

INTRODUCTION



The Fort Lyon Supportive Residential Community was founded in 2013 to provide transitional housing and supportive services to homeless individuals from across Colorado, with an emphasis on serving homeless veterans. Situated on the historic Fort Lyon campus in rural Bent County, the program is a joint effort of the Colorado Department

of Local Affairs, Bent County and the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless. The program re-purposes the facility, stimulates the local economy and offers a supportive environment to individuals experiencing homelessness.

In Fiscal Year 2017, Fort Lyon served 541 individuals, including 77 veterans. Most Fort Lyon residents arrived on campus with multiple health conditions and no cash income after experiencing homelessness for more than a year. Through employment and vocational services, academic opportunities, case management, and recovery-oriented peer support, Fort Lyon retained on average 88% of residents each month. Upon discharge residents showed an improvement in their quality of life, as well as a reduction in the severity of their depression and anxiety symptoms. Ninety-five individuals secured permanent housing after discharge.

The following report details program information from Fiscal Year 2017, including total resident numbers, demographics, program participation, health and post-program housing stability.



KEY FINDINGS IN STATE FISCAL YEAR 2017:

Population Overview

- 541 residents served
- 88% average monthly retention rate

Resident Characteristics

- 68% of residents were over 45
- 60% of residents entered the program with three or more health conditions
- 85% of residents reported having a mental illness at entry
- 78% of residents were homeless 12 months or more prior to entering the program

Program Participation

- 64% participated in job training opportunities
- 31% participated in educational opportunities
- 92% of residents attended recovery-based peer support groups

Discharge

- 95 individuals secured permanent housing while enrolled in the program
- 103 individuals completed the program successfully

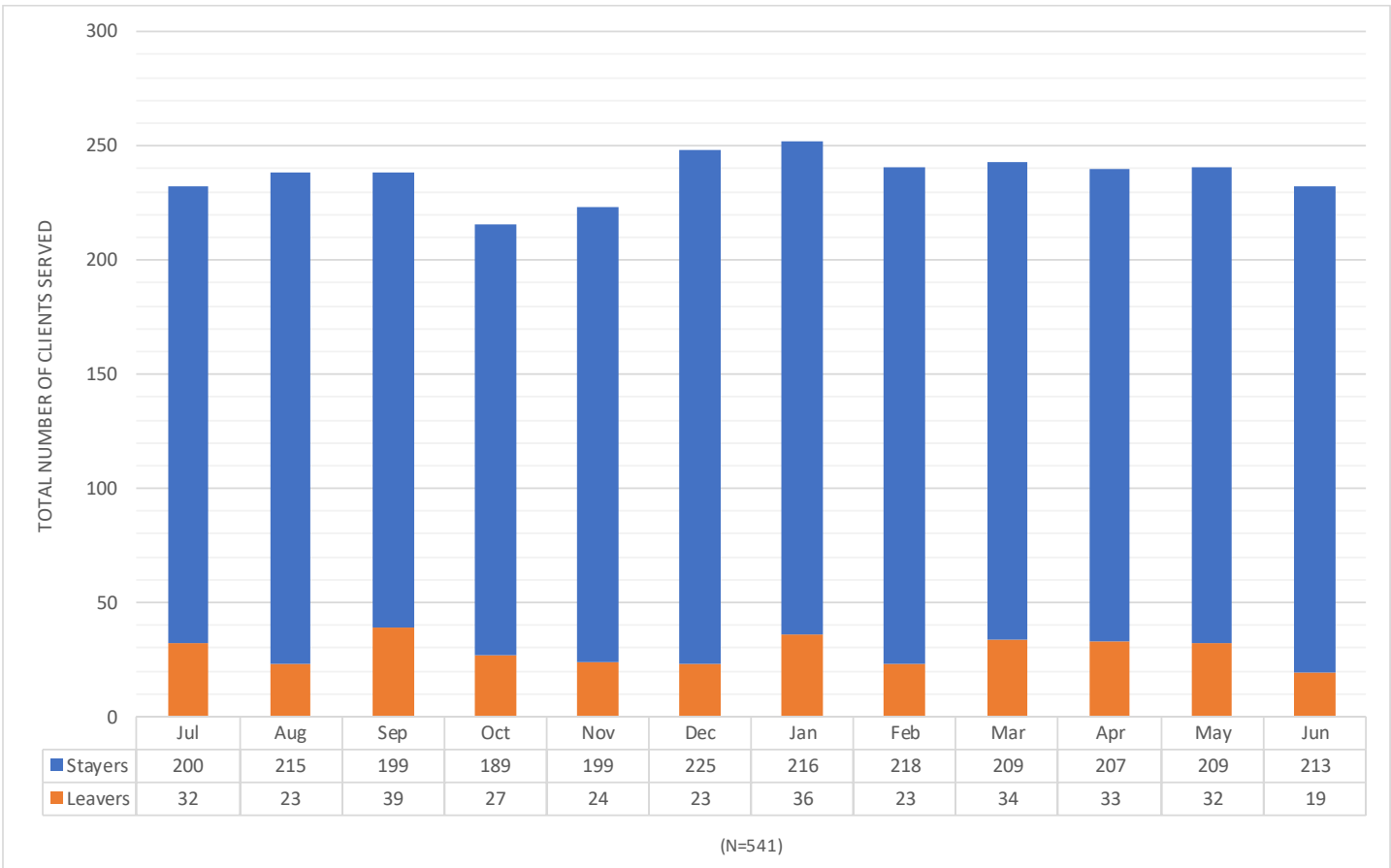
Post Program

- 95% of interview participants were stably housed six months after leaving the program
- 100% of interview participants who screened positive for illegal drug or marijuana use at intake reported a decrease in use six months after leaving the program
- 90% of interview participants who screened positive for depression at intake reported the severity of their symptoms fell by an average of 64% six months after leaving the program



POPULATION OVERVIEW

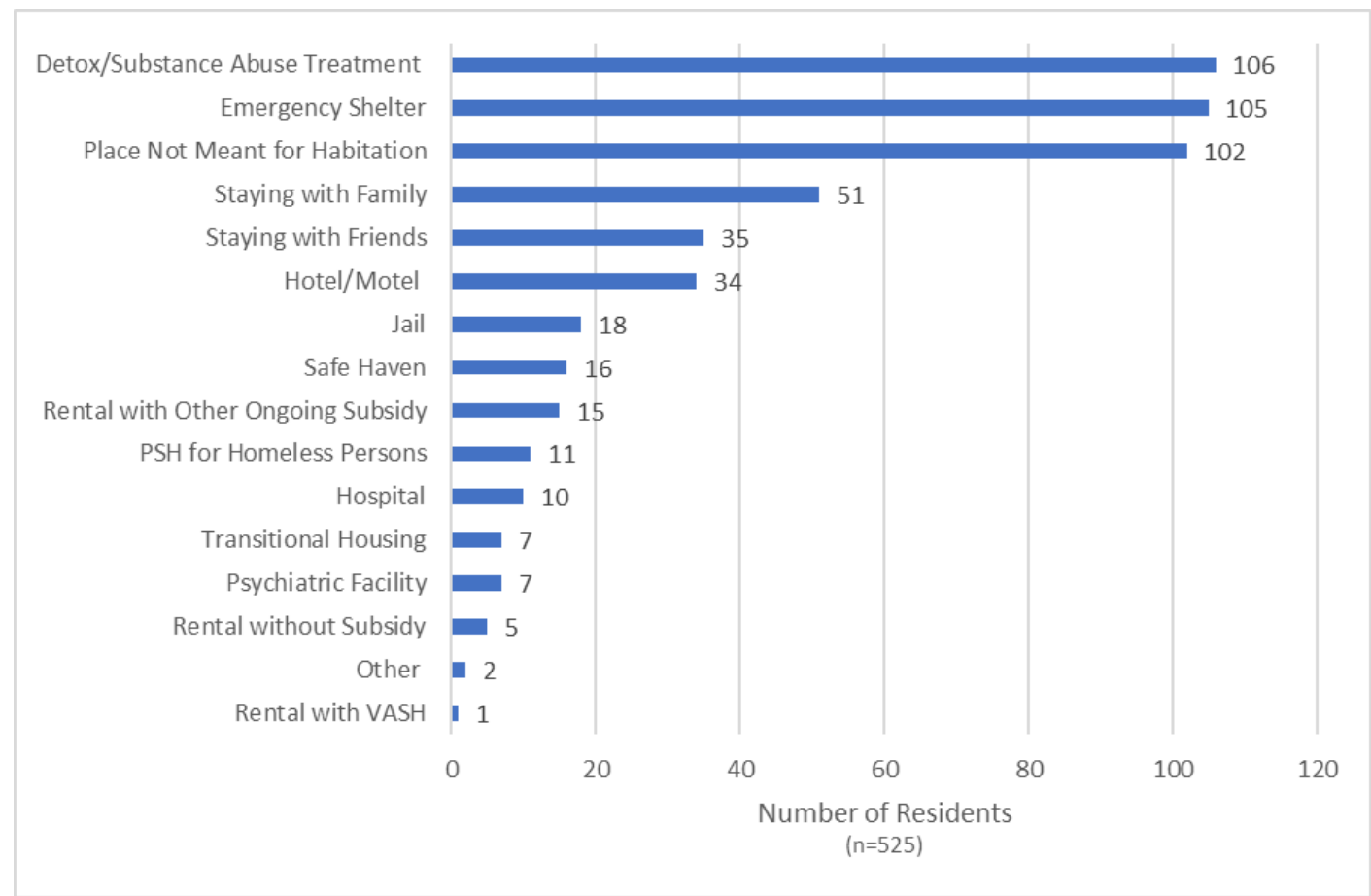
1 Total Residents (by month)



