

# The Time is Now: Implementing Innovative Housing Model for PLWH to Improve Health Outcomes

## ID # 20570

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NATIONAL  
**RYAN WHITE**  
CONFERENCE  
ON HIV CARE & TREATMENT

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# Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Understand how data and system integration can be used to facilitate entry into housing
2. Conceptualize a regional model for housing PLWH
3. Learn how a collaborative approach to services improves health outcomes for PLWH

# Let Me Introduce Myself



**Peta-Gaye Nembhard**

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Advancing CT Together, Inc

# The Agencies We Represent



- Advancing CT Together (ACT) Provides infrastructure to advance sustainability, effectiveness, efficiency, and synergy for and between its services and advocacy initiatives. The collective impact of this joint venture will strengthen and broaden the range of services provided to families throughout Connecticut.



- The mission of the department is to protect the well-being of the people in Hartford, to promote an environment conducive to healthy lifestyles, and to prevent adverse health outcomes. Whenever possible, the Department will endeavor to employ strategies, policies, and interventions through community partnerships to reduce health disparities.



# Background Information

**Advancing CT Together, Inc.** (Formerly AIDS Connecticut) (**ACT**) is the main technical support provider for the City of Hartford HOPWA Program

- **2015**

- US Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) issued guidance for states and territories to develop coordinated entry into housing systems

- **2016**

- HIV providers in Hartford County responded to consumer concerns regarding confidentiality of HIV status and collectively decided to create a separated coordinated access network specifically for HIV (HOPWA) Housing.
- A **Special Projects of National Significance** (SPNS) released the Data Integration Grant opportunity which would help Ryan White and HOPWA programs collaborate
- ACT partners with City of Hartford HOPWA and Ryan White offices to apply for Data Integration Grant to integrate their **CaseWorthy** (HOPWA) and **CAREWare** (Ryan White) data system

# Background Information

- **2017**
  - Hartford HOPWA Providers continued work on consolidating the HIV housing waitlist following the Consolidated Plan first come, first serve & no wrong door
- **2018**
  - A dedicated HOPWA waitlist was created in CaseWorthy by Nutmeg consulting viewable only to HOPWA providers to protect confidentiality of individuals on the list.
- **2019**
  - HOPWA Application process streamlined and single point of entry (ACT). RW and Greater Hartford Coordinated Access Network (GH CAN) providers were trained on the process and ACT was integrated into the GH CAN

# Data Integration Grant Objectives

**Data Integration Grant** provided an opportunity to address HIV Care and Housing coordination through data integration to improve health outcomes along the HIV Care Continuum.

## **The Hartford D.I.G Project objectives:**

- Enact new policies and processes to support data exchange and analysis;
- Create a bi-directional interface between the CAREWare and CaseWorthy systems;
- Develop and implement a cross training curriculum to foster improved service delivery, data exchange and analysis;
- Analyze comprehensive data to assess changes in health outcomes;
- Document and disseminate challenges, lessons learned, best practices, and innovative models.
- Improve health outcomes for persons living with HIV/AIDS and those prone to homelessness



# Hartford D.I.G Stakeholders

## Recipients

- City of Hartford (Ryan White & HOPWA)
- Advancing CT Together (HOPWA)

## Ryan White Partners

- Hartford Hospital
- Community Health Services, Inc.
- Charter Oak Health Center
- UConn/CT Children's Specialty Group
- Latino Community Services
- Community Renewal Team
- Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc.
- Community Health Center, Inc.
- UCONN Health Center
- Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective
- Rockville Hospital

