

## **Supported Housing Benefits Homeless Vets**

VISN 1 MIRECC researchers have shown that housing vouchers combined with intensive case management reduces homelessness and enlarges the social networks of homeless veterans with mental illness and/or substance abuse. In this study, homeless veterans received one of three treatments: housing vouchers + case management, case management alone or standard VA care. This project was an innovative cooperative effort of the VA with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Combined housing and counseling resulted in 36% fewer homeless days and an expanded social network when compared with standard VA treatment. Intensive counseling without supported housing yielded no improvement over standard care. Notably, over the three year study period, homeless vets showed substantial improvement in psychiatric status and greater than a 50% reduction in homelessness in all three groups. This finding supports the value of standard VA care. The additional cost of intensive counseling and supported housing amounted to a modest \$45 per additional day housed. Because the intensive counseling by itself did not improve on standard care, the researchers suggest that supported housing and standard VA care may be sufficient to reduce homelessness at lower cost than the combined treatment used in this study. Overall, this study demonstrates the value of inter-agency efforts to coordinate mental health services with supported housing to address the needs of homeless veterans. The research group was led by MIRECC researcher Robert Rosenheck and included Yale researchers Wesley Kaspro and Wen Liu-Mares and University of Connecticut researcher Linda Frisman.