2 Length of Residency



3 Residence Prior to Entry



4 Length of Homelessness Prior to Entry

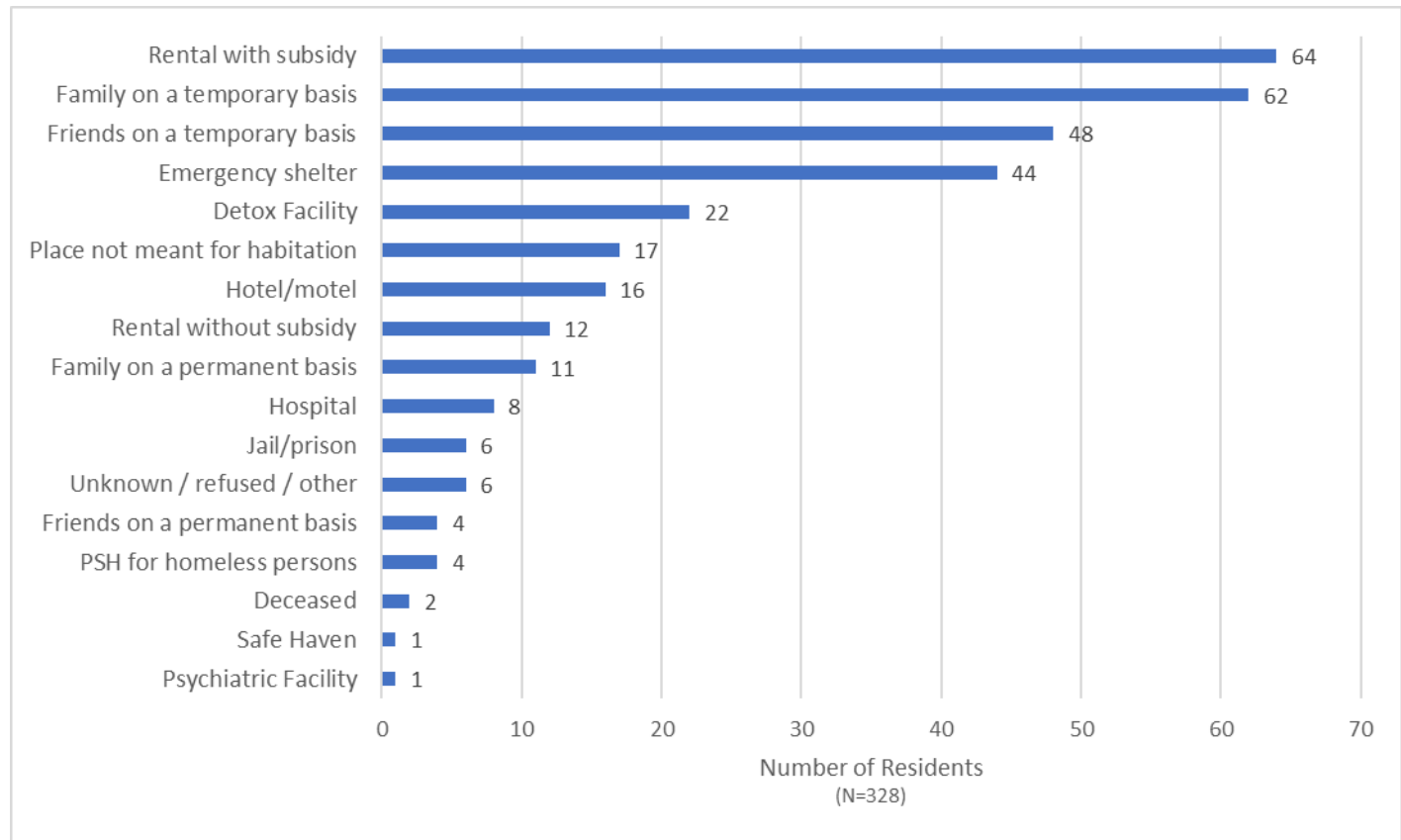
78%

of residents (267/341) were homeless for 12 months or more prior to entry*

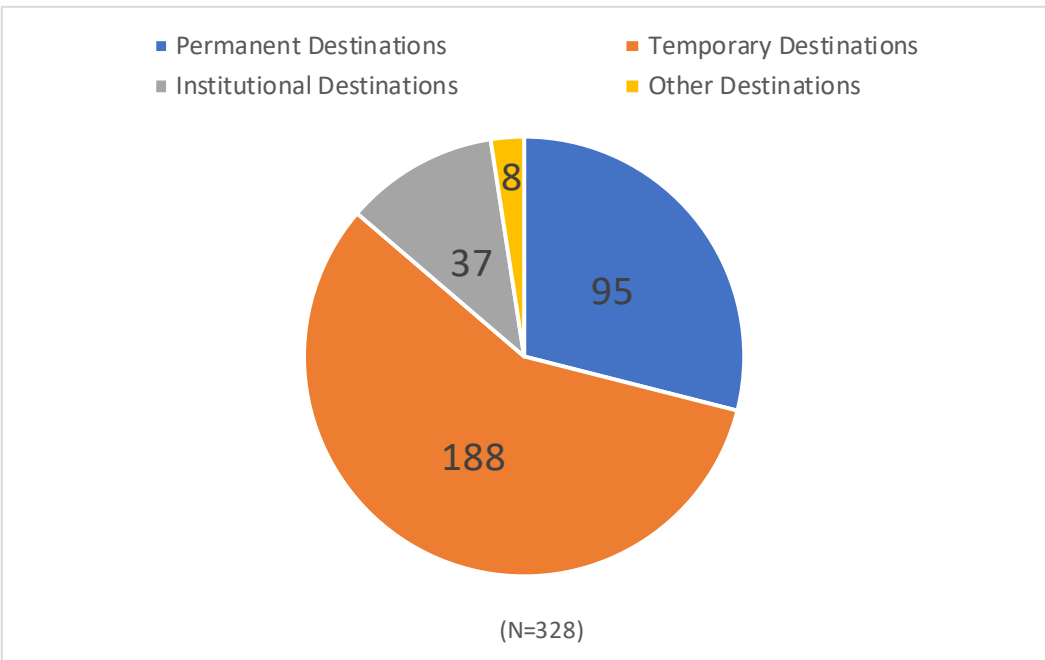
*Data available for 341 out of 541 residents