## Ryan White Partners Cont'd

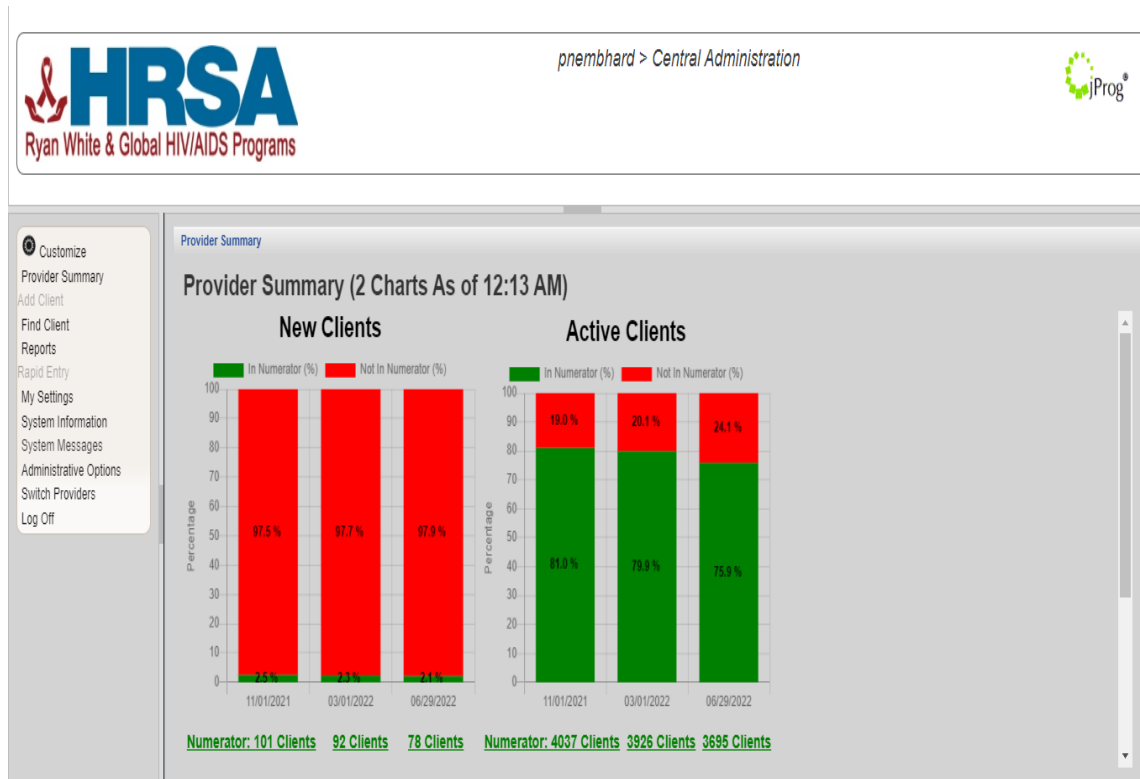
- Charter Oak Health Center
- Saint Francis Hospital
- Hospital of Central CT
- Mercy Housing and Shelter Corp

## HOPWA Housing Partners

- Hands on Hartford/Zeppo House
- Chrysalis Center/St. Philip's House
- Mercy Housing and Shelter Corp
- Human Resources Agency of New Britain, Inc.

