

Sharswood THRIVE

Philadelphia, PA

Background

Sharswood is a neighborhood in Philadelphia which holds some of the highest poverty, un-and-under employment and food insecurity in Philadelphia. To help address these issues, the urban revitalization of Sharswood was initiated by the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) in 2014 with a 5-year plan to transform the current public housing, revitalize commercial activity along the main corridor, establish an integrated social service, adult education and workforce development model for residents, establish a comprehensive public safety program and reopen a then vacant school building. Many of the goals of this first phase of revitalization were achieved over the first several years of this effort. However, PHA and its community partners realized that there was more work to do to ensure that Sharswood residents have the resources they need to thrive.

The Sharswood THRIVE network convened in the fall of 2019 to spark the next phase of work in Sharswood by developing a comprehensive, collaborative approach to increase stability for Sharswood residents. Initially, services have focused on community engagement and short-term stabilization services from the partners in the network. Sharswood THRIVE partners have worked with residents to develop a strategic plan that will create a guide-path for community residents to continue to take greater responsibility for setting the direction for the work moving forward.

“Sharswood THRIVE seeks to fundamentally change the way people seek and receive services by promoting a comprehensive safety-net system approach. The organization not only provides stability services like housing and healthcare, but also economic mobility empowerment through workforce development, home ownership and financial literacy training.”

Network Partners in the Integrator Learning Lab

- Big Picture Schools - Vaux High School
- Brewerytown/Sharswood Neighborhood Advisory Council
- Episcopal Community Services
- Habitat for Humanity - Philadelphia*
- Philabundance*
- Philadelphia Housing Authority
- Temple University - College of Public Health

*Network representatives in the 2020 Integrator Learning Lab



For more information:

Website: <https://www.philabundance.org/sharswood-thrive-community-by-design/>

Email: mcataldi@philabundance.org - Melanie Cataldi, Chief Innovation Officer, Philabundance

Near-Term, Lab-Related Goals

- Build community engagement and capacity
- Establish principles for community ownership of Sharswood THRIVE
- Ensure that Sharswood THRIVE's network governance and decision-making structures reflect community ownership

Achievements Supported by Technical Assistance from the Learning Lab

- Articulation of integrator framework supported Philabundance in actively taking on the integrator role and designating specific staff support for this purpose
- Theory of Change developed with stakeholder partners; also directly supported by technical assistance from the Evaluation Capacity Building Initiative (ECBI), a Pew Charitable Trust initiative
- Intended impact defined with stakeholder partners: Existing, returning and future residents of Sharswood will live peacefully, prosperously and as a cohesive community for generations to come. Sharswood residents will achieve their life goals and affect sustainable neighborhood change
- Broadened and deepened collaboration among stakeholders
- Created alignment and cross-learning between the Integrator Learning Lab and other TA endeavors with which the network is engaged (e.g. Evaluation Capacity Building Initiative, via Pew Charitable Trust)
- Community engagement work continued despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic

Integrative Areas of Future Focus

Though the 2020 Integrator Learning Lab has drawn to a close, Sharswood THRIVE will continue to be deliberate and strategic about deploying integrative activities in support of the goals of the network. This will include a focus on increasing community control/governance of the work and deepening partnerships with local healthcare providers, with such actions as:

- Creating more opportunities for Sharswood residents to take leadership for developing a strategic plan that sets future goals for the network
- Working in conjunction with residents to collect and analyze data that shows the impact of the network on the health + wellness of Sharswood families through the creation of a community connectors program
- Formalizing relationships between local health care providers and other community-based organizations that serve the Sharswood area
- Scaling up the successful Sharswood model to support other communities that can benefit from a coordinated multi-sector partnership that addresses the health and wellness of residents
- Creating a strategic plan (intended to operationalize the theory of change)



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