5 Destination at Program Exit

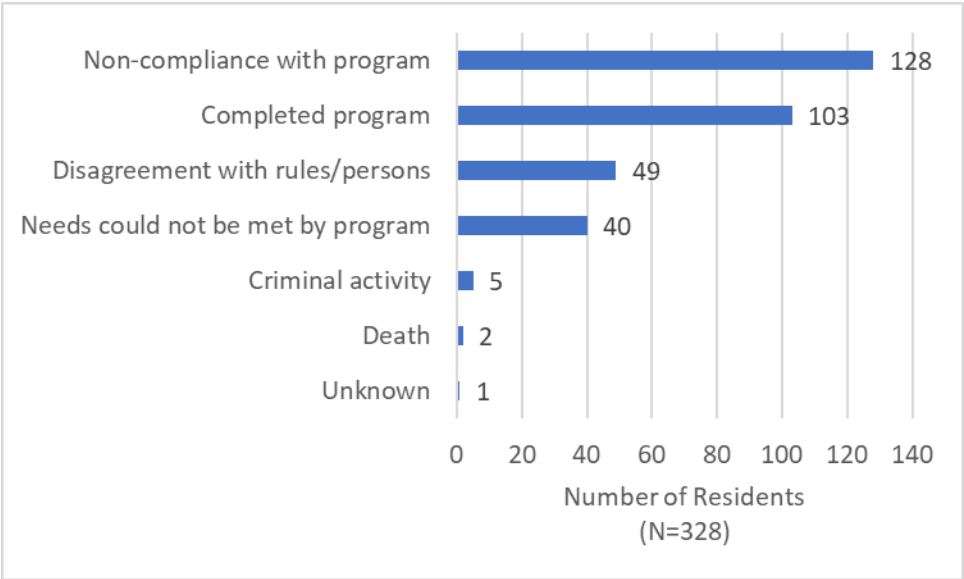
Destination at Program Exit



Resident Exits to Permanent, Temporary, Institutional and Other Destinations



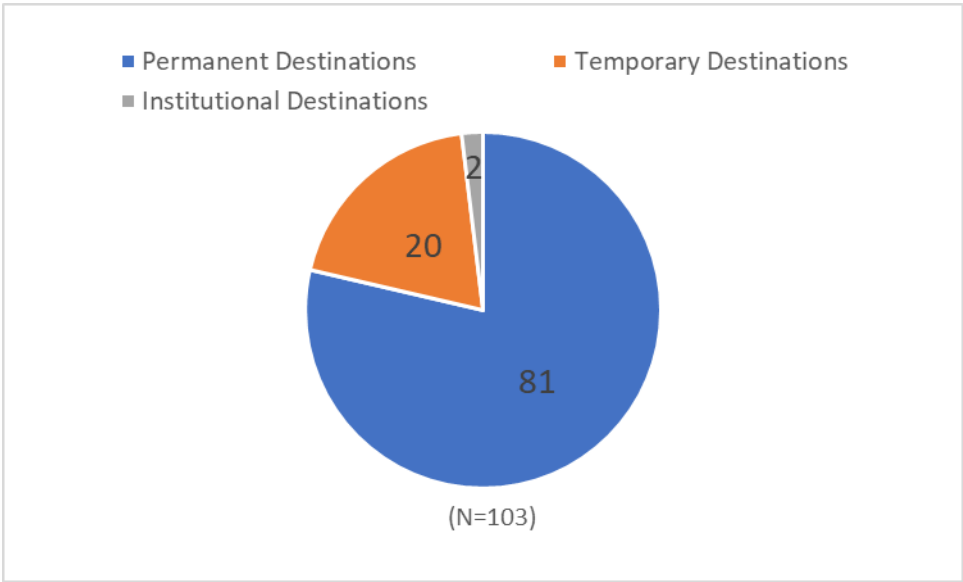
6 Resident Exits: Reasons for Leaving



103
residents completed
the program

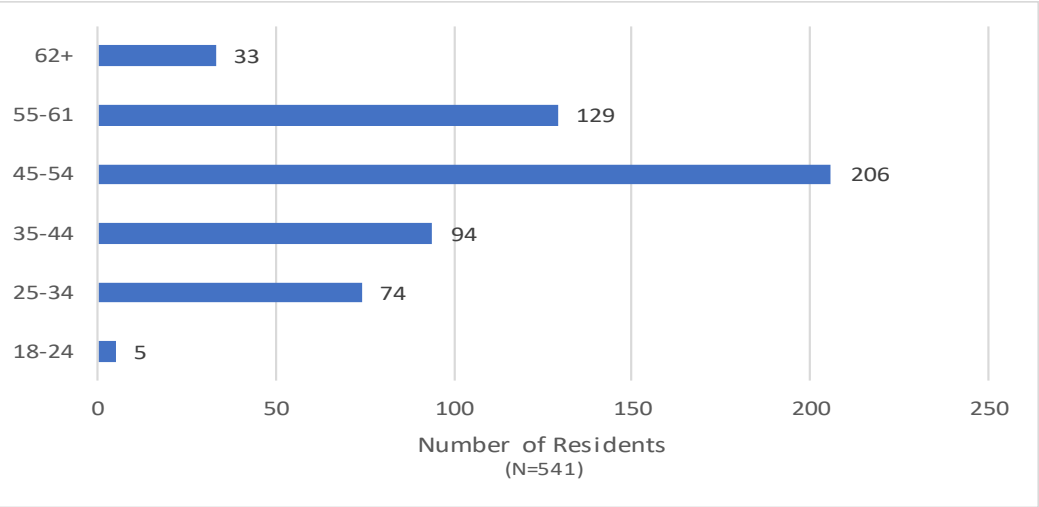
31%
of residents exiting completed the
program (103/328)

Exits to Permanent, Temporary and Institutional Destinations for Residents Who Completed Program



RESIDENT CHARACTERISTICS

7 Age



68%
of residents served
are age 45 or older

8 Gender



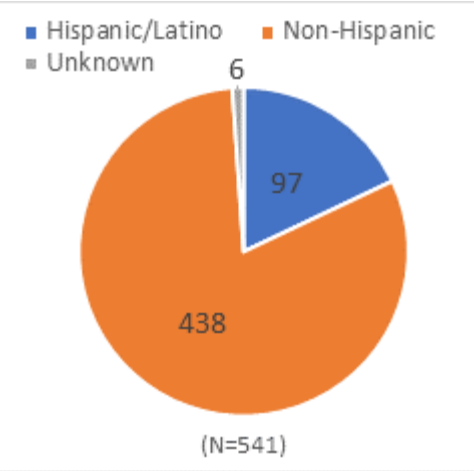
83%
of residents served
are male (449 men)



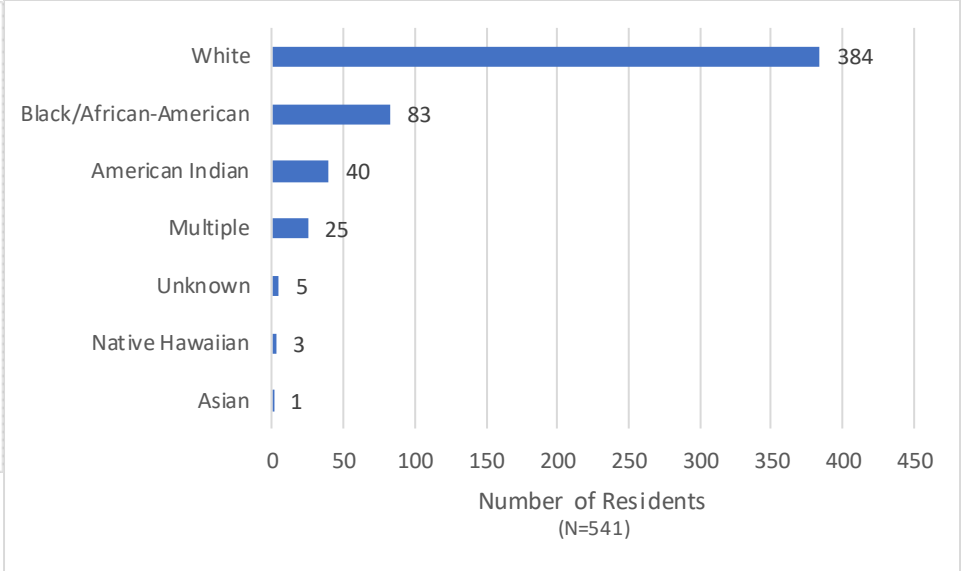
17%
of residents served
are female (92 women)