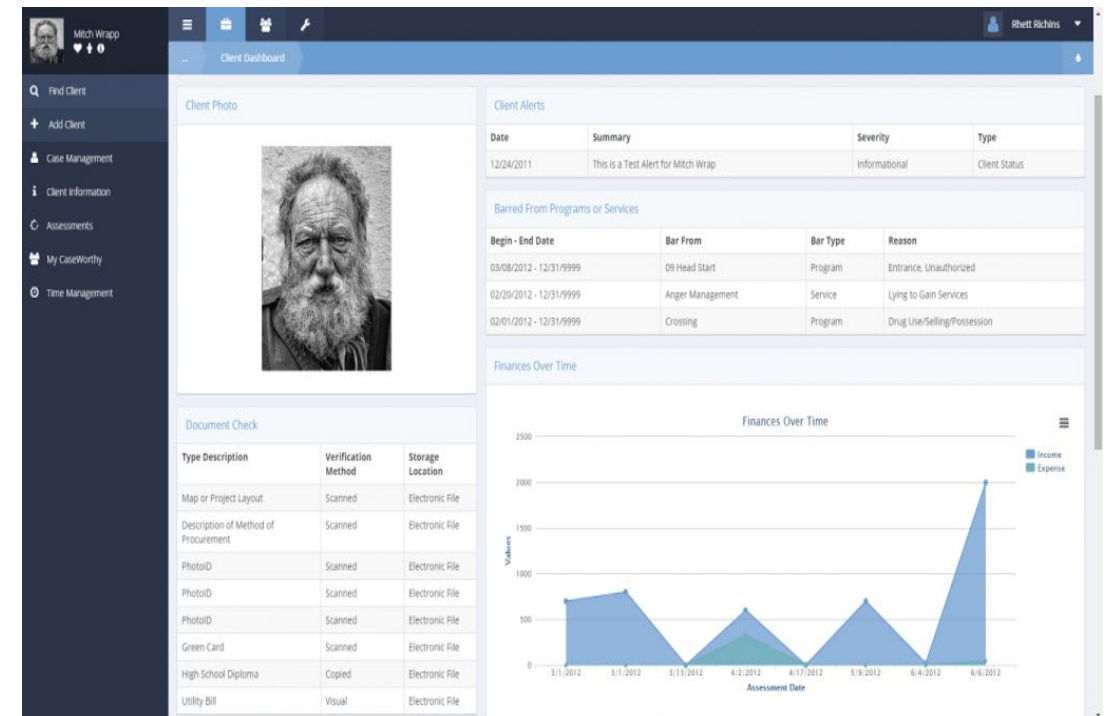
# The Data Systems

## CAREWare



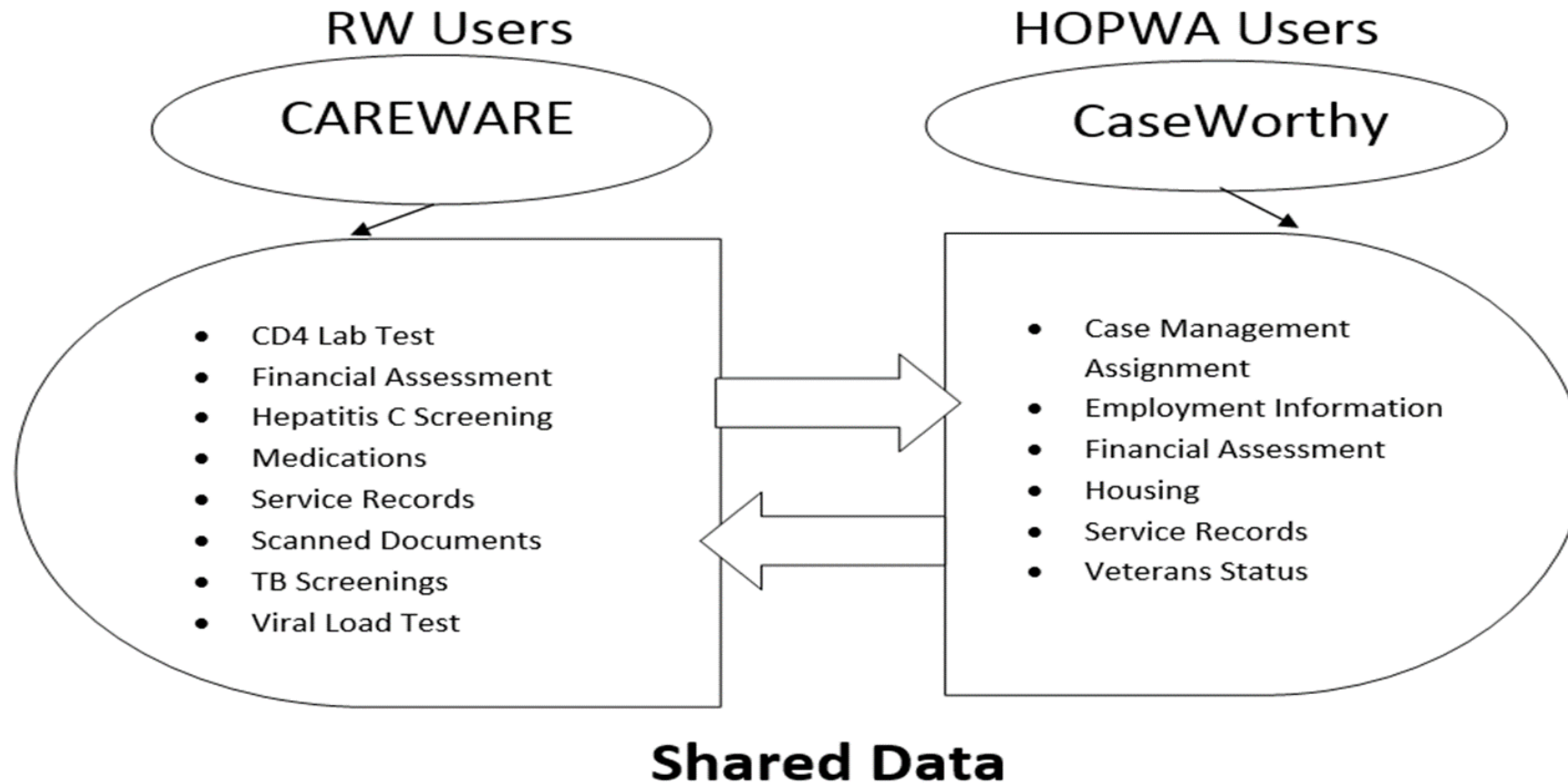
The Ryan White Data System  
Developed by JPROG Inc

