

2.06 *Tailoring Interventions and Partnerships for Older Adults Facing Homelessness and Abuse*



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Older adults experiencing homelessness often face compounding challenges including domestic violence, elder abuse, neglect and exploitation—which required specialized responses. This session will explore how tailored interventions, and interdisciplinary partnerships can support older adults at the intersection of homelessness or housing instability and interpersonal violence

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Ending Homelessness is Possible.



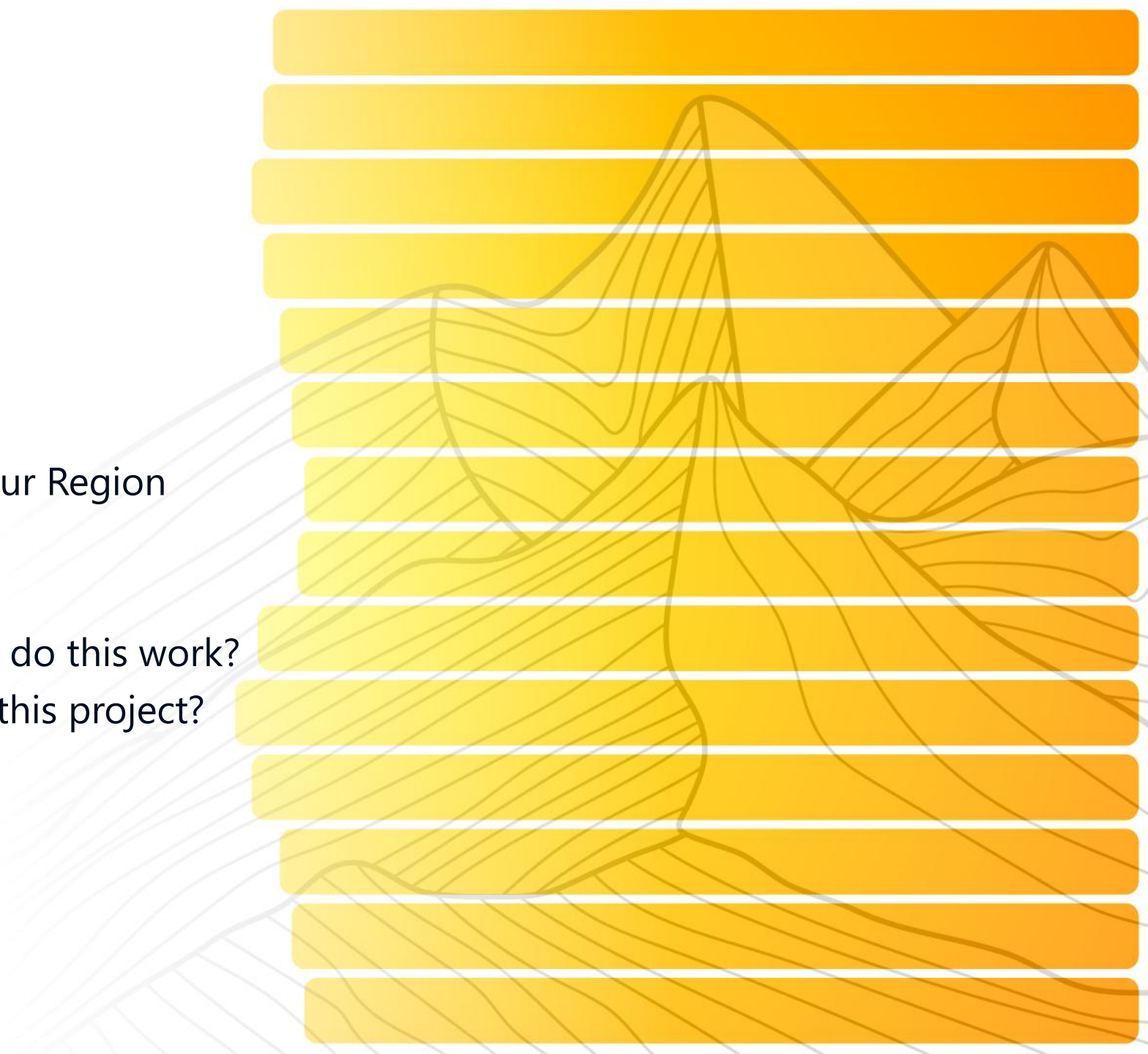
Session Overview

Homelessness & Elder Abuse in Our Region

Project & Partners Overview

Discussion

- How have partners changed to do this work?
- What has changed because of this project?



Among people responding to 2025 Point-in-Time Count, half were 50 or older.

- 75% male
- 64% African American or Black
- 71% reported 1 or more disabilities
- 81% insured by Medicare, Medicaid, or both
- 30.7% had experienced violence in their lifetime
- Top reason identified reason for homelessness:
Family/relationship breakdown (24.4%)
- 64.2% had visited ER and 64.8% had seen a doctor in the past year

Homeward, 2025

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Elder Abuse is also escalating.