9 Ethnicity and Race

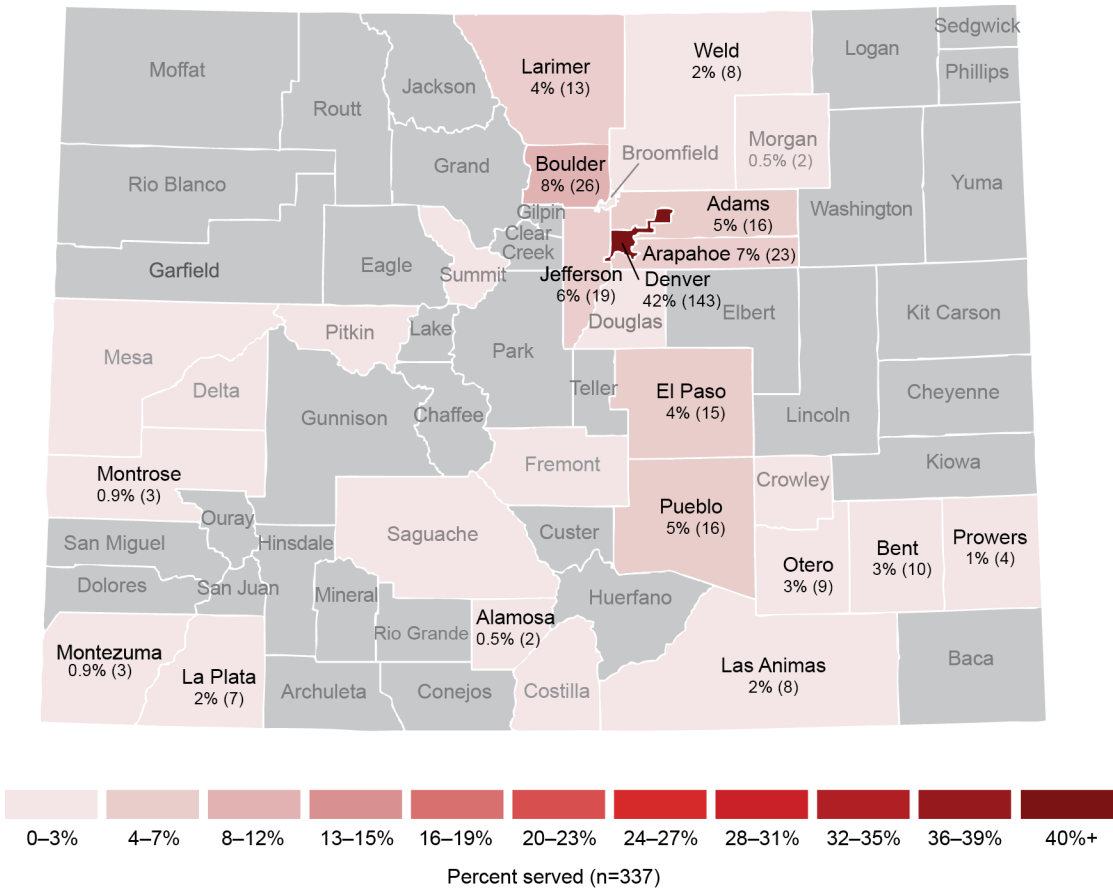
Ethnicity



Race



10 County of Origin



25

counties represented
among residents

39%

of Colorado counties (64) repre-
sented among residents

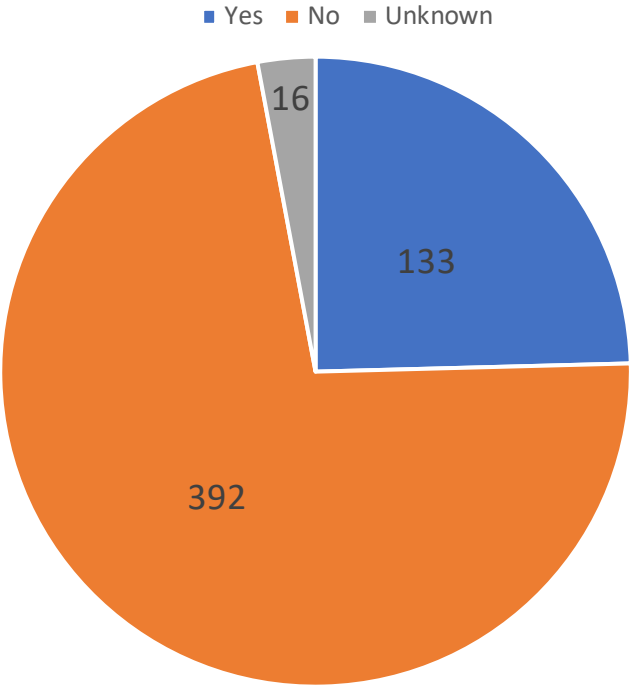
11 Veterans



14%

of residents served are
veterans (77 veterans)

