I. Abstract

Homelessness, especially for the chronically homeless alcoholic individual, often results in high use of emergency services, depression, loss of hope, increased victimization, poor medical care of chronic conditions, and intense suffering for the individual affected. Proponents of the Housing First model believe that housing is a human right, a need, and should be made available to all for basic human dignity. The primary purpose of this study was to answer the question of whether a Housing First model example in Alaska has impacted healthcare utilization for this specific population. Data on hospital visit numbers and hospital costs were collected from both a tenant and a control sample, for the 2011-2013 period, from three area hospitals. Initial findings indicated there was higher outpatient healthcare service use for the tenant sample after obtaining supportive housing. The control sample also showed statistical significance for an increase in emergency services costs, which was not evident for the tenant sample. Future Housing First programs in Alaska may provide improved healthcare for individual tenants by increasing utilization of outpatient services.