## CaseWorthy



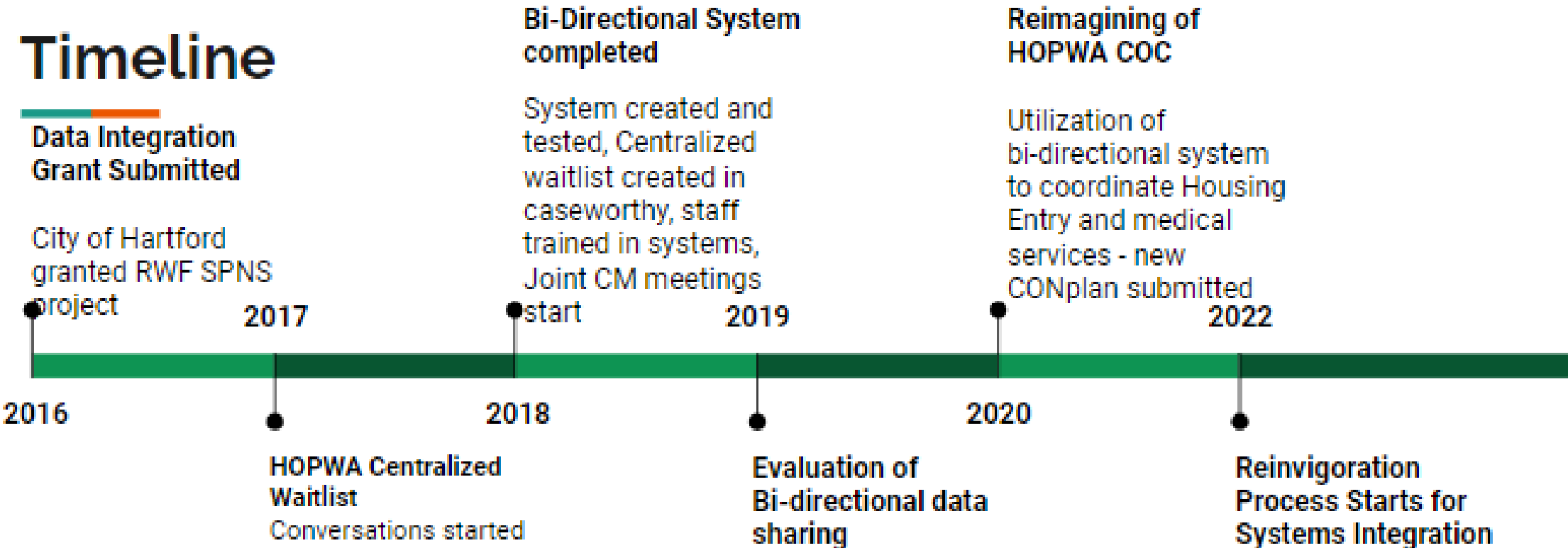
The Hartford HOPWA Data System  
Managed & Maintained by Nutmeg Inc

# The Bi-Directional Data Exchange



# The D.I.G Timeline: Past and Future

## Timeline



# The Successes of the Hartford Data Integration Grant

What Went Well During the Implementation of the 4 years of the Data Integration Grant.



