



Housing Profile

2020 Houston HIV Care Services Needs Assessment

Disclaimer:

This Housing Profile uses data from the 2020 Houston Area HIV Care Services Needs Assessment (approval pending). The 2020 Needs Assessment summarizes primary data collected from April 2019 to February 2020 from 589 self-selected, self-identified people living with HIV (PLWH) using either a self-administered written or electronic survey, or verbal interview. Most respondents resided in Houston/Harris County at the time of data collection. Data were statistically weighted for sex at birth, primary race/ethnicity, and age range based on a three-level stratification of HIV prevalence in the Houston EMA (2018). Though quality control measures were applied, limitations to the raw data and data analysis exist, and other data sources should be used to provide context for and to better understand the results. Data collected through this process represent the most current *primary* data source on PLWH in the Houston Area. Census, surveillance, and other data presented here reflect the most current data available at the time of publication.

Funding acknowledgment:

The 2020 Houston Area HIV Care Services Needs Assessment is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$24,272,961 and was not financed with nongovernmental sources. The contents are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.”

Incentives were provided by the Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group, Inc.

Suggested citation:

Housing Profile - 2020 Houston Area HIV Care Services Needs Assessment.

Approved: PENDING. Primary Author: Amber Lynn Harbolt, MA, Health Planner, Ryan White Planning Council Office of Support.

For more information, contact:

Houston Area Ryan White Planning Council

2223 West Loop South #240

Houston, TX 77027

Tel: (832) 927-7926

Fax: (713) 572-3740

Web: www.rwpchouston.org

HOUSING SERVICE NEEDS AND BARRIERS

As payer of last resort, the Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program provides a spectrum of HIV-related services to people living with HIV (PLWH) who may not have sufficient resources for managing HIV. The Houston Area HIV Services Ryan White Planning Council identifies, designs, and allocates funding to locally-provided HIV care services. Housing services for PLWH are provided through the federal Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) program through the City of Houston Housing and Community Development Department and for PLWH recently released from incarceration through the Houston Regional HIV/AIDS Resource Group (TRG). The primary function of HIV needs assessment activities is to gather information about the need for and barriers to services funded by the local Houston Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program, as well as other HIV-related programs like HOPWA and the Houston Health Department’s (HHD) prevention program. This Profile assesses the need, accessibility, and barriers to housing for PLWH in the Houston area.

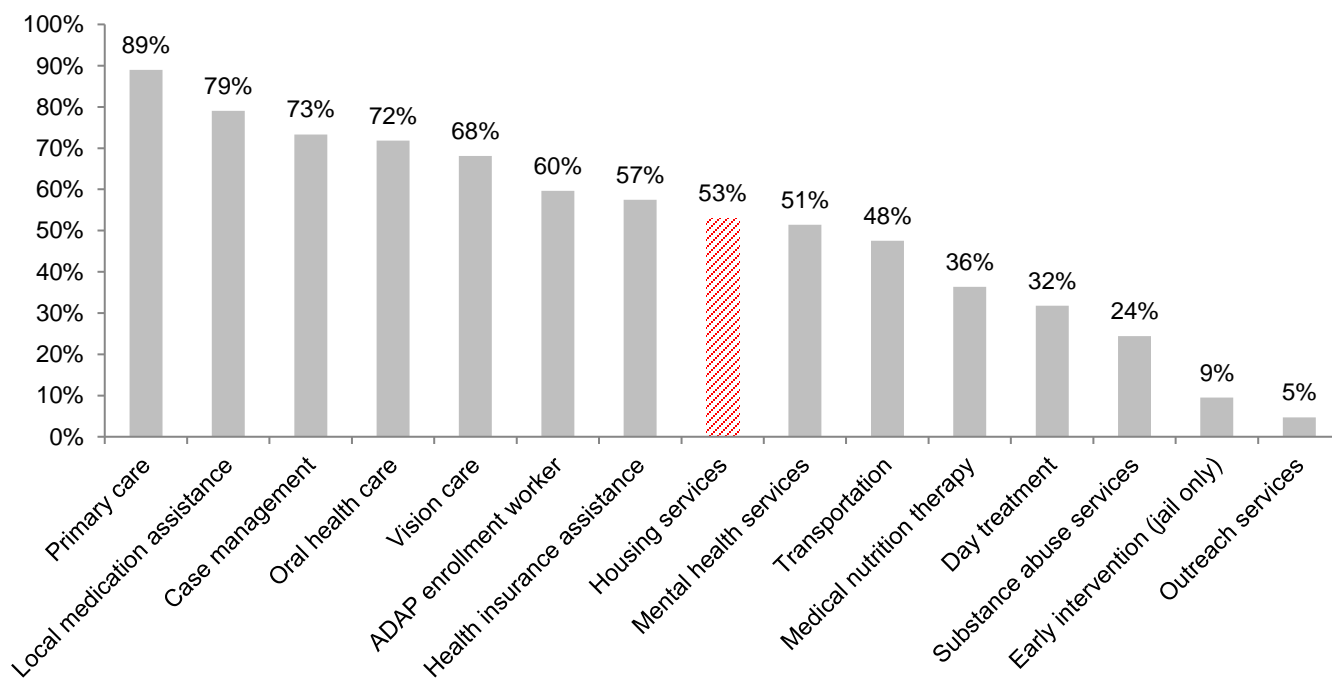
Overall Ranking of Housing and Funded Services, by Need