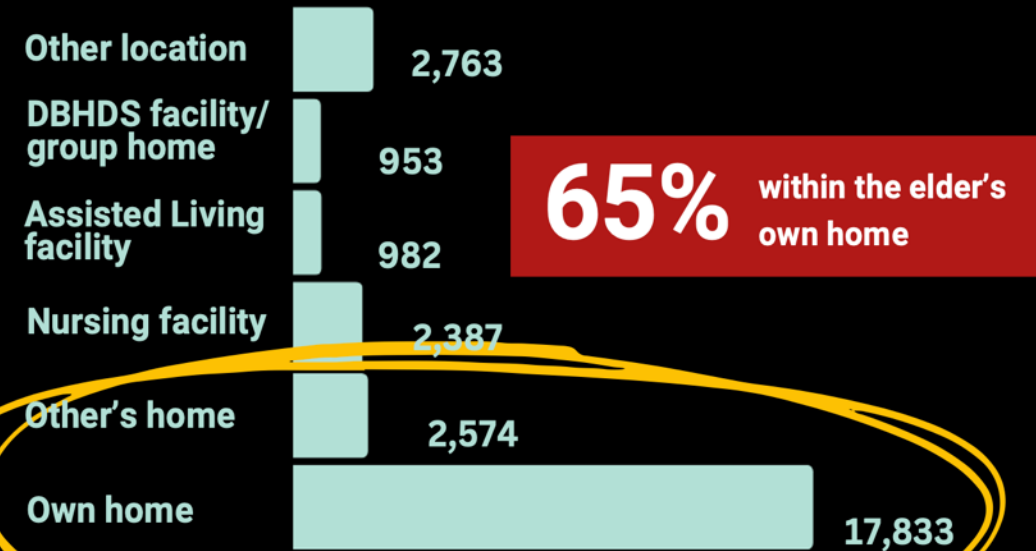
1 in 6 people 60 years and older experience elder abuse (1).

In Virginia in 2023 (2)

- 12,514 substantiated reports
- 77% of APS clients were aged 60 and older
- 23% were under 60 and had disabilities

Likely a vast underestimation of the true prevalence. Research suggests that only **1 in 24 cases** of elder abuse **become known to authorities** (3)

Where Elder Abuse Occurs



1. Virginia APS. 2024; 2. Storey, 2020; 3. Mikton et al. 2017.

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Our Innovation

Establishing, piloting, and evaluating an innovative **decentralized elder shelter model** serving the greater Richmond region.

This model will include **strategies for emergency and transitional housing** needs incorporating **support services** for older adults ages 60+, including those with disabilities, who have experienced abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Planning District 15

Where We Serve



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Communication, Collaboration, and Cooperation: A Public Private Partnership



Higher Education | State Government | Private non-profit
Working Together for Positive Change

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What is an Area Agency on Aging?

- **Established Under the Older Americans Act:** Created in 1973, AAAs implement federally funded aging programs at the local level.
- **Local Hub for Aging Services:** AAAs are community-based organizations that coordinate services to help older adults live in their homes and communities.
- **Support for Caregivers:** AAAs provide respite care, education, and support for family and informal caregivers of older adults.
- **Information & Referral:** AAAs offer guidance on local resources, such as transportation, meals, home care, and legal assistance.
- **Advocacy & Planning:** They assess community needs, develop aging plans, and advocate for policies that support older adults and people with disabilities.
- **Coordinating Systems of Care:** Like CoCs in homeless services, AAAs coordinate a network of service providers to ensure a comprehensive, person-centered response to community members, through No Wrong Door (NWD).
- **Local Planning and Resource Allocation:** Both AAAs and CoCs lead local planning efforts, assess community needs, and allocate federal and state resources to support essential services and fill service gaps.



AAA + CoC partnership

- Area Agency on Aging Homeless Connection Line staffing
- Shared training among staff from aging services + homeless services
- Personal care aide certification of shelter staff
- Case conferencing & supportive services
- Community advocacy



How We Are Changing Systems



1. Housing Strategy

Establish a person-centered, trauma-informed housing strategy with a continuum of partners.



2. Cross-Sector Service Protocol

Develop a service coordination protocol for elders experiencing mistreatment and homelessness.



3. Electronic Referral System

Develop an electronic referral system between homeless and aging services providers.



4. Volunteer Care Team Model

Develop a volunteer care team model to provide social and practical supports.



5. Workforce Support

Boost workforce support and training to decrease moral injury and moral distress.



