

# Pathways to Housing, Inc Press Kit

*•Facts •Story •Press •Awards •Bio*

# FACT SHEET

**Founder & Executive Director:** Sam Tsemberis, Ph.D.

**Established:** New York, NY: 1992  
Washington DC: 2003  
Philadelphia, PA: 2008  
Burlington, VT: 2009

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**Media Resources:** [www.pathwaystohousing.org/press](http://www.pathwaystohousing.org/press)

## Services:

Pathways to Housing provides immediate and independent housing for persons who are homeless and suffer from psychiatric disorders. The program is based on the belief that housing is a human right and provides independent and permanent apartments without preconditions. Support services are provided 24 hours, 7 days a week and comprise of a team of nurses, psychiatrists, wellness specialists, employment specialists, family specialists, social workers and substance abuse specialists.

The Pathways Housing First model is an Evidence-based model that has been proven a success and cost-effective. The model has sparked national and international interest and many cities across the USA and Canada have implemented the program. Pathways is committed to providing training to these new programs and ongoing support to Housing First programs.

## Consumers:

Pathways to Housing serves over 650 clients in New York, over 200 in DC and over 100 in Philly.

## Cost:

Pathways Housing First model costs approximately \$57 per night compared to \$73/night for a shelter, \$164/night for the jail, \$519 for an Emergency Room visit and \$1185 for a Psychiatric hospital.

# THE PATHWAYS TO HOUSING STORY

## *The Problem*

- Over the course of a year, between 2.5 and 3.5 million people will live either on the streets or in an emergency shelter. This population, if it was a city, would be the third largest city in the U.S., ranking between Los Angeles and Chicago.
- 23% of homeless people are chronically homeless, meaning that they have been homeless for a year or more or four times in the past three years and they suffer from mental or physical disabilities.
- 16% of all homeless people in America suffer from mental illness.

## *The Solution*

1992, Dr. Sam Tsemberis, compelled by his work as a director of a psychiatric outreach program, founded Pathways to Housing to ensure that people on the street obtained what they were entitled to, housing as a basic right. Pathways' Housing First approach to ending chronic homelessness for people with mental disabilities has been proven to work.

The principles are:

- Providing immediate access to permanent independent apartments, without preconditions
- Setting the standard for services driven by consumer choice that support recovery and community integration
- Conducting research to find innovative solutions and best practices for those who suffer from mental illness and homelessness

## *The Impact*

- The number of chronically homeless people in the United States dropped by almost 30% between 2005 and 2007. Administration officials attribute much of that one-third drop to the Housing First Strategy.
- Public cost of an average chronically homeless person per year, living in a supportive housing program like Pathways to Housing: \$16,000  
  
Public cost of an average chronically homeless person per year, living on the streets and in shelters: \$40,000
- Pathways to Housing clients have an 85% five-year retention rate and drastic drops in emergency room visits, contacts with law enforcement, and psychiatric hospitalizations.
- More than 350 cities in the US and Canada adopted 10-year plans to end chronic homelessness, 75% of these plans include a Housing First program

# PATHWAYS TO HOUSING: PRESS HIGHLIGHTS

## *TV Spotlights*

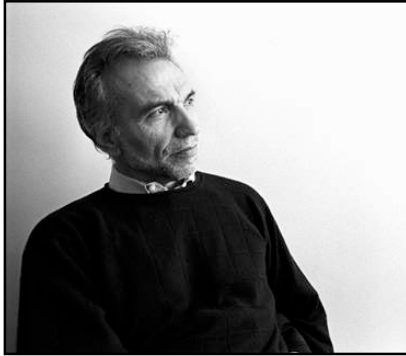
BBC  
BC Local News  
CBS News  
CNN  
NBC  
PBS

## *Print Spotlights*

Philidelphia Inquirer  
Miller- McCune  
New York Times  
Huffington Post  
Behavioral Healthcare  
Washington Post  
Miami Herald  
Reverse Zone  
Calgary Herald  
The Hilltop Online  
NYU Silver School of Social Work Issues and  
Actions  
The Gilroy Dispatch  
Colorado Springs Gazette  
The Indypendant  
Las Vegas Sun  
Wall Street journal  
Boston Globe  
New Orleans News  
Grand Forks Herald  
Edmonton Sun  
Lethbridge Herald  
Hawaii Reporter  
The Daily Progress  
National Council Annual Report  
Commonweal  
University of Calgary Gauntlet  
Local Buzz  
United Press International  
Western Catholic Reporter  
Des Moines Register  
The Boston Globe