At the time of survey, 17 HIV core medical and support services were funded through the Houston Area Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program. For the first time, the 2020 Houston Area HIV Needs Assessment also collected data on the need for and accessibility to 10 additional services that are allowable under Ryan White, but not currently funded through Ryan White in the Houston area, such as housing services. Participants of the 2020 Houston HIV Care Services Needs Assessment were asked to indicate which of these funded and unfunded services they needed in the past 12 months.

(Graph 1) All funded and unfunded services except hospice and linguistics were analyzed and received a ranking of need. Housing services was identified as the most commonly needed unfunded service at 53% of survey participants indicating need. When ranked with currently funded services, housing was the 8th highest ranked for need. This places the need ranking for housing services before mental health services, transportation, medical nutrition therapy, adult day treatment, substance abuse services, early intervention services, and outreach services.

GRAPH 1-Ranking of Housing and Funded HIV Services in the Houston Area, By Need, 2020

*Definition: Percent of needs assessment participants stating they needed the service in the past 12 months, regardless of service accessibility.
Denominator: 569-573 participants, varying between service categories*



Overall Ranking of Housing and Funded Services, by Accessibility

Participants were asked to indicate whether each of the funded and unfunded services they needed in the past 12 months was easy or difficult for them to access.

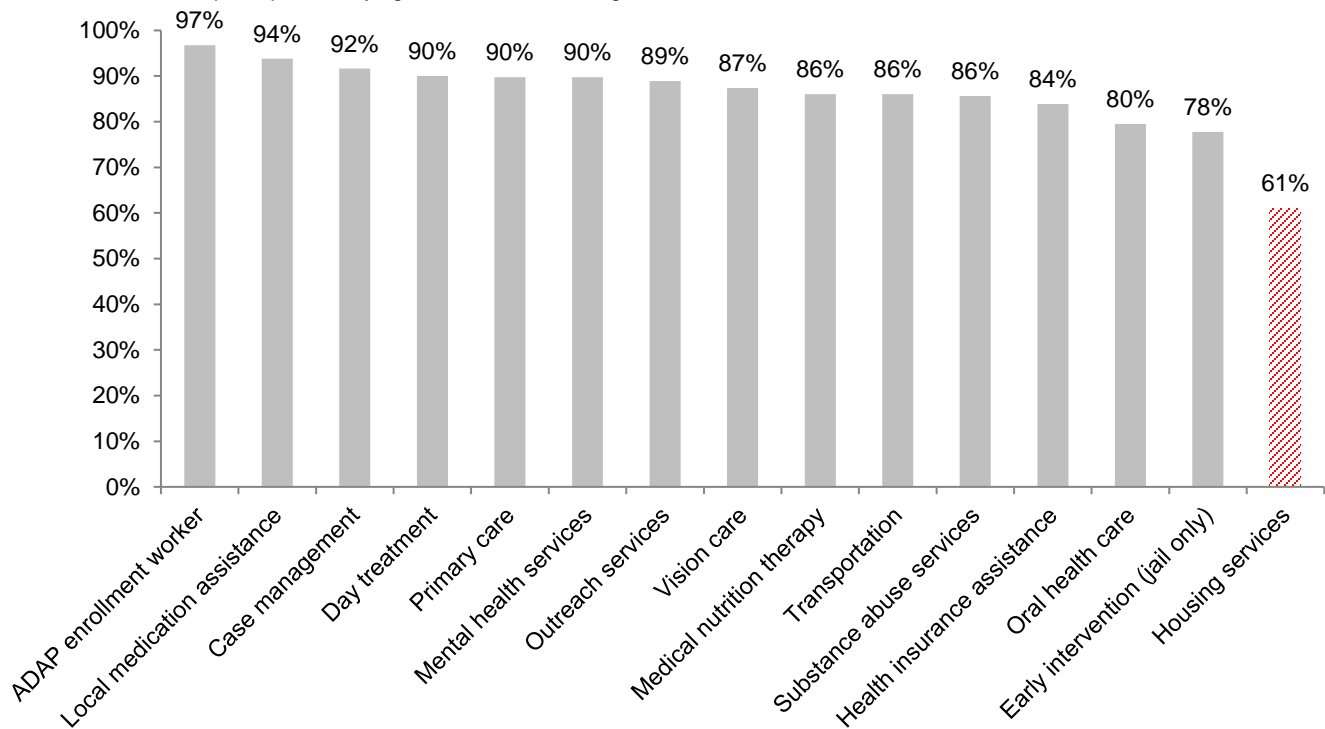
(Graph 2) All funded and unfunded services except hospice and linguistics were analyzed and received a

ranking of accessibility. Housing was identified as the least accessible unfunded service as only 61% of the participants who needed housing services found it easy to access. When ranked with currently funded services, housing the lowest ranked for accessibility. This places the accessibility ranking for housing services below every funded and unfunded service.

