Overview of DESC

➢ emergency shelter
➢ licensed mental health services
➢ licensed chemical dependency services
➢ supportive housing
➢ high level of integration across programs
Housing First Principles

- Target to most vulnerable homeless
  - abandons 'housing readiness' concept
  - vulnerability vs high utilization

- Move-in directly from streets and shelters
  - no preconditions of treatment acceptance or compliance

- Robust on-site services key to success
  - predicated on assertive engagement, not coercion
Housing First Principles

- No requirement to participate in services
  - clients can fire case managers,
    case managers can never fire clients

- Harm reduction approach to addictions
  - abstinence not mandated
  - not a passive approach to addictions
  - meet clients where they are at and proceed at a pace they can tolerate
Housing First Principles

- Leases and tenant protections under the law
  - Landlord-Tenant Act and Just Cause Eviction Ordinance

- Possible in both scattered site or project based settings
12-month Outcomes for 1811 Eastlake
(Journal of the American Medical Association, 4/1/09)

- $4 million reduction in costs of crisis institutional use
  - a 58% reduction in Medicaid expense

- 30% reduction in alcohol consumption
  - relationship between housing and consumption
  - beer management protocol
  - new alcohol intervention program, new research
Priorities for Resident Selection in a Scarce Housing Market

High Utilization vs Vulnerability

High Utilization

- important in gaining popular support; better stewardship of public revenue
- important in gaining the support of elected officials; business groups; law enforcement
- solid research shows significant cost reduction
High Utilization vs Vulnerability

Vulnerability

- many chronically homeless people never go to the hospital or get arrested
- yet, their level of functioning is so suppressed they are at risk on the streets
- these acutely vulnerable are left out if high utilization is the sole method of prioritization
- there are at least two tools for measuring vulnerability (Common Ground/DESC)