



October 7, 2021

Washington State Department of Commerce
Housing Finance Agency and Healthcare Authority
King County Department of Community and Human Services
City of Seattle Office of Housing
A Regional Coalition on Homelessness

Re: Recommendation for Permanent Supportive Housing Certification and Capacity-Building

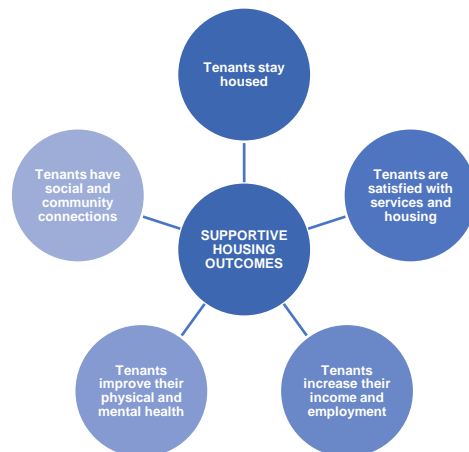
Dear Colleagues:

Supportive Housing is an evidence-based intervention that helps communities thrive by supporting people with the greatest needs to access and remain in housing. [Third Door Coalition](#) is a nimble, solution-focused group of business leaders, service providers, researchers, and others who seek to move beyond typically polarizing discussions around homelessness to create enough high-quality supportive housing to end chronic homelessness in King County. Only supportive housing that operates at a high level of quality and screens people “in” instead of “out” can achieve the outcomes we all seek. However, no common standards exist for supportive housing in our State.

Third Door Coalition recommends that the funders of supportive housing in Washington State implement the Corporation for Supportive Housing’s ([CSH](#)) Quality Certification program to ensure that our collective investments in supportive housing achieve their intended outcomes for tenants and communities. We also recommend the implementation of a capacity-building initiative to support the nonprofit providers who develop and operate supportive housing to ensure they have the infrastructure and supports they need to take their efforts to scale.

Since 1991, CSH has worked with communities to advance supportive housing as a provider of pre-developing financing, training, technical assistance, and policy support. CSH developed the national [Dimensions of Quality \(DOQ\) Supportive Housing](#) to help communities and providers understand what it takes to achieve the outcomes we all seek from supportive housing. The DOQ incorporate guidance and best practices from 15 authorities on supportive housing, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and all fidelity elements required by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and they take these elements a step further to ensure quality in both tenant-based and project-based supportive housing.

Certification: CSH’s Quality Certification ensures housing and services are: 1) tenant-centered, 2) easily



accessible, 3) coordinated among housing and service partners with shared goals, 4) integrated with voluntary services and community connections that honor tenants' identities and backgrounds and 5) sustainable over time to meet the outcomes illustrated in the diagram to the right.

CSH's Certification offers a third-party review of a community's portfolio at the application stage and every three years during the life of each project. This comprehensive review determines the degree to which tenant, community, provider and funder efforts align with national best practices and the evidence base for supportive housing.

Third Door is aware that CSH charges for the training and Certifications it provides; therefore, we advocate for public and private dollars to be leveraged in such a way to avoid imposing additional financial burdens on PSH providers as they prepare to meet these standards.

Capacity-Building: As Third Door and our partners work to increase the resources to take supportive housing to scale, we need to work collectively to ensure that the providers of supportive housing have what they need to scale their efforts. We are delighted that the Healthcare Authority is investing in a CSH Supportive Housing Institute to train developers, operators, and service providers to create new, high-quality supportive housing. We would like to see this type of training expanded and paired with technical assistance and direct contributions to providers to support them in increasing their staffs, developing back-office infrastructure, learning to bill Medicaid, and siting new housing.

Thank you for considering our recommendations. We would be happy to provide additional information and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

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Co-Chair, Third Door Coalition

Chad Mackay
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