GRAPH 2-Ranking of Housing and Funded HIV Services in the Houston Area, By Accessibility, 2020

Definition: Of needs assessment participants stating they needed the service in the past 12 months, the percent stating it was easy to access the service.

Denominator: 569-573 participants, varying between service categories



Housing Services Need and Accessibility by Demographic Categories and Select Special Populations

(Table 1 and Table 2) Need and access to services can be analyzed for needs assessment participants according to demographic and other characteristics, revealing the presence of any potential disparities in access to services. For housing services, this analysis shows the following:

- More females than males found the service accessible.

- More Black/African American PLWH found the service accessible than other race/ethnicities.
- More PLWH age 25 to 49 found the service accessible than other age groups.

In addition, more transgender, homeless, and MSM PLWH found the housing difficult to access when compared to all participants.

TABLE 1-Housing Services, by Demographic Categories, 2020

Experience with the Service	Sex (at birth)		Race/ethnicity				Age		
	Male	Female	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	18-24	25-49	50+
Did not need service	48%	42%	53%	40%	55%	29%	70%	41%	53%
Needed, easy to access	31%	38%	24%	41%	24%	38%	30%	35%	28%
Needed, difficult to access	22%	19%	24%	19%	20%	33%	0%	24%	19%

TABLE 2-Housing Services, by Selected Special Populations, 2020

Experience with the Service	Homeless ^a	MSM ^b	Out of Care ^c	Recently Released ^d	Rural ^e	Transgender ^f
Did not need service	23%	52%	52%	22%	80%	28%
Needed, easy to access	35%	25%	32%	8%	3%	28%
Needed, difficult to access	42%	23%	16%	9%	17%	44%

^aPersons reporting current homelessness ^bMen who have sex with men ^cPersons with no evidence of HIV care for 12 mo.

^dPersons released from incarceration in the past 12 mo. ^eNon-Houston/Harris County residents ^fPersons with discordant sex assigned at birth and current gender

Barriers to Accessing Housing Services

Since the 2016 Houston Area HIV Needs Assessment, participants who reported *difficulty* accessing needed services have been asked to provide a brief description of the barrier or barriers encountered, rather than select from a list of pre-selected barriers. In 2016, staff used recursive abstraction to categorize participant descriptions into 39 distinct barriers, then grouped together into 12 nodes, or barrier types. This categorization schema was applied to reported barriers in the 2020 survey.

(Table 3) When barriers to housing services were reported, the most common barrier type was wait-related issues at 28% of reports, followed by education and awareness issues (24%), interactions with staff (13%), administrative issues (9%) and eligibility issues

(6%). Wait-related issues most commonly experienced were being placed on a housing waitlist (often in excess of 2 years) or being told a waitlist for housing was unavailable. Education and awareness issues were most often lack of knowledge about housing service availability or where to go to access housing services. Barriers regarding interactions with staff were most often poor or no communication from staff and staff who were not knowledgeable about area housing resources. Administrative issues were almost exclusively long, complex, or confusing processes required for accessing housing services. Barriers related to eligibility were most often having difficulty obtaining documentation needed for housing eligibility.

	No.	%
1. Wait-related (W)	31	28%
2. Education and Awareness (EA)	27	24%
3. Interactions with Staff (S)	14	13%
4. Administrative (AD)	10	9%
5. Eligibility (EL)	7	6%

ADDITIONAL HOUSING DATA

The 2020 Houston Area HIV Needs Assessment collected additional data relevant to housing needs, homelessness, housing instability, and housing quality. These additional data are presented below.

Housing Type, Homelessness, and Housing Instability

Participants of the 2020 Houston HIV Care Services Needs Assessment were asked to select on response for where they sleep most often from a list of 11 possible housing types. Participants were also encouraged to write in where they sleep most often if they did not see it listed among the housing type options. Another question asked they felt their current housing situation was stable.

