

HOUSING and SUPPORTIVE SERVICES NETWORK
Strategic Planning and Discharge Workgroup
(the CoC Board)

Friday, April 11, 2014

8:30 to 10:30 am

County Public Services Building - Room 105/115
155 North First Avenue, Hillsboro, OR 97123

AGENDA

Chair: Annette M. Evans, Washington County Department of Housing Services
Co-Chair: Judy Werner, Lutheran Community Services Northwest

I. Introductions

II. Approve Minutes[Action]
A) *February 14, 2014 HSSN Workgroup Minutes*

III. Business Items

- A) *“Community Connect” process and policy implementation. Establish working subcommittee to:*[Action]
1. *Develop Staffing, Resources and Outreach Plan*
2. *Develop Public Marketing Plan to include Messaging*
3. *Oversight Committee meetings scheduled through May 23, 2014*

- B) *2014 Point In Time (PIT) and Housing Inventory Chart (HIC)*[Action]
1. *Approve the PIT and HIC for submittal in HDX to HUD by April 30*
2. *Data messaging points – What is working? What is not working? Where should we invest our resources? How do we create greater access to housing opportunities for chronically homeless individuals?*

C) *HSSN Workgroup Membership (the CoC Board).*

D) *Continuum of Care (CoC) Program Administrative Plan.*

IV. Workgroup Meeting Schedule – Save the Date

- Friday, June 13, 2014
- Friday, August 8, 2014
- Friday, October 10, 2014
- Friday, December 12, 2014

V. Agency Announcements and Open Discussion

VI. Adjournment

Thank you for attending. Questions or comments, please contact Annette Evans at 503-846-4760

**JOINT MEETING OF THE
HSSN STRATEGIC PLANNING AND DISCHARGE WORKGROUP**
Administrative Board of the Continuum of Care in Washington County
AND THE
COORDINATED AND CENTRALIZED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (CCAS) SUBCOMMITTEE
Public Service Building Conference Room 105/115
February 14, 2014

Workgroup

Role: The Workgroup is comprised of public and private representatives of the homeless subpopulations that exist within the CoC geographic region, a formerly homeless consumer representative, and the Emergency Solutions Grant recipient agency. The Workgroup is the jurisdictional CoC Administrative Board, as established by the HSSN Mission and Governance Policy.

Responsibilities: Perform CoC strategic planning, coordinate with and/or assist in State and local discharge planning, review performance outcomes of HMIS and HUD-funded programs, develop housing and service systems alignment, make funding decisions, and approve the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance grant application to HUD.

Subcommittee

Role: Providing the right resources, to the right person, at the right time! The system will:

- ✓ **Screen** to determine eligibility for assistance;
- ✓ **Assess** for barriers to housing and supportive service needs; and
- ✓ **Refer** to resources that assist the individual or family to regain stability in permanent housing.

JOINT ATTENDEES:

Baldiviesoblanco, Jorge – Oregon DHS	Pruyn, Gerry – Jubilee Transition Homes
Bundy, Valerie – Domestic Violence Resource Center	Rogers, Pat – Community Action
Burton, Valerie – Luke Dorf Inc.	Sanders, Andrea Logan – Boys and Girls Aid
Chavez Hernandez, Saul – Community Action	Schwab, Jack – Good Neighbor Center
Erickson, Dennis – Wash. Co. Community Corrections	Sechrist, Lauren – Office of Community Development
Evans, Annette – Housing Services, Wash. Co.	Smith, Rob – Cascade AIDS Project
Galian, Katherine – Community Action	Toevs, Jeremy – Open Door Counseling Center
Linder, April – Housing Independence	Vanderzanden, Heather – Community Action
McCloskey, Amanda – Housing Services, Wash. Co.	Werner, Judy – Lutheran Community Services NW
Pero, David – Homeless Education Network	Winnie, Lana – Lifeworks NW

Chair: Annette Evans, Public Agency Representative Annette_Evans@co.washington.or.us

Co-Chair: Judy Werner, Nonprofit Agency Representative jwerner@lcsnw.org

Meeting called to order at 8:30 a.m.

I. INTRODUCTIONS

II. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion: Approve meeting minutes for December 13, 2013.

Action: Katherine Galian

Second: Lauren Sechrist

Vote: Approved - Unanimous

Motion: Approve meeting minutes for January 9, 2014.

Action: Katherine Galian

Second: Lauren Sechrist

Vote: Approved – Unanimous

A) Community Connect Process and Policy Implementation: Pat Rogers & Katherine Galian
Screening: Lots of Customers, Nothing on the Shelves?

Community Connect (CC), started January 13, has screened 311 people in 101 households to date. There are three to ten calls per day, an average of six new callers. Community Action (CAO) waitlist staff screen the calls. There has been a huge amount of activity in the last three weeks.

Callers to CAO don't have a much different experience than they did before, except now that an assessment appointment is set for them, whereas before they were encouraged to attend the Community Resource Orientation (CRO). The CROs have all been canceled, but people still show up. Annette Evans reported that the CRO cancellation was sent through HSSN and CAO listserves.

