sophisticated experience with recruiting, contracting and agreement-setting with landlords for this population (c3_ll_hsgfirst)	32	3.16	0.81
C3.5 The organization maintains a clear delineation of roles between housing staff and service provider staff, whether it provides both functions itself or works with one or more partner agencies to assure that tenants receive supportive services (c3_roles)	31	3.10	1.08
C3.6 Stable relationships with support staff being important for tenant/client well-being, the organization has a low annual turnover rate of housing placement and support staff (Less than 10 percent = 4, 10-15% = 3, 16-20% = 2, more than 20%=1) (c3_stabrel)	32	3.17	0.89

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.12

**Criterion C4: Funding**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
C4.1 The organization knows about and has obtained many of the major sources of rent or operating subsidies for past, current, or future projects (public housing authorities, VASH, HUD-Supportive Housing Program, VA, 811, 202, other). Knows the strengths, target populations, limitations, and requirements of all major sources. (c4_majrent)	31	3.29	1.04
C4.2 The organization tracks potential new sources of rent or operating subsidies and plans ahead to position itself to take advantage of what's coming up (c4_newrent)	32	3.22	1.01
C4.3 The organization knows about and has obtained, or worked with partners that have obtained, many of the major sources of funding for supportive services for past, current, or future projects (HUD-Supportive Housing Program; health services and mental health departments, Medicaid, other). Knows the strengths, target populations, limitations, and requirements of all major sources and the public agencies that administer them. (c4_partfund)	32	3.42	0.83
C4.4 The organization has a history of being able to adapt to changes in funding availability (e.g., sequestration, other funding shortfalls) (c4_fundavail)	32	3.45	0.61
C4.5 The organization tracks potential new sources of funding for supportive services and plans ahead to position itself to take advantage of what's coming up (Q54_5)	32	3.47	0.76

**Note:** 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.13

**Criterion D1: The Special Nature of the Population Is Reflected in the Organization's Property Management Activities**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
D1.1 Providing property management for supportive housing units for the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population is a major part of the organization's purpose (d1_propmgmt)	19	3.42	1.02
D1.2 The organization's leadership staff have extensive experience managing supportive housing properties for the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population (not just general affordable housing or non-homeless special needs housing) (d1_staffexp)	19	3.42	0.84
D1.3 The organization has managed supportive housing properties in different neighborhoods and areas, including underserved areas of the community as well as in neighborhoods that offer opportunities for community integration and access to community resources (d1_shprop_ngh)	19	2.63	1.34
D1.4 The organization is interested in and willing to provide property management services for supportive housing for this population in communities that presently do not have an adequate supply (d1_propmgmt_supp)	19	3.11	1.10
D1.5 The organization's PSH projects are fully occupied (occupancy rates of 95% or higher) (d1_fullocc)	18	3.56	0.78
D1.6 Maintenance of public spaces and mechanics in the organization's existing buildings is up to date and excellently done (d1_maintpubsp)	18	3.00	0.77
D1.7 Property management staff routinely communicate with supportive services staff about the maintenance needs of tenant units (d1_propmgmt_comm)	18	3.56	0.62
D1.8 Property management addresses maintenance needs in tenant units quickly and completely (d1_propmgmt_maint)	18	3.39	0.70
D1.9 Property management maintains the buildings' external appearance to maximize curb appeal and assure that the buildings are "good neighbors" (d1_propmgmt_extbuild)	18	3.56	0.51

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.14

**Criterion D2: Special Practices Related to the Nature of the Population**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
D2.1 The organization is committed to "blended management," meaning that property management, case management, and supportive services staff work	19	3.74	0.56

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
collaboratively on a day-to-day basis to promote the best interests of PSH tenants (d2_blendmgmt)			
D2.2 Cross-training occurs frequently with supportive services staff (and developer's staff, if applicable) to assure full understanding of roles, responsibilities, and policies; periodic check-up sessions occur; new staff are oriented to building culture, roles, etc. to promote the best interests of PSH tenants (d2_crosstrain)	19	3.21	0.63
D2.3 The organization has policies and procedures in place in its existing buildings to address common problems that arise in ways that are compatible with housing first and harm reduction principles ("What if" policies for how to handle disruptions, when to call 911 and what to do before calling, and how to handle conflict among tenants) (d2_commprob)	18	3.44	0.51
D2.4 The organization's staff are trained and monitored for adherence to these policies, and to assure adherence by property managers and service providers (d2_stafftrain)	18	3.33	0.69
D2.5 The organization regularly reviews its own policies and related practices and those of partner agencies and adds/adjusts as needed (d2_polrev)	19	3.37	0.60
D2.6 On average, the organization fills vacancies in its PSH units within 2 weeks. (d2_vacant)	18	2.08	1.09