Affordable Housing Finance  
Associated Press  
AM New York  
The Las Vegas Sun  
The Gotham Gazette  
The Lancet  
Press of Atlantic City  
Psychiatry News  
Chronicle of Philanthropy  
Salt Lake Tribune  
The Poughkeepsie Journal  
Street Light  
State Techmag.com  
The Atlantic Monthly  
Health Care for The Homeless  
The Honolulu Advertiser  
Chattanooga Free Times Press  
Mental Health News  
Design/builder  
Hope Magazine  
National Resource Center on Homelessness  
and Mental Illness  
Miami-New York City Metro  
City Limits

## BIOGRAPHY OF SAM TSEMBERIS



Dr. Sam Tsemberis founded Pathways to Housing after years of on-the-ground work as a member of a psychiatric street outreach team working to house New York City's chronically homeless street population. He found that many of those struggling with mental illness or addiction did not meet the strict requirements set by existing housing programs. Dr. Tsemberis postured that even chronically homeless people with mental disabilities could stay housed if simply offered a home without prerequisites and the support and services necessary to maintain it.

In 1992, after receiving a \$500,000 grant from the New York State Office of Mental Health, Dr. Tsemberis was ready to test his theory, known as "Housing First." That year, Dr. Tsemberis launched Pathways to Housing – one of the first organizations in the United States founded on the belief that housing is a basic right for all.

Since then, Housing First programs have been implemented in communities across the United States and Canada. Dr. Tsemberis and Pathways have been honored by the Center for Mental Health Services, the National Alliance to End Homelessness, New York Psychiatric Association, Eli Lilly Foundation, and others. In 2005, the American Psychiatric Association Institute on Psychiatric Services awarded Pathways its prestigious Gold Award in the area of community mental health.

Dr. Tsemberis holds a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from New York University, and currently is on the faculty of the Department of Psychiatry of the Columbia University Medical Center. He continues to publish numerous articles and contribute to federally funded studies on the topics of housing and treatment for individuals who are homeless and have psychiatric disabilities. As Executive Director of Pathways to Housing he serves as an international spokesperson on homelessness and the Housing First model of service.

## PATHWAYS TO HOUSING AWARDS/HONORS

- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration awarded Pathways to Housing two prestigious grants in 2009 to bring Housing First to Vermont and also to integrate peer-run Illness Management and Recovery practices into the ACT model for a total of 4 million dollars over a five year period.
- The Catalogue for Philanthropy in 2008, selected Pathways DC to be featured as one of the best, a highly regarded stamp of approval for non-profits in the greater metropolitan DC region.
- In 2007, Pathways to Housing was awarded the Excellence in Innovation Award from the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare, which represents 1,300 organizations providing treatment and rehabilitation to help people recovery from mental illnesses and addiction disorders nationwide.
- In 2006, Dr. Sam Tsemberis won the National Alliance to End Homelessness John E. Macy Award for Individual Achievement. As Founder and Executive Director of Pathways to Housing, Dr. Tsemberis received this distinguished award for outstanding success with the “Housing First” model in New York City and the District of Columbia.
- In 2005, The American Psychiatric Association presented Pathways to Housing with the Gold Award, First Place for Community Mental Health Program. Pathways to Housing was selected for the "exemplary success of [its] housing first program in the provision of permanent housing and treatment services for adults with severe mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders."

### Pathways New York Featured Awards

2008	Behavioral Healthcare Champion, Sam Tsemberis, Behavioral Health Champions
2004	Public Health Association of New York, Leadership & Advocacy that promotes public health
2002	New York University, Division of Nursing, Special Recognition Award
2002	New York Association for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Marty Smith Memorial Award, For Outstanding Contribution to the Advancement of Services for People with Psychiatric Disabilities
2001	National Alliance for the Mentally Ill NYC, Special Achievement in Housing Award

### Pathways DC Featured Awards

2009	AmeriCorps , Program Support and Leadership Award
2008	Chronicle for Philanthropy, Best small philanthropy in the Washington area
2007	Consumer Leadership Forum gave us an award for providing good consumer services