# HOPWA & Ryan White System Improvements

## Cross Training and Coordination of Providers

- Creation of Joint Peer Lead HOPWA Housing and Ryan White Case Management coordination/training meetings **\*\*HRSA Best Practice Model\*\***
- Over 150+ individuals trained through joint meetings
- 15 provider sites and staff trained on integrated system
- 60+ joint clients with sharing agreements
- Located “out of care” clients who were housed but not virally suppressed



# Integration of Case Managers

- Medical and Housing Case Managers meet monthly
  - Participation has been integrated into HOPWA and RW Contracts
  - Peer-driven
  - Continuing education on HIV topics and community resources
  - Cross-training (RW -> HOPWA, HOPWA->RW)
  - Interactive Clinical Case Conferencing opportunities with LMSW
  - Networking

# Smashing Silos with Data Integration= System Integration

- Integration of HIV Data into HOPWA Coordinated Housing Entry system
- Streamlined housing waitlist and application process
- Vulnerability index for housing prioritizes out of care individuals
- Development of standards for housing programs CD4/ VL monitoring & Hepatitis C
- Elimination of barriers to HIV housing
  - HIV+ Individuals status protected by closed system
  - Multiple housing options prioritizing client choice
  - Elimination of multiple waitlists





# Housing is Healthcare!

People living with HIV must have safe, stable, appropriate housing in order to successfully access and benefit from life-saving HIV treatments.

Being stably housed is positively associated with:

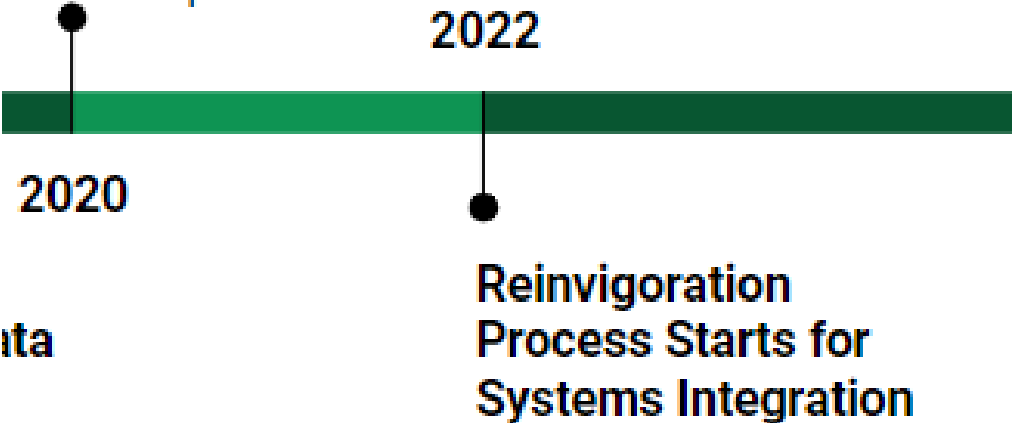
- Effective antiretroviral therapy
- 20% more likely to be virally suppressed
- Lack of co-infection with hepatitis C or tuberculosis
- Reduced mortality