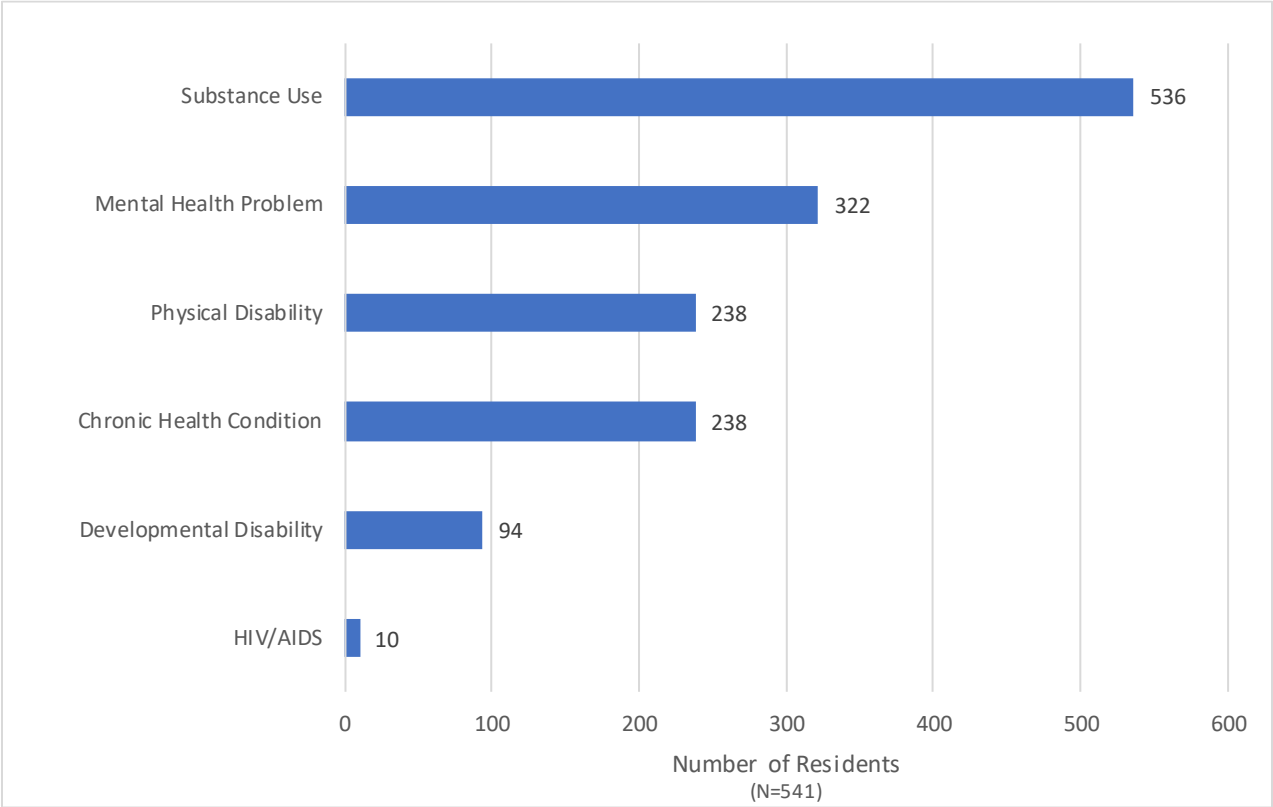
12 Domestic Violence Experience



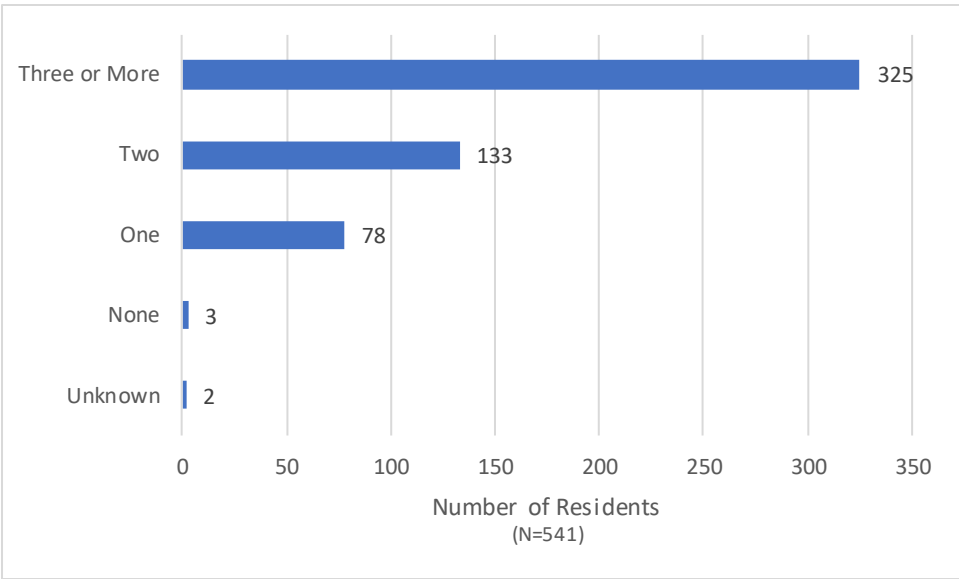
(N=541)

13 Physical and Behavioral Health Conditions at Entry

Known Conditions at Entry



Number of Known Conditions at Entry



60%
of residents enter
with three or more
health conditions

INCOME/BENEFITS SOURCES

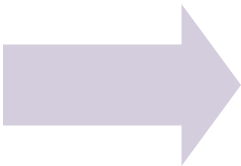
14 Cash Income Sources

Residents with Cash Income at Entry

Residents with Cash Income at Exit

36%

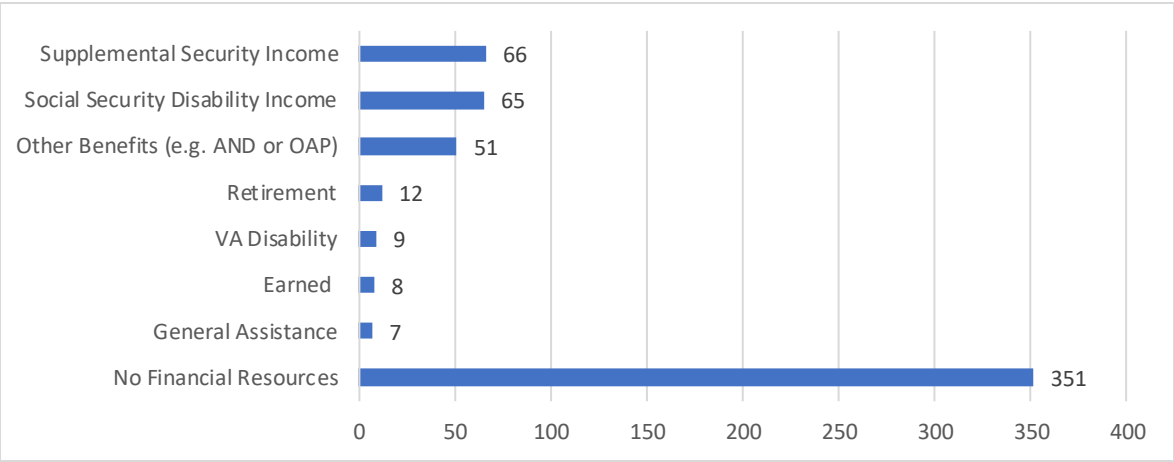
of residents have one or more cash income sources at entry



