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## Daily Reports

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## Daily Reports

THE COMPREHENSIVE SOURCE

### Kaiser Daily HIV/AIDS Report

Across The Nation | **Alabama HIV/AIDS Clinic Awarded Nearly \$1 Million in HUD Funding for Housing Program**  
[Dec 12, 2008]

The *Anniston Star* on Wednesday examined an almost \$1 million [Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) grant awarded to the [Health Services Center](#) in Hobson City, Ala., which is the area's only HIV/AIDS clinic. The not-for-profit center has provided transitional housing for people living with HIV/AIDS and their families in 14 counties since 2005, and the \$997,838 grant from the HUD's [Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS](#) program will go toward purchasing permanent housing units and supporting the existing units already owned by the clinic, the *Star* reports. Rita Flegel, housing program coordinator for the center, said the clinic owns three units in nearby Oxford that will be used for permanent housing. She added that the center hopes to use the grant money to purchase two more units in Anniston and one in Gadsden for a total of six units. She said that housing "is health care" and is the "basis of everything. If you don't have a place to sleep at night, it doesn't really matter if you're taking your medications or not."


The clinic said it will also use the grant to continue funding its Permanent Housing Plus program, which helps clients pay short-term rent, mortgage and utility bills. Flegel said that the clinic has "many working clients who are struggling to pay for the typical housing costs and cost of daily living -- just like so many people today." She added that additional costs for HIV/AIDS medications and illness-related absences from work can cause them to "run into a financial crisis quickly." Flegel said the grant "will help those people with a month of rent or a utility bill to help them get through the crisis."

Prior to the new grant, the Health Services Center's housing program was funded through a separate HUD grant, which helped 21 clinic clients receive funding for short-term transitional housing. The *Star* reports that 77% of the clients who left the transitional housing had moved into stable housing arrangements. Cindy Yarbrough, director of HUD's Birmingham field office, said that the clinic was awarded the new grant based on this "impressive" success rate and its previous record of effectively using HUD grant money. She said the clinic "demonstrated a need ... [and] a good program. Their past funding has been carried out wisely, and they've been good stewards of that funding."

The *Star* reports that Health Services Center was one of nine national HIV/AIDS housing programs to receive HOPWA grants, which totaled almost \$10 million and included programs in larger metropolitan areas such as Dallas, Chicago, Los Angeles and New York. Flegel said that Hobson City's inclusion among the agencies awarded grants "shows that the need here is just as great." She added that the issues the grant will address are "HIV and homelessness combined," which will

"provide a tremendous service not only for our clients but for the entire community."

According to the *Star*, the housing provided by the clinic is connected to intensive support service centers, providing clients access to medical care and case management. Flegel said the main goal of the program is to help people living with HIV become financially independent. "We want to help them learn how to live on their own," she said, adding that the grant "isn't going to bring in the needy people. The needy people are already here" (Buckner, *Anniston Star*, 12/10).

 An HUD press release about its recent grants is available [online](#).

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