source: <http://nationalaidshousing.org/housing-and-health/>

# Reimagining of HOPWA Continuum of Care

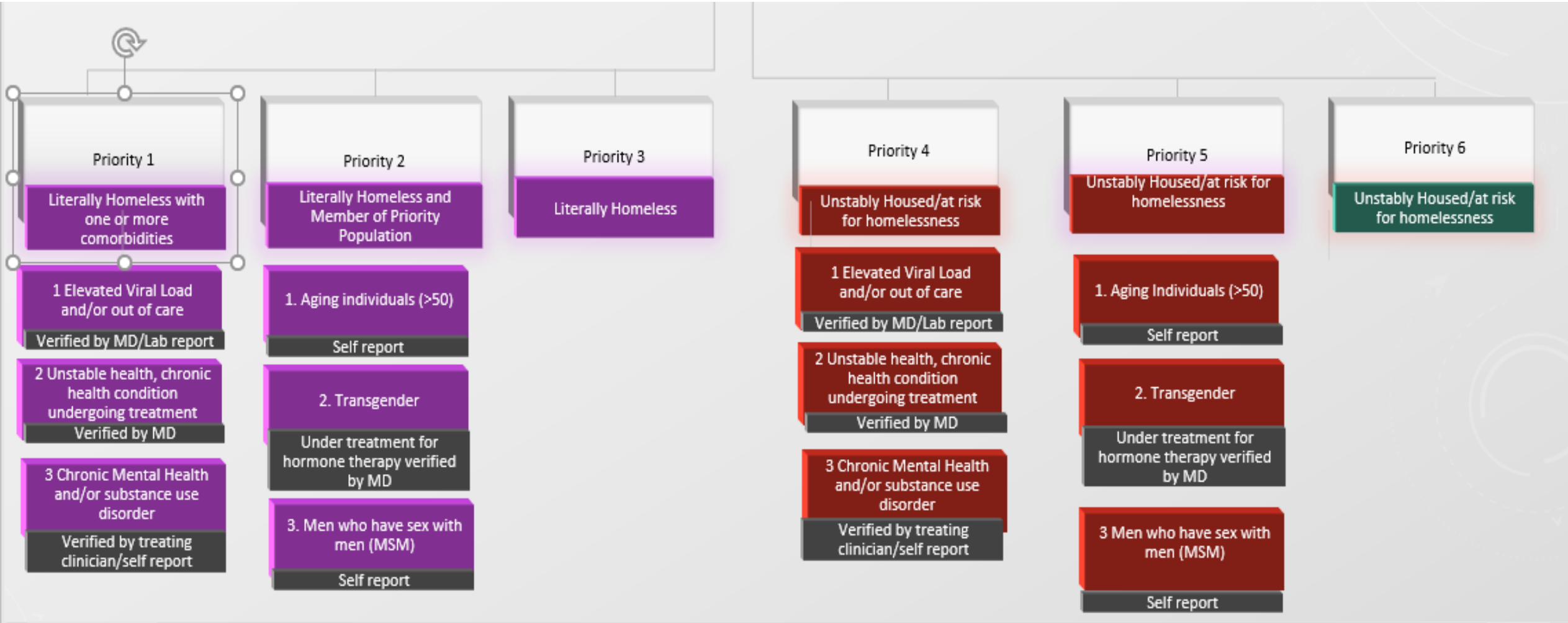
## Reimagining of HOPWA COC

Utilization of  
bi-directional system  
to coordinate Housing  
Entry and medical  
services - new  
CONplan submitted