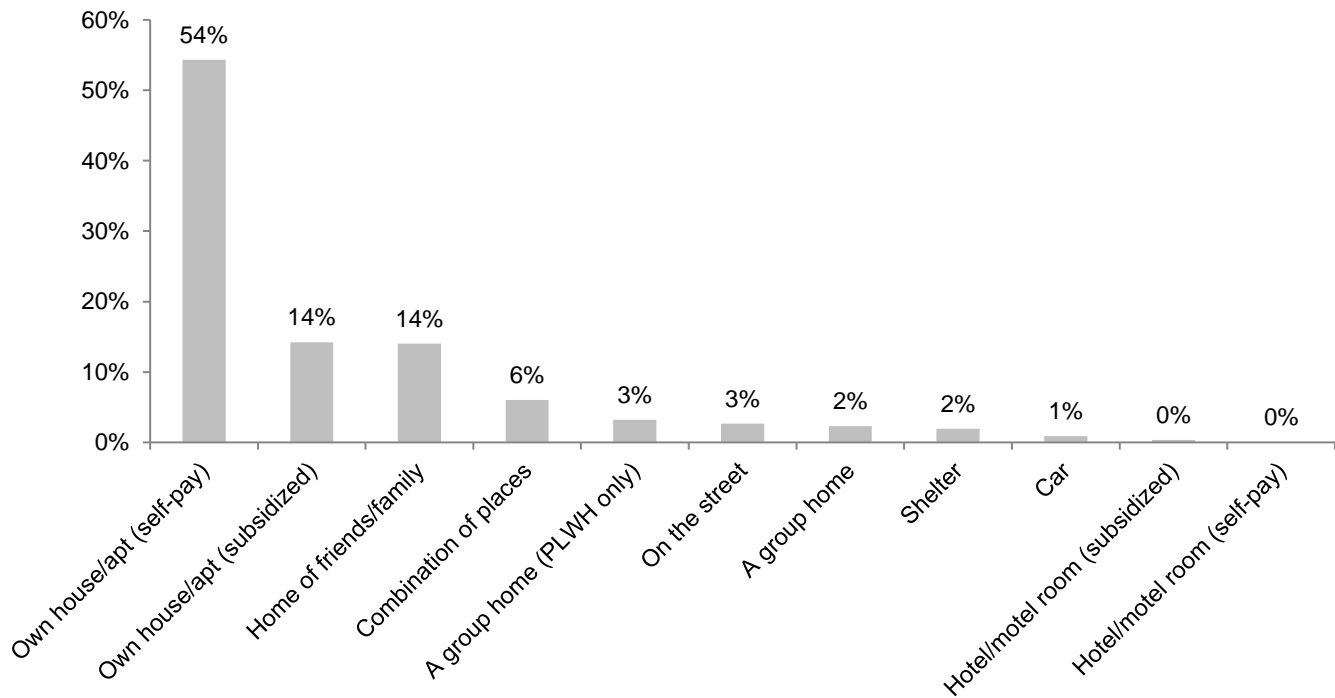
(Graph 3) A majority of participants slept most often in a house or apartment that they paid for (54%). This was followed by sleeping most often in a subsidized house or apartment (14%), staying with friends or family (14%), sleeping in a combination of places (6%), staying in a group home for PLWH (3%), or sleeping on the street (3%).

Participants who indicated they slept most often at a shelter, in a car, on the street, or in a combination of places that changes were identified as experiencing homelessness. By this metric, 11% of participants were experiencing homelessness as the time of survey. Regardless of housing type, 32% of participants indicated that they felt their current housing situation was unstable.

GRAPH 3 -Ranking of Housing Types for PLWH in the Houston Area, 2020

Definition: Percent of needs assessment participants stating they slept most often at each housing type.

Denominator: 563 participants



Current Housing Problems

Regardless of housing status and stability, other housing-related issues may present barriers to access and retention in care. Twelve-percent (12%) of participants indicated that their housing situation has interfered with them getting HIV medical care.

Participants were asked to indicate whether they were currently experiencing any of a list of housing quality, safety, or access issues. Participants were also encouraged to write-in any current housing problems, which at analysis were added to the list or condensed into existing options. Forty-percent (40%) of survey participants indicated they were currently experiencing housing quality, safety, or access issues.

(**Graph 4**) The most common housing problem participants were experiencing at the time of survey was poor housing quality at 26%. Examples given in the survey for poor housing quality were presence of mold or asbestos, exposed wires, broken windows, leaks, poor insulation, broken plumbing, or broken appliances. This was followed by having no privacy and feeling that possessions and medications were not safe (20%), being denied housing due to a past felony (14%), feeling unsafe or threatened at home (13%), and overcrowding (11%). Write-in responses with enough cases to justify inclusion in the list currently experiencing homelessness, struggling to pay rent/utilities, substance use in the home, pest infestation, stigma at home, and difficulties with landlords.

GRAPH 4-Current Housing Problems Experienced by PLWH, 2020

Definition: Of needs assessment participants stating they were currently experiencing problems with housing quality, safety, or access, the percent stating they were experiencing each problem.

Denominator: 328 participants

