

HOUSING FIRST PARTNERS CONFERENCE 2024

**José Ornelas**

Appsyci/ISPA-Instituto Universitário  
Lisboa, Portugal



# **Ecological Perspective in Individual Intervention: Towards a Purpositive Community Integration**

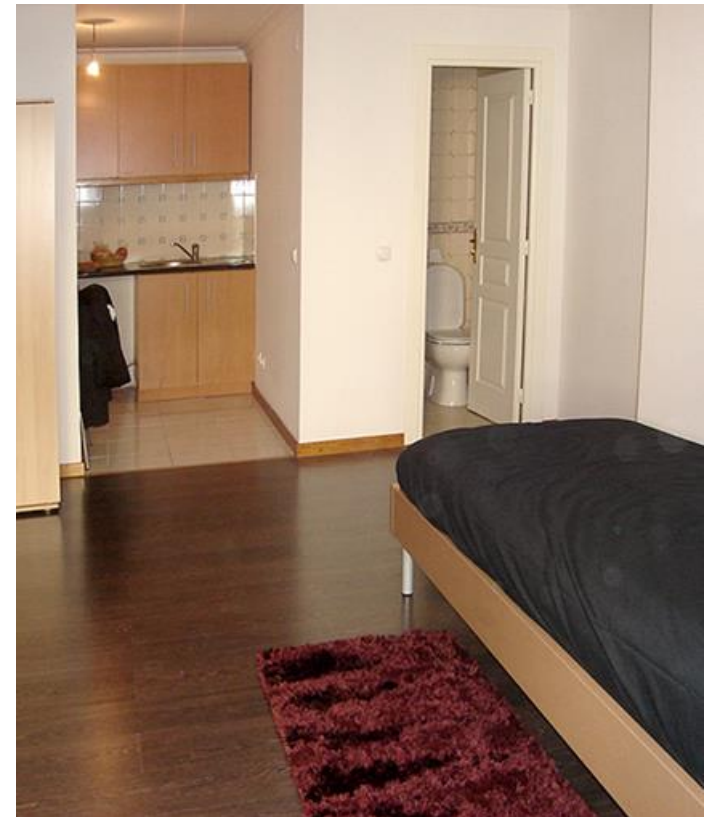
# HOUSING FIRST – CASAS PRIMEIRO PROGRAM

- Started in October 2009.
- Priority is given to persons who are long term homeless, sleeping rough, with multiple and complex needs (mental illness, substance abuse).
- No housing readiness and no treatment contingencies: people move directly to permanent housing.



# HOUSING FIRST – CASAS PRIMEIRO PROGRAM

- Permanent Housing.
- Independent Housing (individualized or family).
- Scatter site apartments in mainstream neighborhoods. Rental private market.
- 160 apartments



# HOUSING FIRST – CASAS PRIMEIRO PROGRAM

- Mobil team: provides services (7-24 on call)
- Ratio 1 staff to 10 participants
- Peers as service providers
- Focus on recovery and community integration
- Ecological and collaborative intervention



# RECOVERY AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

**Recovery:** a process of regain a new sense of identity and purpose, control and mastery in various spheres of life, and social participation (Deegan, 1988; Chamberlin, 2006; Fisher, 2006).

**Community Integration:** participation in all areas of community life, in the same way as other citizens:

- access to community resources, and meaningful activities (housing, employment, education, sports, culture, leisure)
- social contacts and relationships

(Nelson, Kloos, & Ornelas, 2014; Salzer & Baron, 2014)

# THE ECOLOGICAL PARADIGM OF RECOVERY AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

## Recovery and Community Integration should be understood in an ecological framework:

- To avoid the limitations associated with being exclusively focused on individual adjustment. A person's capability set depends not only on individual abilities but also on external conditions:
  - opportunities of contexts (material resources, social roles and significant activities, social relationships, community participation)
  - quality of relationships between people and contexts (hope, empowerment, social support, appreciation of diversity)

(Nelson, Kloos, & Ornelas, 2014; Salzer & Baron, 2014)



# HOUSING FIRST

## ECOLOGICAL LIVING ENVIRONMENT

- Housing in integrated neighborhoods, with access to diverse community resources, such as commerce and transports.
- Independent Housing: tenants choice about where they live and with whom they live.



- Independent housing and better quality of housing environment (apartment and neighborhood) are positively associated with housing stability, perceived choice, recovery and community integration.



(Greenwood et al., 2019; Martins, Ornelas, & Silva, 2016)

# HOUSING FIRST ECOLOGICAL AND COLLABORATIVE INTERVENTION

## Contextualist Intervention:

Team works in the natural contexts of the community to facilitate social integration processes.

- access to services and resources that are available to the general population
- increase the quality of tenants involvement in community life
- social contacts and natural supports (neighbors and other elements of the community)
- advocacy and cooperation with other community organizations and services



- Increased knowledge and enhancement of community resources
- Diverse, creative and context-adjusted solutions
- Sustainability of the intervention



# HOUSING FIRST ECOLOGICAL AND COLLABORATIVE INTERVENTION

## Collaborative relationship between tenants and staff:

- Choice and control over services: objectives and interventions are related to the tenants unique interests and preferences;
- Use of the resources and services that tenants consider most appropriate.
- Staff encourage and support tenants to evaluate different options and possibilities.
- Support is flexible and tailored to each person's needs and goals.
- Reciprocal learning: sharing information and knowledge, valuing tenants' knowledge and experience.



- Tenants capacity, empowerment and autonomy
- Sustainability of the intervention



VIDEO

# HOUSING FIRST: OUTCOMES