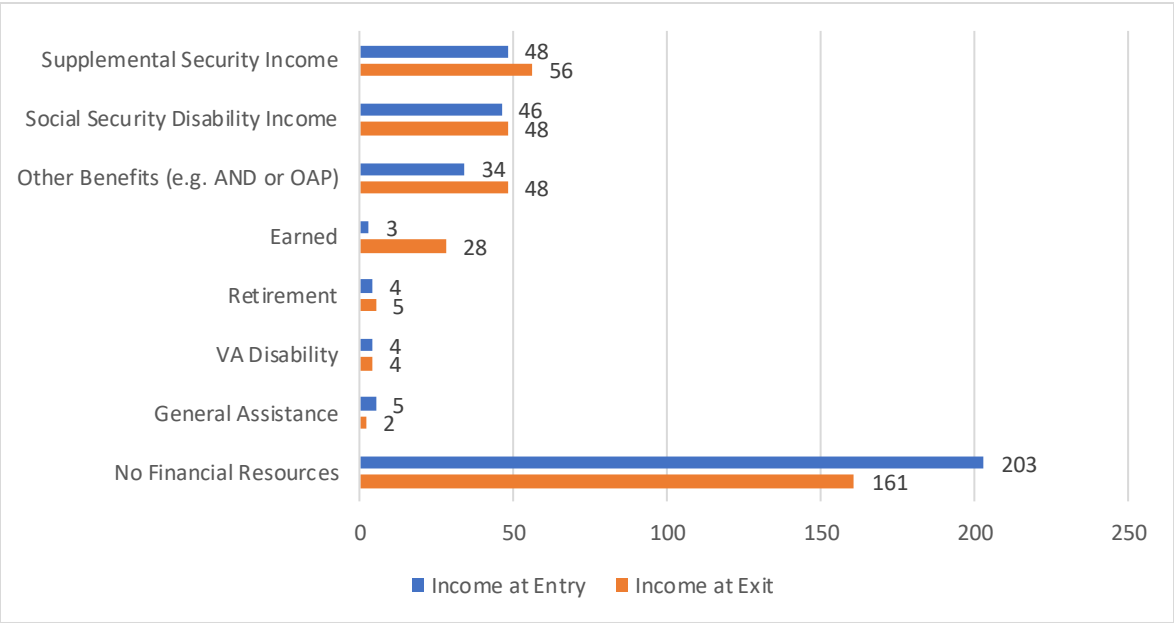
52%

of residents have one or more cash income sources at exit

Cash Income Sources at Entry

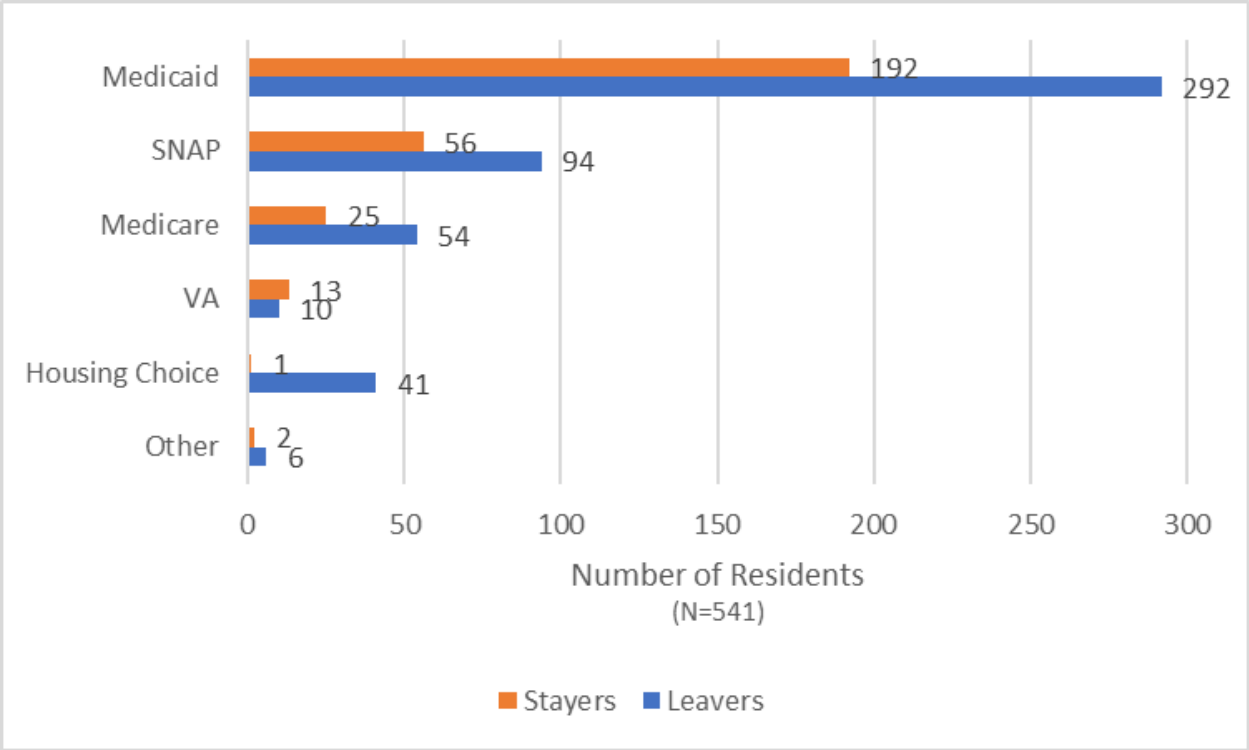


Cash Income Sources at Entry and Exit Among Leavers

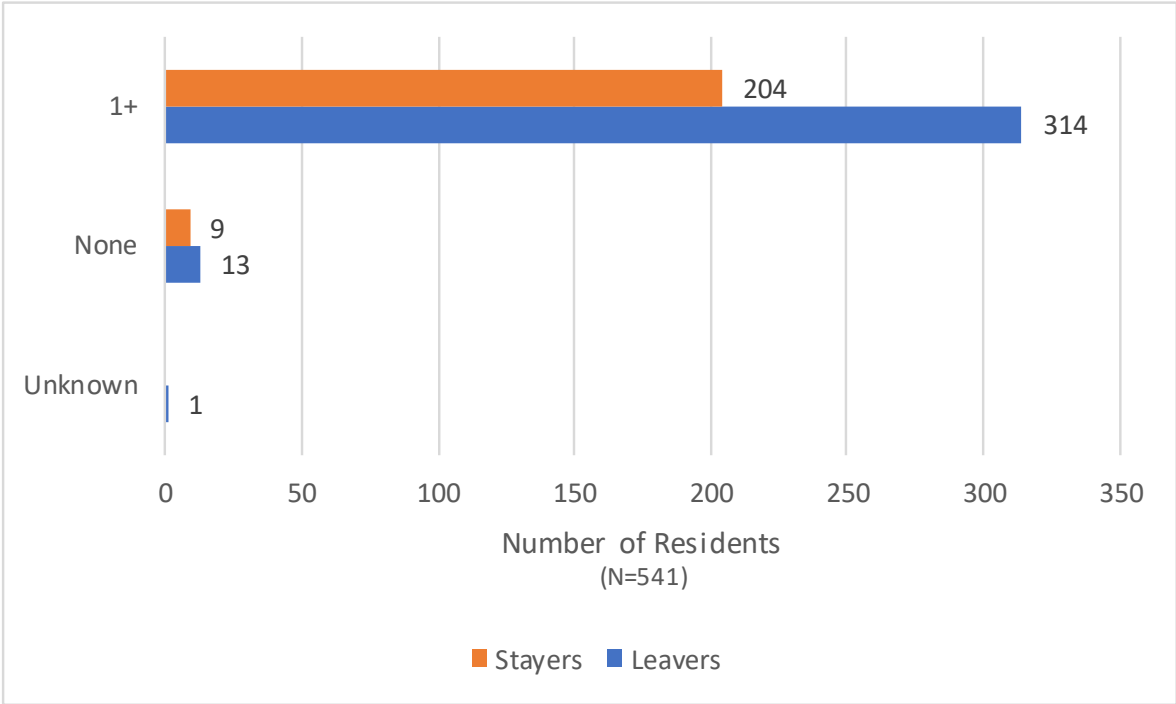


15 Non-Cash Benefit Sources

Type of Non-Cash Benefit Sources



Number of Non-Cash Benefit Sources



RESIDENT PARTICIPATION & ENGAGEMENT

16 Resident Participation and Engagement

Vocational Training

348

participants in vocational training

64%

of residents participated in vocational training

Educational Opportunities

170

participants in educational opportunities

31%

of residents participated in educational opportunities

Outside Employment

59

participants gained outside employment

11%

of residents participated in outside employment

98%

of residents served (N=541) were engaged in vocational, educational, employment, and/or recovery-based services

Recovery-Based Support Groups

498

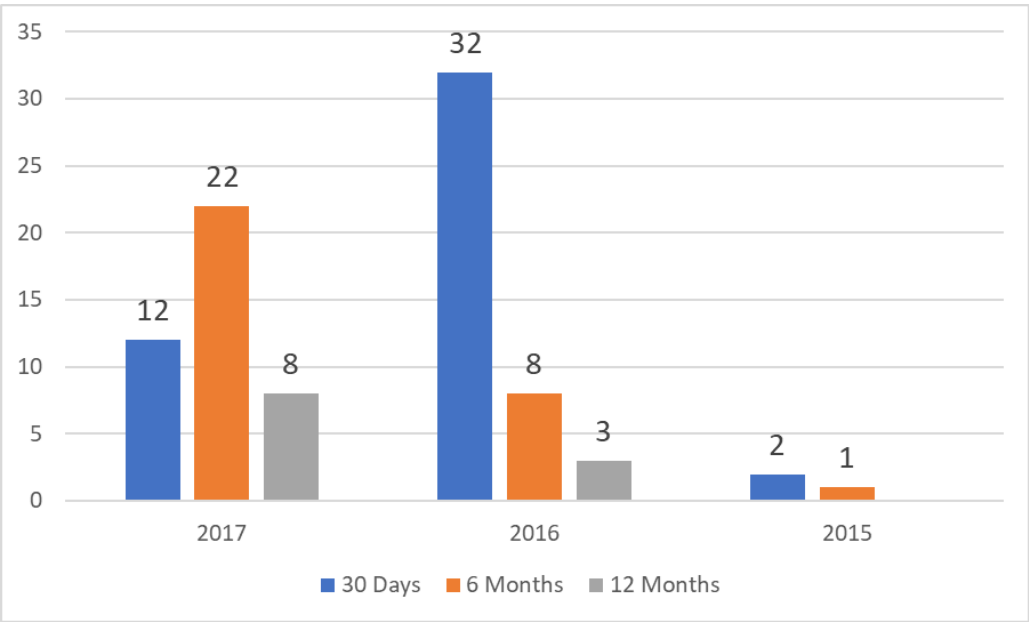
participants in recovery-based support groups