6. Replicable Blueprint

Develop a replicable blueprint of a decentralized elder justice shelter model and protocols

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What we're learning:

- Wider contributing issues
 - Lack of housing options for range of preferences and needs
 - Cost of housing
- Personal care
 - Workforce shortage
 - Cost of care
- Critical need for cross-training and collaboration
 - Providers lack working knowledge of each other's roles, capacity, strengths
 - Normative/non-normative aging
 - Ageism v. Elderhood
 - Safety planning

Homeward, 2025

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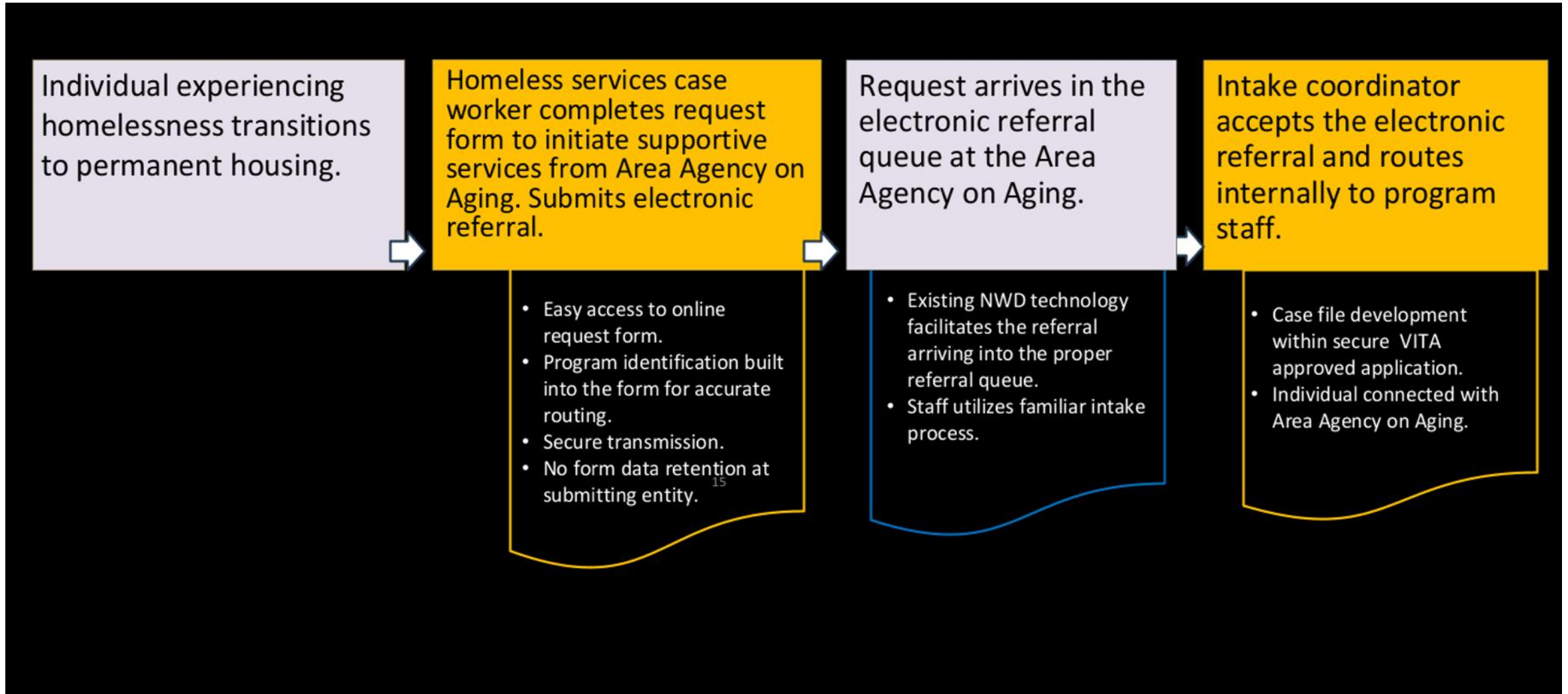
Data Informed Collaborative Action

- 
- Surveys, interviews, focus groups (needs & patterns)
 - Enhanced PIT count (50+ and 60+ data)
 - Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data
 - Uniform Assessment Instrument (UAI) data
 - Real-time Data: Moving 4 older adults into Section 202 housing
 - Responsive conversations

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Elder Justice Shelter Initiative E-referral Process Flow



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Responding Together: Innovation Through Partnership

Homeless Services

Longstanding evolving partnerships: trust
and high tolerance for ambiguity

Spotlighting the needs creates
opportunity for learning and advocacy

Aging Services

Public-private partnership leveraging
funding, solutions, and resources

Elder Justice Hub

Deepening relationships throughout
partner organizations

Systems coordination and innovation will
benefit the entire community

Shared priorities, values, opportunity, vision, community needs
Trust, pragmatism, transparency, and adaptability in practice



Ending Homelessness is Possible.

Would you like to learn more or connect with us?

Email us

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VCU College of Health
Professions

Gerontology and the Virginia Center on Aging

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SAVE THE DATE

***Virtual* Capitol Hill Day: September 17**



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