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HUD awards grant to River Region Human Services to improve housing and services for families and individuals living with AIDS

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded \$1.3 million to River Region Human Services to offer permanent and transitional housing and support services to families and individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Provided through HUD's Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) Program, this project will also develop new cross program approaches in HIV care by creating an Integrated HIV/AIDS Housing Plan in the communities.

River Region will be collaborating with 2 other organizations to offer supportive housing to eligible candidates over the next three years. Ability Housing is a nonprofit focused on creating permanent housing for individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The Health Planning Council of Northeast Florida provides community planning and health assessment services to develop strategies for a healthier environment.

Grants funded under this initiative advance HUD's implementation of the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) and will demonstrate models for a next generation of improved coordination of housing and care for a vulnerable population. This better integration of housing support will also help achieve the Obama Administration's Opening Doors Strategy to prevent and end homelessness.

"River Region Services has successfully developed a community partnership to develop comprehensive solutions to improve health outcomes for persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families," said Valerie Feinberg, AICP, Director with the Health Planning Council.

"With this resource we can make our housing affordable to persons with HIV/AIDS who otherwise would be unable to afford a place to live," stated Shannon Nazworth, Ability Housing Executive Director.

"We will effectively and efficiently assist vulnerable households with HIV, and we will serve as models for others to improve health outcomes and reduce risks of homelessness," concluded Carl Falconer, Director of Housing with River Region.

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