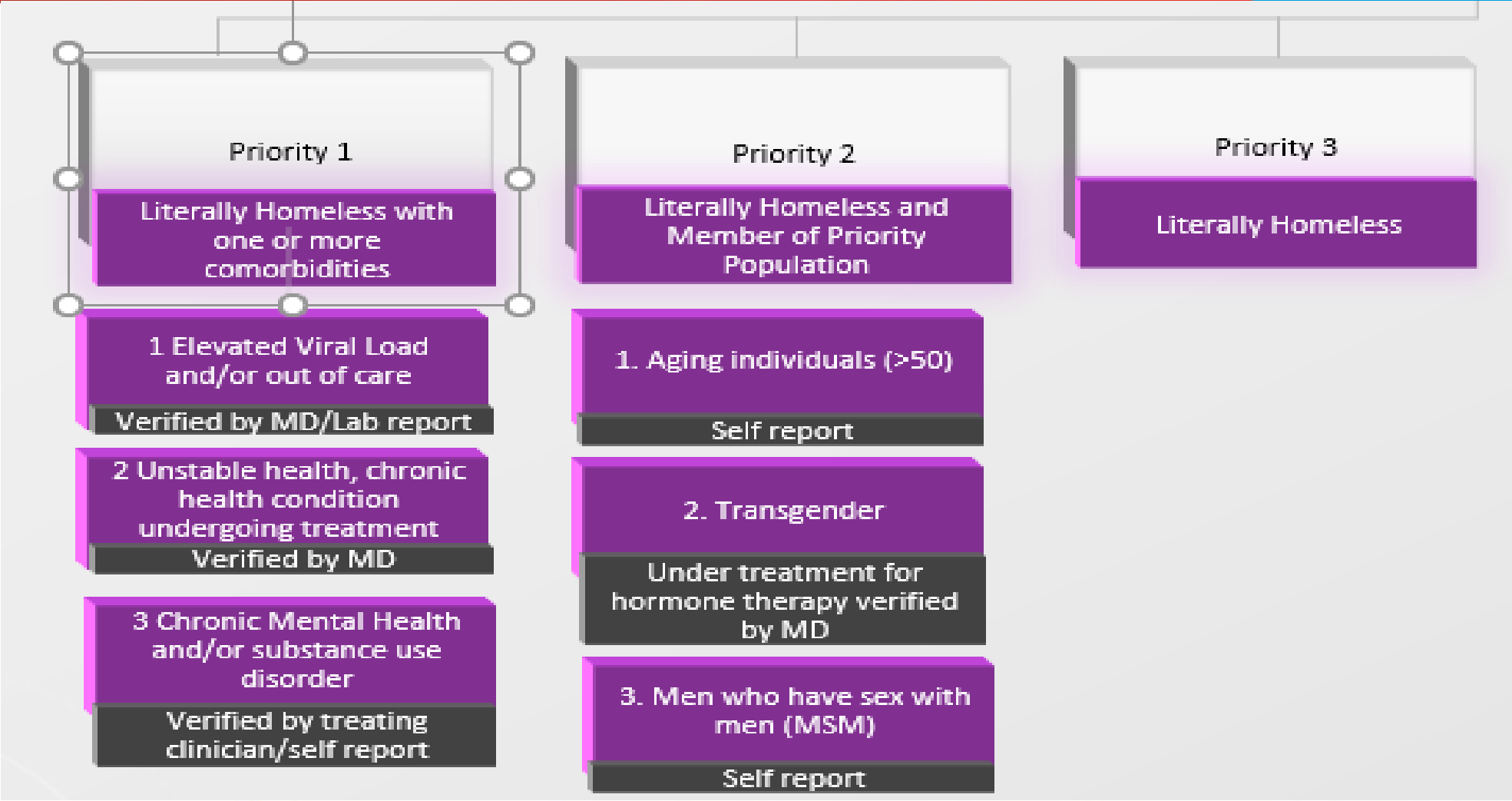




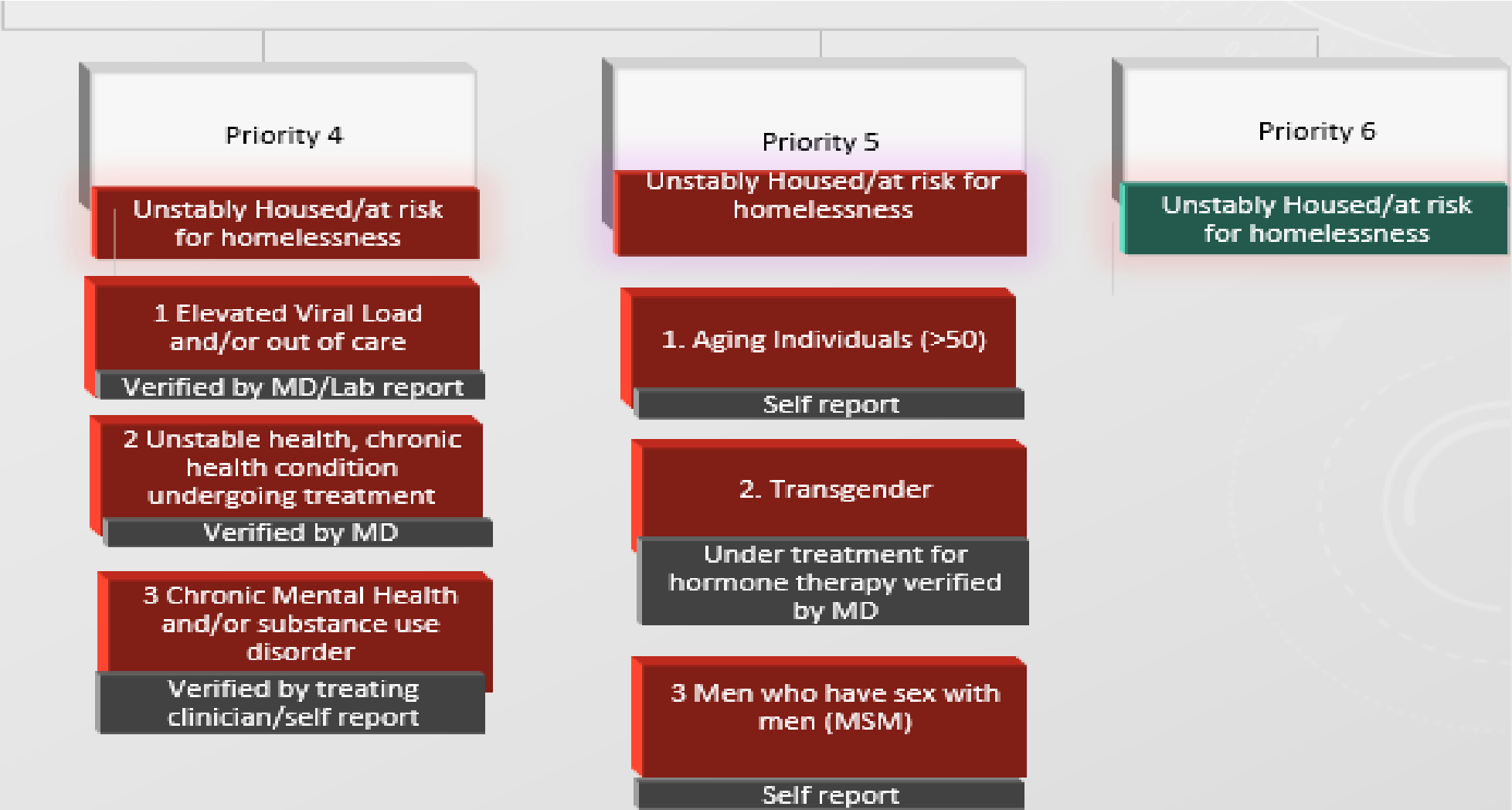
# Housing Priority Process developed in 2021



