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**REPORT FINDS PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS A SOLUTION TO HOMELESSNESS FOR MANY WITH SEVERE HEALTH ISSUES**

Burke, VA—Housing with supportive services demonstrates success in reducing homelessness and taxpayer costs, according to a new report from the Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH). An assessment of Virginia’s response to homelessness finds permanent supportive housing to be effective and decreases costs, yet continues to be an underused alternative for reducing homelessness.

“Expanding permanent supportive housing programs in Virginia can help end homelessness for those who are cycling between the streets, emergency shelter, jails and prisons, and hospitals,” said Phyllis Chamberlain, Executive Director of the Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness. “For many who have lived on the streets for long periods of time, permanent supportive housing is a life-saving intervention that can provide the stability they need to get off the streets for good.”

Permanent supportive housing combines affordable housing with support services to help people with severe disabilities live in stable housing and increase their self sufficiency. A study of existing Virginia programs showed high success rates with 85 to 100 percent of tenants not returning to homelessness.

Multiple studies have demonstrated cost savings to public systems such as hospitals, shelters, and the corrections system. A comparison of daily costs of Virginia Supportive Housing’s (VSH) program shows this type of housing plus services costs \$49 a day versus jail at \$70 per day or an adult psychiatric hospital at \$598 per day. VSH also found a 66 percent decrease in emergency room costs after people were living in permanent supportive housing.

Permanent supportive housing can help to end chronic homelessness for those living on the streets for long periods of time with mental illness, chemical dependency, and other long-term

disabling conditions. Permanent supportive housing is a permanent solution to stop the cycle of homelessness.

VCEH recommends a short-term goal of creating 1,000 new units of permanent supportive housing in the next three years — a modest beginning to moving towards a long-term goal of creating 6,800 new units of permanent supportive housing in Virginia. This number of new units will reduce taxpayer costs, end chronic homelessness, and reduce jail and prison recidivism. Permanent supportive housing can be expanded by using already existing housing and service programs and funds, as well as prioritizing permanent supportive housing with any new federal, state, or local funding.

Download the report *The State of Permanent Supportive Housing in the Commonwealth of Virginia* from <http://www.vceh.org/support.html>

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About the Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness: The Virginia Coalition to End Homelessness (VCEH) is the statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing and ending homelessness in the Commonwealth of Virginia through community collaboration, capacity building, education and advocacy. VCEH promotes the understanding that there are solutions to homelessness and works with communities to shift the response from short-term to long-term solutions to homelessness. Learn more at <http://www.vceh.org>