92%

of residents participated in recovery-based support groups

17 Post-Program Housing Status

Post-Program Interviews Collected



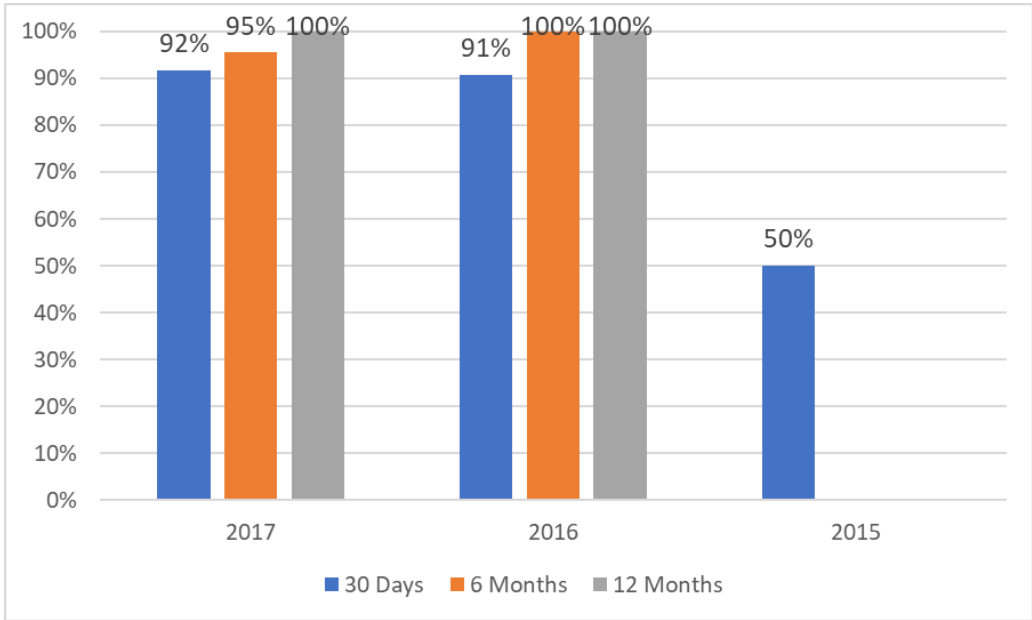
42

post-program interviews
were collected in 2017

88

post-program interviews
were collected between
2015 and 2017

Post-Program Housing Status



Former residents reported they
were housed at the time of

80%

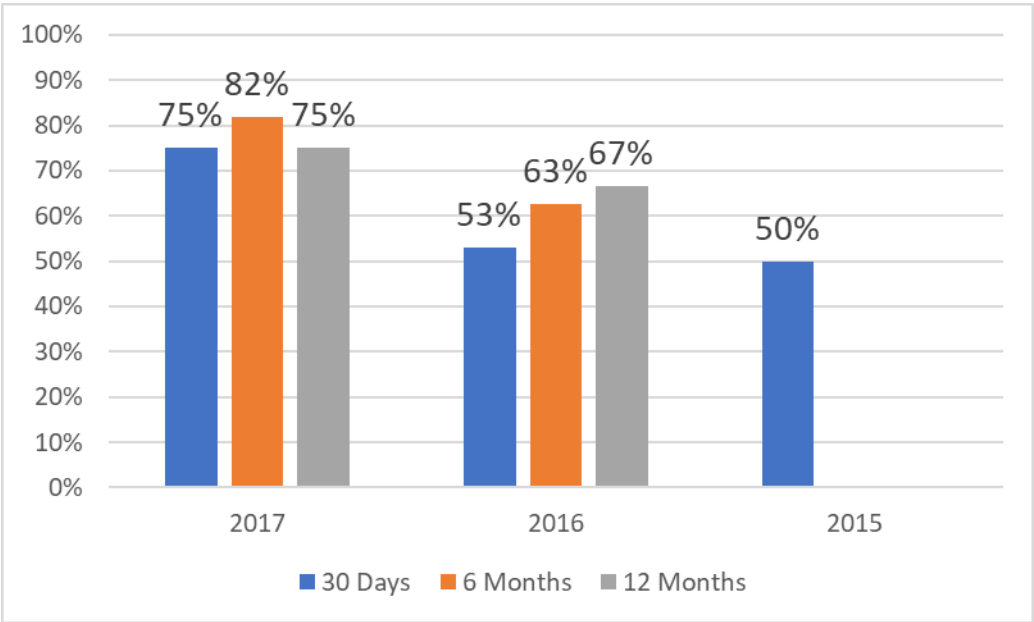
of post-program
interviews (70/88)

Post-Program Housing Stability

Former residents reported they were housed every day since leaving Fort Lyon in

66%

of post-program interviews (58/88)



18 Other Exit and Post-Program Outcomes

The following four tables summarize substance use, mental health and quality of life outcomes for residents who exited the program and/or completed a post-program interview during the fiscal year and cumulatively. In 2017, substance use decreased across all substance types at each interview interval among those who reported use at intake. Likewise, depression and anxiety symptoms declined among residents who screened positive for either condition at intake.

Quality of life scores for physical health, psychological health, social relationships and environmental health all improved at each interview interval. Social relationship scores in particular jumped dramatically, as many residents had a score of zero in that domain at intake.

The use of gift cards to provide compensation to former residents who take time to participate in post-program interviews had a positive effect on interview completion. The total number of post-program interviews collected doubled in the span of just a few months.

	2017				
	Baseline	Exit	30 days post	6 months post	12 months post
Alcohol Use in Last 30 Days Among Individuals Positive for Alcohol Use at Intake (GPRA)					
Number of Interviews	208	87	7	5	0
Mean Baseline Days	17.6	17.9 (n=88)	13.4	15.2	N/A
Mean Interval Days	N/A	0.8	2.9	0.0	N/A
% Whose Use Decreased	N/A	98.9%	85.7%	100.0%	N/A
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	-95.1%	-4.8%	-100.0%	N/A
Illegal Drug Use in Last 30 Days Among Individuals Positive for Illegal Drug Use at Intake (GPRA)					
Number of Interviews	104	51	5	6	1
Mean Baseline Days	16.5	17.4 (n=52)	13.4	15.8	0.0
Mean Interval Days	N/A	0.8	1.8	0.0	2.0
% Whose Use Decreased	N/A	98.0%	80.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	-93.6%	-77.3%	-100.0%	-93.3%
Marijuana Use in Last 30 Days Among Individuals Positive for Marijuana Use at Intake (GPRA)					
Number of Interviews	139	48	3	2	0
Mean Baseline Days	15.5	16.3 (n=49)	11.3	25.0	N/A
Mean Interval Days	N/A	0.9	10.0	0.0	N/A
% Whose Use Decreased	N/A	100.0%	66.7%	100.0%	N/A
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	-96.3%	-33.3%	-100.0%	N/A
General Anxiety Symptoms Among Individuals Who Screened Positive at Intake (GAD-7)					
Number of Interviews	190	76	8	8	4
Mean Baseline Score	16.3	16.3 (n=78)	14.8	14.5	18
Mean Interval Score	N/A	9.9	9.6	5.0	3.5
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	77.6%	87.5%	75.0%	100.0%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	-39.1%	-35.4%	-57.7%	-78.3%

	Total				
	Baseline	Exit	30 days post	6 months post	12 months post
Alcohol Use in Last 30 Days Among Individuals Positive for Alcohol Use at Intake (GPRA)					
Number of Interviews	339	89	7	5	0
Mean Baseline Days	17.7	17.8 (n=90)	13.4	15.2	N/A
Mean Interval Days	N/A	0.8	2.9	0.0	N/A
% Whose Use Decreased	N/A	98.9%	85.7%	100.0%	N/A
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	-95.2%	-4.8%	-100.0%	N/A
Illegal Drug Use in Last 30 Days Among Individuals Positive for Illegal Drug Use at Intake (GPRA)					
Number of Interviews	181	53	5	6	1
Mean Baseline Days	17.0	17.2 (n=54)	13.4	15.8	0.0
Mean Interval Days	N/A	0.7	1.8	0.0	2.0
% Whose Use Decreased	N/A	98.1%	80.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	-93.9%	-77.3%	-100.0%	-93.3%
Marijuana Use in Last 30 Days Among Individuals Positive for Marijuana Use at Intake (GPRA)					
Number of Interviews	207	50	3	2	0
Mean Baseline Days	16.3	15.9 (n=51)	11.3	25.0	N/A
Mean Interval Days	N/A	0.9	10.0	0.0	N/A
% Whose Use Decreased	N/A	100.0%	66.7%	100.0%	N/A
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	-96.5%	-33.3%	-100.0%	N/A
General Anxiety Symptoms Among Individuals Who Screened Positive at Intake (GAD-7)					
Number of Interviews	386	150	25	13	5
Mean Baseline Score	16.2	16.2 (n=152)	16.5	15.4	17.8
Mean Interval Score	N/A	8.74	6.2	5.6	2.8
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	82.0%	92.0%	76.9%	100.0%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	46.3%	59.3%	59.2%	82.7%

	2017				
	Baseline	Exit	30 Days post	6 months post	12 months post
Depression Symptoms Among Individuals Who Screened Positive at Intake (PHQ-9)					
Number of Interviews	171	77	6	9	4
Mean Baseline Score	17.9	17.7	20.3	16.4	17.8
Mean Interval Score	N/A	10.9	11.5	6.7	1.3
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	79.2%	83.3%	88.9%	100.0%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	-37.0%	-44.3%	-64.0%	-92.2%
Physical Health (WHOQOL)					
Number of Interviews	318	141	10	17	7
Mean Baseline Score	54.2	48.4	49.4	51.4	48.4
Mean Interval Score	N/A	54.9	56.5	61.9	54.7
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	61.0%	50.0%	64.7%	83.7%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	25.2%	39.6%	29.8%	17.7%
Psychological (WHOQOL)					
Number of Interviews	318	141	10	17	7
Mean Baseline Score	50.4	52.8	51.4	55.2	43.0
Mean Interval Score	N/A	62.8	63.2	73.3	69.7
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	66.7%	70.0%	64.7%	83.7%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	28.8%	28.7%	58.0%	91.4%
Social Relationships (WHOQOL)					
Number of Interviews	318	141	10	17	7
Mean Baseline Score	41.6	44.0	41.3	47.4	40.1
Mean Interval Score	N/A	58.1	61.9	80.9	84.9
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	60.3%	70.0%	82.4%	71.4%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	336927.6%	1000034.9%	588316.7%	1428775.9%
Environment (WHOQOL)					
Number of Interviews	318	141	10	17	7
Mean Baseline Score	44.1	46.9	46.4	53.9	47.7
Mean Interval Score	N/A	65.3	68.9	78.1	79.7
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	73.0%	90.0%	88.2%	83.6%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	66.3%	78.0%	86.9%	160.4%