# Priority 1 thru 3



# Priority 4 thru 6



# Data Outcomes

Let's Look at the Data!

# What Does the Data Show Us

**Hartford County has matched more individuals to HIV specific housing programs than any other region in CT but has the third largest HIV population and receives less funding**

- Since 2019, **160** client have been referred to the HOPWA WL as of June 2022
- **70** clients were housed with eligible programs, **37** remain enrolled
- **4** have moved on to other Permanent Supportive Housing opportunities
- **50** clients have self-resolved, did not qualify at intake, or were unable to be located
- **6** clients are currently enrolled in Rapid Rehousing project and
- **2** clients are in Transitional housing pending bridge
- **35** clients remain on the waitlist, of which **8** are currently matched and in housing search.



# What Does the Data Show Us

Of the total **160** clients on the HOPWA Waitlist

- **93/160** received a Ryan White Service
- **54/93** received at least 1 medical visit (Hartford TGA); this can also reflect those who are retained in Care in the Hartford TGA
- **48/54** had at least 1 CD4 or Viral Load test
- **40/48** were virally suppressed

**This is year one baseline data that we hope to build upon moving forward**

- Maintaining provider knowledge of the integrated systems of care between HOPWA and Ryan White
- Maintaining provider buy-in for Long-term, continued use of data sharing between CaseWorthy and CAREWare.
- Allocate HOPWA and Ryan White funds to maintain Joint activities and trainings for HOPWA and Ryan White that have been developed through Hartford DIG.
- Contract language addressing ongoing implementation in both RW & HOPWA sub-recipient agreements will remain in contracts.
- Strengthen partnerships with community partners with the HOPWA Continuum of Care
- Continued education about the unified HIV Housing waitlist
- Work with other jurisdictions to replicate the process; leverage resources in the State

# Closing Thoughts

## People who are living with HIV face a number of barriers related to the social determinants of health

- Integrated systems help alleviate barriers to care and assist with care coordination for clients
- Integration is not possible without key stakeholder involvement
- Housing is an important part of healthcare provision, even though it is viewed as a supportive service
- The current housing landscape in CT following CV-19 pandemic makes this process essential to service delivery
- Future efforts will involve integrating baseline data into future quality management activities for both RW and HOPWA

# Thank You for Joining Us!

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