**Note:** 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

**TABLE C.15**

**Criterion D3: Staffing**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
D3.1 The organization's key staff are established leaders in providing property management for supportive housing, and have a reputation for innovation and high-quality performance (d3_propmgmt_lead)	19	3.11	0.81
D3.2 The organization's key staff are effective organizational leaders, capable of motivating and directing staff to fulfill the organization's mission (d3_efflead)	19	3.58	0.69
D3.3 The organization is fully aware of the special skills and attitudes needed by all staff working with supportive housing tenants, and has policies and practices in place to assure appropriate skills and attitudes (d3_skills)	19	3.42	0.77
D3.4 The organization's property management contracts specify staff qualifications and attitudes that assure that all staff working in PSH buildings are appropriate for the types of tenants likely to occupy these units. (d3_propmgmt_qual)	18	3.17	0.99

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
D3.5 The organization has staff dedicated to providing property management services specifically for supportive housing for formerly chronically homeless (d3_chronhome)	18	3.39	0.85
D3.6 Stable relationships with property management staff being important for tenant/client well-being, the organization has a low annual turnover rate for its PSH property management staff (Less than 10 percent = 4, 10–15% = 3, 16–20% = 2, more than 20% = 1) (d3_stabrel)	18	3.53	0.70
D3.7 The organization has staff with the competence to work well with supportive services staff, its own or those of other organizations, in support of tenants (d3_tensuppt)	19	3.47	0.61
D3.8 Ratios of tenants to property management staff (including front desk staff, resident counselors, janitorial/maintenance staff, and others) are low enough that staff can effectively help tenants stabilize in housing and address crises for new and longer-term tenants in ways that maximize housing retention (d3_tenratio)	18	3.39	0.78

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.16

**Criterion D4: Funding**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
D4.1 The organization has never had cost overruns for the PSH properties it manages that require appealing to the developer to make up the difference. (d4_costovr)	16	2.19	1.11
D4.2 The organization maintains adequate reserve funds to meet maintenance needs as they arise (d4_rsrvfund)	18	3.00	1.03
D4.3 The organization's property management contracts assure funds sufficient to cover the costs of the types of staff able to work well with PSH tenants, including adequate staff: tenant ratios, staff training time for team meetings, etc. (d4_costprop)	16	2.81	0.98
D4.4 The organization places staff in PSH property management positions who have the skill sets to understand the various rent subsidy programs, keep records, report accurately for each program separately, assure compliance each funding source's reporting requirements, and also have the patience to work well with PSH tenants (d4_propmgmt_staff)	18	3.00	0.84
D4.5 The organization has received compliance certification to be included as property manager for buildings applying for low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC) (d4_compcert)	16	2.50	1.32

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.17

**Criterion E1: The Special Nature of Population Is Reflected in the Organization's Supportive Services Activities for Supportive Housing Tenants**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
E1.1 Providing supportive services in supportive housing (health, behavioral health, housing stabilization, etc.) for the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population is a major part of the organization's purpose (e1_provsuppserv)	46	3.46	0.78
E1.2 The organization's ED/CEO and/or Senior Director for Services has extensive experience providing supportive services in supportive housing for the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population (e1_suppserv_hts)	45	3.44	0.92
E1.3 The organization has provided supportive services in supportive housing for this population in different neighborhoods and areas, including underserved areas of the community (e1_diffngh)	46	3.15	1.09
E1.4 The organization is interested in and willing to provide supportive services in supportive housing for this population in communities that presently cannot meet the need (e1_commneed)	46	3.52	0.72