	Total				
	Baseline	Exit	30 Days post	6 months post	12 months post
Depression Symptoms Among Individuals Who Screened Positive at Intake (PHQ-9)					
Number of Interviews	380	139	18	13	5
Mean Baseline Score	17.8	17.6	19.7	17.9	17.8
Mean Interval Score	N/A	9.6	6.8	6.8	1.4
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	82.0%	94.4%	92.3%	100.0%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	-45.6%	-64.4%	-64.5%	-91.5%
Physical Health (WHOQOL)					
Number of Interviews	649	260	35	24	9
Mean Baseline Score	47.5	48.2	48.1	49.1	50.1
Mean Interval Score	N/A	55.5	61.6	62.7	55.8
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	63.1%	65.7%	70.8%	55.6%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	27.2%	47.0%	43.5%	15.2%
Psychological (WHOQOL)					
Number of Interviews	649	260	35	24	9
Mean Baseline Score	52.3	52.59 (n=259)	50.6	52.9	46.0
Mean Interval Score	N/A	63.1	69.0	72.0	72.2
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	66.8%	71.4%	59.3%	88.9%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	34.1%	57.4%	70.8%	82.4%
Social Relationships (WHOQOL)					
Number of Interviews	649	260	35	24	9
Mean Baseline Score	41.7	44.2	44.8	41.9	41.0
Mean Interval Score	N/A	60.63	66.74	46.29	84.78
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	66.5%	68.6%	83.3%	77.8%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	324297.3%	660066.9%	1016729.2%	1111290.6%
Environment (WHOQOL)					
Number of Interviews	649	260	35	24	9
Mean Baseline Score	45.3	47.0	48.5	49.6	47.6
Mean Interval Score	N/A	66.3	73.4	78.8	83.6
% Whose Score Decreased	N/A	75.0%	77.1%	91.7%	88.9%
Mean Interval % Change from Baseline	N/A	76.7%	150.1%	145.9%	150.4%

18 Resident Profiles

Current Resident: Curtis

Curtis made a conscious decision when he came to Fort Lyon that this would be the turning point of his life. “The first few weeks [here] were very rough. I wasn’t liking life at all,” says Curtis, looking comfortable and confident while lounging back in a chair on the Fort Lyon campus. “But the judge at Veteran’s Court was tired of seeing my face, and I was definitely tired of seeing his.” Curtis spent six years in the Army as a Combat Engineer in South Korea and bases across the United States with his last assignment in Colorado. After a number of hardships, including the passing of his second wife, Curtis began using crystal meth. He struggled with addiction for three years before seeking support to get clean at a sober living community in Colorado Springs.

Other veterans in Colorado Springs first told him about Fort Lyon, saying it is a program that focuses on PTSD and accommodates many veterans from across the state experiencing homelessness and addiction like Curtis. Since Army veterans are the only family Curtis has ever known, Fort Lyon seemed like the perfect fit.



Curtis decided that in order to commit himself to the Fort Lyon program, he would need to be true to himself. He jumped into the program fully, engaging in work modules on the campus, and even began fixing computers for other residents as a hobby. One of the best ways for him to work on his recovery was to think less about himself and more about others around him, and fixing computers was his way of showing that. Years prior, Curtis attended seminary school and worked in compassion ministry—he knew how to shift his focus to caring for others and being an active member of society to make it better. On campus, fixing computers is his way of caring for others around him. Curtis acknowledges he sometimes has six or seven computers he is working on at once, but he enjoys it.

Outside, Curtis shakes the hand of a fellow resident walking by, waves to another, cracks a joke with a third. He is known throughout the campus by staff and residents alike. But in a few short weeks, Curtis will complete the program at Fort Lyon and move back to Colorado Springs where he will begin a work-therapy program that is offered through the Department of

Veterans Affairs. His plans are to work in IT where he can use his skills and be in a work environment that accommodates PTSD. His future looks promising.

“[Fort Lyon] was what I needed when I needed it,” said Curtis, who is looking forward to the next chapter of his life. A lifetime of tragedy, including becoming a runaway at the tender age of 14-years-old and losing two of his loved ones to devastating diseases as an adult, combined with his military experience and an otherwise challenging life on and off the streets, Curtis needed Fort Lyon to close a chapter of trauma and start fresh.

Current Resident: Jamie

In the fall of 2016, Jamie was in a San Luis Valley prison for a drug-related offense when he first heard about Fort Lyon. That December, Jamie got lucky. The judge overseeing his case released him and gave him a chance at Fort Lyon.

For over a decade, Jamie experienced the symptoms of a severe and persistent mental illness while going in and out of correctional facilities and psychiatric hospitals. However, those challenges have not stopped him from becoming one of the most active residents at Fort Lyon.

The adjustment was hard at first. Jamie was put on a behavioral plan early in his stay at Fort Lyon. Since then, he says, “I’ve done a complete 180. This is a gift. This is everything I needed.” Jamie regularly attends support groups on and off-campus, and he has become very active in the local church. Jamie also found a job that he enjoyed, but the long hours on his feet in the sun put his health at risk. He was having trouble adhering to his medication regimen.

It was a difficult choice, but Jamie decided to prioritize his mental health and sobriety by leaving his job. As a result, Jamie has been medication compliant for over a year, and he can really tell the difference. “When I get off

my medication, I feel good for a while, but then I go into an episode and get myself in trouble. Knowledge of your medications is key...I’ve made the decision not to go back to that life.”

Though he is not working at the moment, Jamie is set to start school this fall, where he plans to get his certification as a health navigator. He says, “I want to try to help people that have been in my shoes. I want to give back.” Jamie has already begun giving back by mentoring new residents and volunteering his time to the sweat lodge on campus.

Jamie has been clean for over a year and says that he takes things day by day. He lives his life by the mantra, “I am not the man I want to be. I am not the man I ought to be, but by the grace of God, I am not the man I used to be.”



Former Resident: Sarah

As a child, Sarah survived countless traumatic experiences, including losing her mother, fleeing an abusive father and living on the streets for years.

Sarah coped for decades by using drugs, but eventually the reality of her situation became too much and she attempted suicide. This dark moment became a turning point. Sarah decided to do things differently and two weeks later she was on the van to Fort Lyon.

Sarah says that when she first arrived on campus, “I was combustible and aggressive. I was angry and just mean.” After thirty days, Sarah started to transform. She began eating and sleeping normally, and even began to laugh and smile. “I started noticing that I wasn’t a bad person,” she reflected.

Eventually, Sarah decided she wanted to pursue an education, and she enrolled in the Psychology program at Otero Junior College. She explains, “I wanted to understand why I thought what I thought; I am a result of what lack of nurturing does to a child. I am a product of that.” Sarah is almost done with her degree, and hopes to help create a homeless services center in the Arkansas Valley and facilitate a women’s support group.

Life at Fort Lyon has not always been easy for Sarah. “When I first got here, I was frustrated because I didn’t get anything done. I was either in survival mode or combat mode.” Sarah says, “I was on restriction a large percentage of my time at Fort Lyon because of my conflicts with the other women.”

While Sarah was at risk of being discharged several times over her two years in the program, she worked hard to overcome the challenge of living within a sober community. She says, “I learned that it isn’t what happens to me, it’s how I respond to it. I still battle with my anger but I’ve learned meditation and I can deescalate myself.”

Sarah has now successfully completed the program and moved into her very own apartment in the Arkansas Valley. Sarah is active in the local church community, maintains her own jewelry business and plans to continue pursuing her Associates Degree.

Looking towards the future, Sarah says, “My dream and my goal is to financially, mentally and, in every other sense of the word, become independent. I want my legacy to be that, through my own desire and self-love, that I was able to accomplish and overcome all the things that had me bound and unable to see the beauty and talents in myself.”

