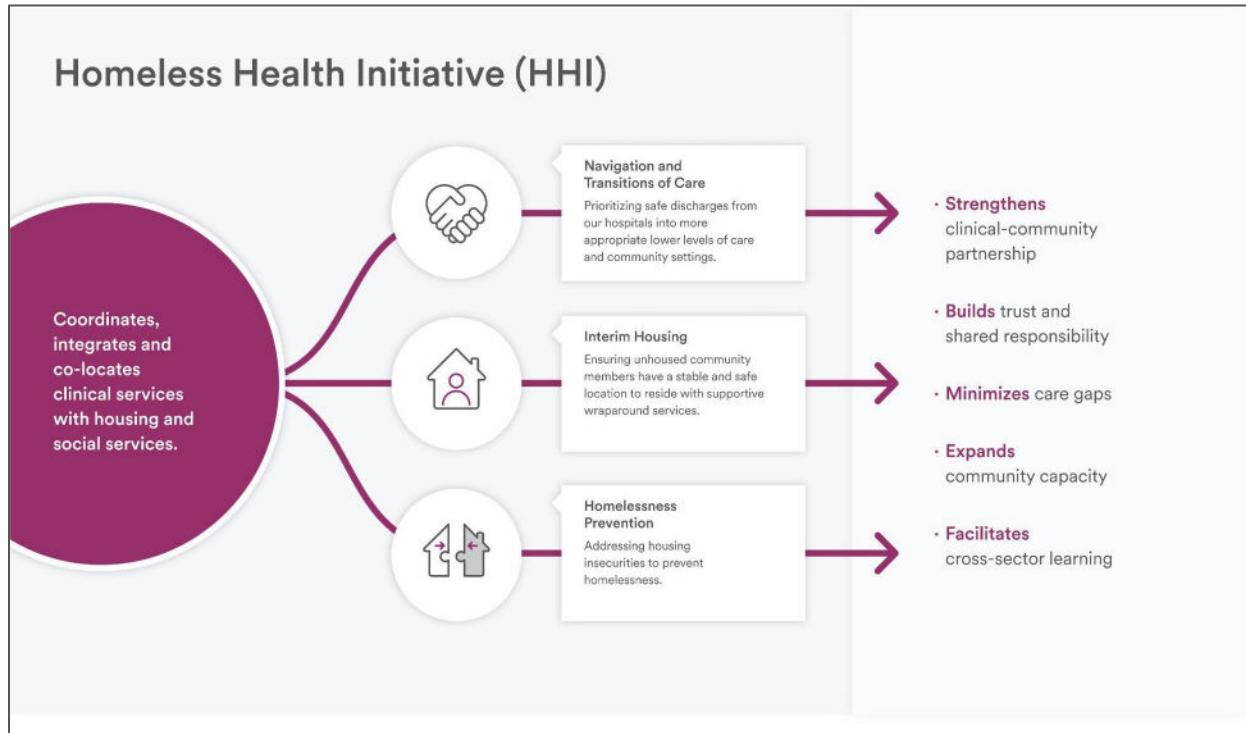


# Research & Equity Advisory Council for Housing Insecurities (REACHI): Learnings from our Lived Experience Advisory Council

August 27th, 2025

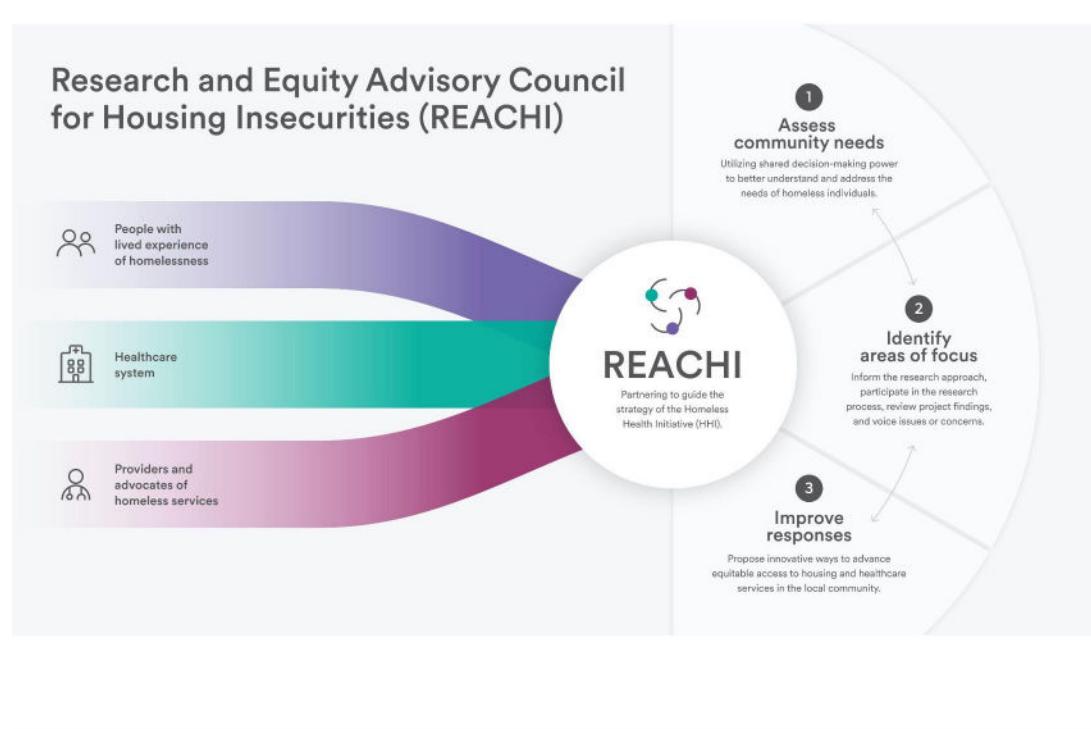
Presenters:  
Nicole Wilson, CommonSpirit Health

# CommonSpirit's Homeless Health Initiative (HHI)



# REACHI Background & Purpose

In April 2022, CommonSpirit launched **REACHI** to build partnerships between people with lived expertise, the healthcare system, and providers and advocates of homeless services in CA. We've now expanded to WA state.