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.18

**Criterion E2: Special Practices Related to the Nature of the Population**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
E2.1 The organization has policies and procedures in place for its existing supportive services programs to address common problems that arise in ways that are compatible with housing first and harm reduction (e.g., "What if" policies for how to handle disruptions, lease violations, when to call 911 and what to do before calling or if someone has already called 911, handling conflict among tenants, and how to help tenants keep their housing after receiving a warning or eviction notice) (e2_commprob)	46	3.28	0.69
E2.2 The organization's staff are trained and monitored for adherence to these policies, and to assure adherence by other service providers (e2_stafftrain)	46	3.26	0.77
E2.3 Cross-training occurs, if applicable, with developer, housing placement, and property management staff to assure full understanding of roles, responsibilities, and policies; periodic review sessions occur; new staff are oriented to supportive services culture, roles, and responsibilities for the population (e2_crosstrain)	46	3.07	0.90
E2.4 The organization has procedures in place that it uses to review these policies and related practices regularly and add/adjust as needed (e2_polrev)	46	3.02	0.77

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
E2.5 The organization's supportive services staff ensure that clients are enrolled in Medicaid or other health insurance, have a medical home, have a Primary Care Provider (e2_hlthinsure)	45	3.64	0.61
E2.6 The organization's supportive services staff work with clients, health and behavioral health providers, and benefits agency staff to facilitate successful applications for SSI or SSDI (e2_ssi)	46	3.52	0.69
E2.7 The organization's supportive services staff monitor clients' use of health and behavioral health care, encourage use as appropriate, provide transportation if needed, etc., in keeping with voluntary use of services and harm reduction principles (e2_hlthcare)	46	3.66	0.52
E2.8 The organization follows one or more evidence-based models of service delivery for this population (e.g., Critical Time Intervention, Motivational Interviewing) (e2_ebmod)	46	3.51	0.65

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.19

**Criterion E3: Staffing**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
E3.1 The organization has staff dedicated to providing supportive services in supportive housing (health, behavioral health, housing stabilization, etc.) to the hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population (e3_hts_suppserv)	46	3.58	0.71
E3.2 The organization is fully aware of the special skills and attitudes needed by all staff working with supportive housing clients/tenants, and has policies and practices in place to assure appropriate skills and attitudes (e3_skills)	46	3.55	0.65
E3.3 The organization's staff has sophisticated experience helping consumers access and use a variety of sources for rent subsidies (if not part of organization's work, note "N/A" under "comments") (e3_rentsub)	43	3.23	0.90
E3.4 The organization has staff dedicated to helping clients stabilize in housing, specifically for hardest-to-serve chronically homeless population; offers landlords 24/7 responsiveness when issues arise; staff has sophisticated experience with crisis management for this population (e3_stabhsg)	46	3.35	0.82
E3.5 The ratio of clients to staff is low enough that staff can effectively provide move-in and stabilization services and address crises for new and longer-term tenants (e3_clientratio)	45	3.20	0.87

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
E3.6 The organization's supportive services staff spend a lot of their time out of their offices, meeting clients where they live or in other community venues (e3_outoffice)	46	3.38	0.80
E3.7 The organization maintains a clear delineation of roles between housing staff and service provider staff, whether it provides both functions itself or works with one or more partner agencies that do the housing part (e3_staffroles)	46	3.17	0.80
E3.8 Stable relationships with support staff being important for tenant/client well-being, the organization has a low annual turnover rate of supportive services staff (Less than 10 percent = 4, 10-15% = 3, 16-20% = 2, more than 20% = 1) (e3_stabrel)	46	3.29	0.86

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.20

**Criterion E4: Funding**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
E4.1 The organization tracks potential new sources of rent or operating subsidies and plans ahead to position itself to take advantage of what's coming up (e4_newrent)	46	3.11	1.04
E4.2 The organization knows about and has obtained, or worked with clients who are recipients of many of the major sources of funding for supportive services for past, current, or future projects (mental health and health services departments, Medicaid, other). Knows the strengths, target populations, limitations, and requirements of all major sources and the public agencies that administer them. (e4_rec_majrent)	46	3.46	0.81
E4.3 The organization has developed strategies that allow it to be reimbursed for services delivered in the community (i.e., out of the office), 3rd party contacts (i.e., talking with a health or behavioral health care provider when the client is not present), and participation in multidisciplinary team meetings as needed (e4_reimbr)	44	2.75	1.08
E4.4 The organization has a history of being able to adapt to changes in funding availability (e.g., sequestration, other funding shortfalls, changes in Medicaid rules or procedures) (e4_fundavail)	46	3.30	0.84
E4.5 The organization tracks potential new sources of funding for supportive services and plans ahead to position itself to take advantage of what's coming up (e4_newfund)	46	3.41	0.83

