IMPACT OF THE HOUSING FIRST MODEL ON USERS WITH SUBSTANCE USE PROBLEMS

Results and key elements for resilience development in the Hábitat program

Roberto BERNAD
Research Context

Study for the National Plan on Drugs 2016-2017
Based on pilot evaluation of Hábitat program (2014-2017)

Objective
To analyse the impact of the Housing First approach on RESILIENCE as a main competence to confront addictions:
1. treatment adherence, compliance and recidivism
2. development of personal competences and strategies to confront substance abuse
3. effective use of the socio-sanitary services
Research Method

QUANTITATIVE

- Random assignment trial n= 82 (28 HF / 54 control)
- Semi-structured interviews every 6 months for 24 months

QUALITATIVE

- 3 Alcohol abuse Case studies
  - AHAH - Extinction of addiction
  - ANHU - Recidivism crisis
  - RAZA - Harm reduction
- Development of a specific tool (Strategies to confront substance use crisis) + Focus group with professionals
- Analysis of intervention strategies on addictions in international HF programs
Sample profile

80.4% men / 19.6% women

Mean age
47.5 years

Mean years when first found in homelessness situation
34.5 years

Mean homelessness trajectory 10.0 years
Substance users

% of participants using substances M0

- Alcohol: 17.6%
- Cannabis: 13.7%
- Heroine: 5.9%
- Cocaine: 9.8%
- Methadone: 7.8%
- Other drugs: 7.8%

% of participants using substances M24

- Alcohol: 27.5%
- Cannabis: 11.8%
- Heroine: 3.9%
- Cocaine: 5.9%
- Methadone: 13.7%
- Other drugs: 3.9%

% of substance users per group M0

- Alcohol: 33.3% (Habitat), 66.7% (Control)
- Cannabis: 28.6% (Habitat), 71.4% (Control)
- Heroine: 96.8% (Habitat), 3.2% (Control)
- Cocaine: 40.0% (Habitat), 60.0% (Control)
- Methadone: 50.0% (Habitat), 50.0% (Control)
- Other drugs: 25.0% (Habitat), 75.0% (Control)

% of substance users per group M24

- Alcohol: 50.0% (Habitat), 50.0% (Control)
- Cannabis: 50.0% (Habitat), 50.0% (Control)
- Heroine: 66.7% (Habitat), 33.3% (Control)
- Cocaine: 57.1% (Habitat), 42.9% (Control)
- Methadone: 100.0% (Habitat), 0.0% (Control)
- Other drugs: 100.0% (Habitat), 0.0% (Control)
Days of substance use

N. days of use last month M0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>Cannabis</th>
<th>Heroin</th>
<th>Cocaine</th>
<th>Methadone</th>
<th>Other drugs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M0</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N. days of use last month M24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>Cannabis</th>
<th>Heroin</th>
<th>Cocaine</th>
<th>Methadone</th>
<th>Other drugs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M24</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% days of use per group (last month) M0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>Cannabis</th>
<th>Heroin</th>
<th>Cocaine</th>
<th>Methadone</th>
<th>Other drugs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M0</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% days of use per group (last month) M24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alcohol</th>
<th>Cannabis</th>
<th>Heroin</th>
<th>Cocaine</th>
<th>Methadone</th>
<th>Other drugs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M24</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alcohol abuse M0-24

OPERATING HF ELEMENTS

Listening space

- It took months until AHAH assumed and expressed his addiction

Trustful not blaming client/professional relation

- It was after the recidivism crisis when ANHU told about death of wife and son

Leadership and self-determination

- RAZA sets an objective on physical recovery instead of on stop drinking
- AHAH’s own objective of visiting his family helps him to stop drinking alcohol
Housing stability

OPERATING HF ELEMENTS

Housing and coverage of basic needs

- AH AH sets the objective of stop drinking when he has a home from which plan a better future
- ANHU asks his brother for help, who comes and stays with him after the crisis
- RAZA involves neighbors in taking care of his home while on addiction treatment

Identity

- ANHU’s home allows developing a new identity but tension with previous one leads to recidivism
Social & Family Relations

OPERATING HF ELEMENTS

New relations or relinkage with family
- AHAH admires a peer program user who stopped drinking
- After crisis, ANHU establishes regular contacts with family as a support

Contact with other people on homelessness
- AHAH stops contact with former acquaintances from the shelters and homelessness resources
- RAZA stops contact with former relations when abstinent, then feels lonely at home and restarts drinking with them

Participation in community
- AHAH volunteers in homelessness resources
Health

OPERATING HF ELEMENTS

Control over service

- During recidivism crisis ANHU asks HF team for emotional support, calls the emergency services and sets an appointment with addiction service
- RAZA decides to join a peer support group
Quality of life

OTHER HOUSING FIRST ELEMENTS OPERATING ON RESILIENCE

- Internal locus of control
- Support as required (intensity/type/moment)
- Use of individual competences and external resources
- Satisfaction with achievements
Conclusions

- No relevant improvements in substance use for both groups
- Some people in both groups start treatment with irregular results

- Overall reduction of substance use in Habitat (nº people/nº days)
- Increase in abusive use in those who use (just alcohol)

- Housing is a key element for abstinence or stabilization processes
- Abusive use in HF does not affect housing stability
- Even when abusive use, HF facilitates Harm reduction through:
  - Components favoring resilience & other competences
  - Improvements in Quality of life
- Tensions in building new identity & relations affect addiction processes