# Envisioning Grant Funding Leadership

## REACHI ENGAGEMENT

- When our members were first onboarded an identified activity was incorporation of recommendations for the Homeless Health Initiative (HHI) grant proposal process.
- Out of this work, some initial low-hanging opportunities included:
  - Creation of a subcommittee on the grant proposal review process
  - Engagement with exploratory calls when meeting with a potential grantee
  - A majority vote by the council to approve a grant proposal for funding
  - Site visits to HHI funded community based organizations



# Cal-AIM: One Time Grant Funding Pool

- **Why:**

Feedback from newly established grant sub-committee

- Members had requested to engage more meaningfully in our grant funding process
- Consulted with our co-chairs to create a one-time grant pool of 1M fully directed by the council

- **Focus area:**

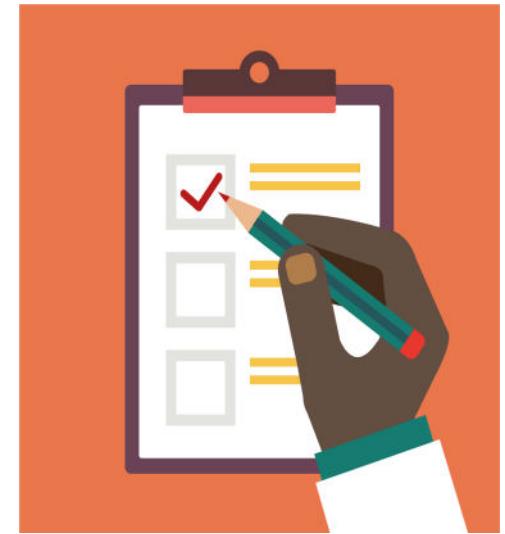
Supporting CBOs in aligning with CalAIM

- Time sensitive & intentional need across CA communities
  - Strengthen homeless service providers' capacity to partner with:
    - Managed Medi-Cal plans
    - Health systems
    - Other local community organizations



# Preparation & Support for Grant Review

- **Participation & Capacity:**
  - Engagement optional based on members capacity
  - A minimum of 4 members to review/participate in grantee interviews
- **Educational Opportunities:**
  - Facilitated internal guest speaker on evaluation considerations for our entire membership
  - Provided a 1 hr information session on Cal-AIM
- **Co-Creation:**
  - Members co-designed application requirements
  - Developed timeline, supports, and evaluation rubric
- **Structure & Flexibility:**
  - Interviews scheduled around member work schedules
  - Recordings available for all interviews



# Compensation Learnings for Grant Review

- **Compensation:** Members participating in grant review received a stipend for all meetings, interviews, and all grant review related time and activities.
  - Initial model: **\$200 flat-rate stipend** (set with Co-Chairs)
  - Adjusted model: Hourly structure
    - \$25/hour for grantee interviews (30 min each)
    - \$50/hour for prep & debrief meetings (1 hour each)
    - Compensation was also provided separately for sub-committee grantee discussions
  - **Why:** Recognized additional capacity required for members to meaningfully participate



# Equitable & Transparent Power Sharing

- **Council-led design:** Members co-created application, rubric, and timeline considerations
- **Shared decision-making:** Council determined funding priorities & evaluations.
- **Transparency:** Clear criteria and process shared with all applicants and members with the opportunity for feedback and integration at every stage.
- **Accountability:** Feedback loops built into the process allowed members to evaluate what worked, identify gaps, and recommend improvements for future cycles.
- **Equity in practice:** Centered lived experience voices in shaping and leading funding decisions



# Quality Improvement Considerations

- **Compensation:** Refined stipend model to reflect time and effort
- **Capacity:** Continued focus on optional and flexible participation to honor members' workload and sustain engagement
- **Training & Education:** Provide more targeted sessions (e.g., evaluation skills, topic specific trainings)
- **Process Feedback:** Gather member input after each cycle for ongoing refinement
- **Accessibility:** Maintain flexible scheduling and recordings to maximize inclusion
- **Equity:** Members shared they had “ownership” in the group to enact change and impact decision making.



# Group Activity

- **Grounding exercise:** Which value is most important to you in creating an equitable grantmaking process?
  - Choices:
    - Transparency
    - Equity
    - Flexibility
    - Co-Creation
    - Choose your own
- **Deeper reflection:** With these values in mind, imagine you're on a funding committee with limited resources.
  - What's one step you'd take to ensure equity and meaningful participation in your process?"

*"Even if programs or councils have people with lived experience or not, they might be listening, but not always. They're like, okay. But yeah, we're in control, though. So we'll see if what you are saying or advising fits into what we're already doing, which is not the case here. CommonSpirit is constantly showing. This is what we can do, but not directing, not saying, Okay, this is what I want y'all to do right. And I appreciate that there have been times when things have been brought up at the meetings. And then, you know, at our next meeting like that, there's already been so much work done in the background towards what a small discussion had started as is now. There's momentum behind it by the time we get to our next meeting and that's pretty cool. It's pretty cool to know that the input is being taken seriously. That is definitely one of the highlights."*



*Mark Castaneda,  
REACH! member*

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**For more on REACHI**, please see a short video [here](#).