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.21

**Criterion F1: Partnering with Agencies of Your Own Choosing (Please Complete if You Have One or More Formal Partnering Agreements, MOUs, or Contracts with Another Agency Pertinent to PSH) with Agencies of Your Own Choosing**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
F1.1 Organization has a history of successful, detailed agreements, such as MOUs or other formal agreements, with partner agencies over their roles and financial responsibilities through all phases of a PSH project. (f1_mou)	32	3.50	0.62
F1.2 There are clear and appropriate expectations for the roles of developer, property manager, and service provider for all partnerships that the organization enters into for PSH projects (f1_develrole)	32	3.28	0.85
F1.3 Each partner agency employs staff with the appropriate skills and attitudes for the population served; MOUs/agreements specify staff qualifications, including attitudes and experience (f1_partnerskill)	32	3.22	0.91
F1.4 Staff at partner agencies have a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities and adequate training and experience to be successful. (f1_partnerrole)	31	3.32	0.79
F1.5 Roles and responsibilities of developer, property manager, and supportive services provider staff are clearly spelled out in MOUs/agreements, such that each partner organization can be held responsible for complying with expectations (f1_partnerexp)	31	3.39	0.84
F1.6 Organization has staff with competence to monitor, supervise, and if needed modify, the activities of partner agencies (f1_staffcomp)	31	3.32	0.79
F1.7 Organization involves all relevant partner agencies in the building design, construction, and lease-up phases of PSH projects (f1_partnerbuild)	31	3.02	1.02
F1.8 Organization ensures that its staff have clear lines of communication with counterparts at partner agencies and are responsive to their concerns (f1_partnercomm)	32	3.41	0.76
F1.9 Organization has policies and procedures in place to address concerns communicated by its partner agencies, and/or concerns that it has with partner agencies (f1_pol_comm)	32	3.25	0.80

**Note:** 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

TABLE C.22

**Criterion F2: Working with Agencies in the Larger Community Context, with Which You Probably Don't Have Formal Agreements, MOUs, or Contracts**

Item	N	Mean	Standard error
F2.1 The organization is able to identify tenants/clients with unmet service needs and assure that these tenants get engaged or re-connected to agencies that can meet those needs, either through its own staff or staff of other agencies (f2_tenantneed)	32	3.30	0.68
F2.2 The organization has been able to establish clear and appropriate expectations and good collaborative relationships with other agencies involved with its tenants/clients to promote tenant/client residential stability and well-being (f2_collabrel)	32	3.33	0.64
F2.3 The organization has successfully negotiated with one or more lead public agencies responsible for assignments to housing or services to support improved communication and coordination on behalf of tenants/clients' well-being (f2_negtenant)	32	3.27	0.84
F2.4 Organization has successfully negotiated with one or more lead public agencies to have funding for case management and related services transferred to its own staff. (f2_negcasemgmt)	31	3.02	1.13

Note: 4 = Mostly or completely; 3 = Moderately; 2 = Somewhat; 1 = Little or not at all.

# Notes

- <sup>1</sup> SPAs are distinct geographical regions within Los Angeles County. The eight SPAs, which together cover all of Los Angeles County, were created by the Los Angeles Department of Public Health to help provide public health and clinical services targeted to the needs of each region. See, “What Is a Service Planning Area?” County of Los Angeles Public Health, accessed October 16, 2018, <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/chs/SPAMain/ServicePlanningAreas.htm>.
- <sup>2</sup> “Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool,” Marguerite Case Foundation, accessed October 23, 2018, [https://caseygrants.org/what\\_we\\_are\\_learning/capacity-building-tools/](https://caseygrants.org/what_we_are_learning/capacity-building-tools/); “Foundation Core Capacity Assessment Tool (FCCAT),” TCC Group, accessed October 16, 2018, <https://www.tccgrp.com/fccat.php>.
- <sup>3</sup> The Dimensions of Quality Toolkit can be found online here: <http://www.csh.org/qualitytoolkit>. The dimensions it covers for supportive housing projects are whether its practices are tenant-centered, accessible, coordinated, integrated, and sustainable.

# References

- Benston, Elizabeth A. 2015. "Housing Programs for Homeless Individuals with Mental Illness: Effects on Housing and Mental Health Outcomes." *Psychiatric Services* 66 (8): 806–16.
- Burt, Martha R., Carol Wilkins, and Donna Mauch. 2011. *Medicaid and Permanent Supportive Housing for Chronically Homeless Individuals: Literature Synthesis and Environmental Scan*. Washington, DC: Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Department of Health and Human Services.
- Dickson-Gomez, Julia, Katherine Quinn, Arturo Bendixen, Amy Johnson, Kelly Nowicki, Thant Ko Ko, and Carol Galletly. 2017. "Identifying Variability in Permanent Supportive Housing: A Comparative Effectiveness Approach to Measuring Health Outcomes." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 87 (4): 414–24.
- Home for Good. 2014. "Standards of Excellence." Los Angeles: Home for Good.
- Leopold, Josh, Mychal Cohen, Sade Adeeyo, and Lily Posey. 2018. *Show Me Healthy Housing: Year Two Evaluation Report*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
- Leopold, Josh, and Mychal Cohen. Forthcoming. *Final Report on the CSH Los Angeles Supportive Housing Lab*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute.
- McKinsey and Company. 2013. "The Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT): 2.0." New York: McKinsey and Company.
- Nichols, Ben, Whit Spencer, and My Trinh. 2011. *Building Sustainable Organizations for Affordable Housing and Community Development Impact: Lessons and Recommendations from the Field*. Columbia, MD: Enterprise Community Partners, Inc.
- Perl, Libby, and Erin Bagalman. 2015. "Chronic Homelessness: Background, Research, and Outcomes." Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service.

# About the Authors

**Martha Burt** is an affiliated scholar at the Urban Institute, where she is the director of the Social Services Research Program for 29 years. She has conducted research and evaluation pertaining to a wide variety of populations and issues. Her most recent book, *Repairing the U.S. Social Safety Net*, that she coauthored with Demetra Smith Nightingale, was published in late 2009. She directed studies for HUD with the following reports: *Strategies for Preventing Homelessness* (2005), *Strategies for Reducing Chronic Street Homelessness* (2004), *Evaluating Continuums of Care for Homeless People* (2002), and *Life after Transitional Housing for Homeless Families and Strategies for Improving Homeless People's Access to Mainstream Benefits and Services* (2010). She also directed Initiative to End Homelessness for People with Mental Illness in Los Angeles County for the Corporation for Supportive Housing. She received her PhD in sociology in 1972, from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**Joshua Leopold** is a senior research associate in the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center at the Urban Institute, where his work focuses on homelessness and affordable housing policy. Before joining Urban, Leopold was a management and program analyst at the US Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH). At USICH, he helped implement the Obama administration's plan for ending chronic homelessness and homelessness among veterans by 2015; he also helped develop a national research agenda related to homelessness. From 2006 to 2011, he worked as an analyst for Abt Associates, where he was involved in numerous studies, including the Annual Homeless Assessment Report; the Costs of Homelessness study; the Study of Rents and Rent Flexibility in Subsidized Housing; and an evaluation of the AmeriCorps program. Leopold has a bachelor's degree from Grinnell College, Iowa, and a master's degree in information science from the University of Michigan.

**Mychal Cohen** is a research analyst in the Metropolitan Housing and Communities Policy Center at the Urban Institute. His work focuses on affordable housing, neighborhood initiatives, and community development. Before joining Urban, Cohen was a policy and development associate at the National Housing Trust, where his work focused on state and local preservation of affordable housing, especially through the low-income housing tax credit. Cohen holds a bachelor's in government from the University of Virginia and a master's in public policy from Georgetown University.

## STATEMENT OF INDEPENDENCE

The Urban Institute strives to meet the highest standards of integrity and quality in its research and analyses and in the evidence-based policy recommendations offered by its researchers and experts. We believe that operating consistent with the values of independence, rigor, and transparency is essential to maintaining those standards. As an organization, the Urban Institute does not take positions on issues, but it does empower and support its experts in sharing their own evidence-based views and policy recommendations that have been shaped by scholarship. Funders do not determine our research findings or the insights and recommendations of our experts. Urban scholars and experts are expected to be objective and follow the evidence wherever it may lead.



2100 M Street NW  
Washington, DC 20037

[www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org)