Saul Chavez Hernandez said that many of the calls he takes at CC are from people "at imminent risk of homelessness" but not "literally homeless" by HUD definition. 35% of callers are literally homeless and 65% are at risk. This is a mismatch with HUD resources, which divide their funding into 60% for chronic homelessness and 40% for rapid re-housing (RRH). During the assessment projects some who originally said they were literally homeless change status to "at risk." Annette said that we do have SPC vouchers for chronically homeless folks available. Only two or three chronically homeless folks have turned up in CC assessments so far.

CAO staff are running the CC program for the entire CoC, but now the callers think they are CAO clients. According to the CoC inventory list, there are no openings available. It's like staffing a store with nothing on the shelf. Currently there are 101 families "churning," and they keep calling back, which is a lot to manage. All CC staff can tell them is that "If your housing situation changes we want to know, but for now, sorry." It's frustrating for staff and clients, who may perceive it as wasting their time and taking away hope. CAO staff have run into policy and procedures glitches that couldn't have been foreseen around CC, and so are meeting once per week to help things function smoothly.

Assessments: Need Exceeding Capacity

Katherine Galian handed out a spreadsheet listing everyone (without names) who has been screened. At the beginning, callers were assessed within a couple of days but the volume has exceeded capacity. The assessment process is getting backed up and assessment interviews are scheduled out into the end of March. Part of the backup is due to staffing changes that resulted in having only one assessor in place. CAO is working on their assessment team and has temporarily added some staff that wouldn't be typically be doing assessments to help out. It's important to consider that once assessment appointment scheduling gets too far out in time callers are essentially being put on a wait list as opposed to live assessment.

No shows are problematic. So far there have been 14 no shows, a full week of wasted time for 1 FTE. To minimize no shows, the plan is to switch to phone-based assessments. Annette asked if shelter specialists were doing their own assessments as discussed at the CC tabletop exercise held in December. Pat explained that Rose Browning at GNC began doing CC assessments this week with shelter clients. Pat sent email to both GNC and Family Promise with instructions on how to proceed after assessment. Annette asked him to send that information to Safe Place as well.

The vast majority of callers have scores of low to moderate housing barriers. Very few score in the high barrier range. So, most people are being told there's nothing for them. The main barriers are landlord debt, which is often in the thousands, plus incomes that are never really high enough to pay rent. Most everyone is receiving TANF benefits, or they have \$0 in income.

List of CoC Housing Inventory, Openings

Katherine handed out a report of current CoC inventory and openings, which is generated by HMIS each morning. Melanie Fletcher programmed the report into HMIS so that it auto-generates and goes into Saul's inbox. The second column is where openings appear. Some programs still need to turn in missing information. Some agency representatives at the meeting thought their data might

be wrong. The inventory list shows over-leased units, which may include non-HUD units. Annette will check with Melanie to see if reprogramming the report would help. Katherine urged everyone to enter "exits" in a timely manner, as it will help if available housing opening data is accurate.

Results: No Successful Placements Yet

Katherine stated that CC has yet to have successful external placement. There was a near placement with Lutheran Community Services Northwest, but it failed because the single mom being placed did not have and could not get immediate physical custody of her child. Her housing score was moderate.

Mental Health Screening: Are We Asking the Right Questions? Referred to MHSNCC for Review

Katherine and others noted that even with the high call volume there haven't been any mental health referrals, which is unexpected. She requested that the screening questions be reviewed by the Mental Health and Special Needs Community Consortium (MHSNCC). Annette will add that to their next agenda.

Q&A

Q: Does the screening process turn up callers who are already served by other CoC members?

A: We ask if they are with another organization, receiving services. Katherine suggested adding a question to ask if someone is currently on a Shelter Plus Care or Housing Authority waitlist.

Q: Any single men?

A: One or two. Jubilee Transition Housing (which provides housing for homeless men) has been full, but will have openings in the next few weeks.

Q: Does CC screen for substance abuse issues?

A: Yes. Only one or two callers so far have replied that they have substance abuse issues.

Q: Any callers with criminal histories?

A: The ones that do seem to have several felonies. Dennis Erickson reported folks with criminal histories are struggling with housing. Their housing placement program works due to access to substance abuse help, with bridge funds (federal dollars) providing subsidized housing (Oxford House, Homeward Bound, House of Hope) for 50 people per month. When someone is discharged from prison, a parole officer works on a transition plan, to identify housing and mentors. Every parole officer wants to make sure their client is in suitable housing.

The most difficult placements are with sex offender housing. The percentage of homeless individuals in that population is high. There are no welcome arms in the community. Doors are closed. Nor can sex offenders live together in group homes - state law limits the number of people charged with sex crime living together in a residence to two.

1. Establish Oversight Committee and Schedule Regular Implementation Meetings

Community Connect Oversight Committee (CCOC) to meet Friday mornings, 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. in the Housing Services Conference Room, 111 NE Lincoln, Suite 200-L, Hillsboro 97124

Meetings attendees decided to have a weekly face-to-face problem solving group (with an option to call in) in support of CC clients, as some callers have situations which would benefit from oversight by multiple CoC members. CC staff end up representing or speaking for other agencies that provide services (such as the Washington County Housing Services department), which is a good reason for an oversight committee to meet to collectively own the information and solutions presented. Annette will send invitations to the workgroup meetings and thanked CAO for their work so far.

2. Develop Staffing and Resources

CAO has made funding requests for CC staffing. Lauren Sechrist announced that CDBG funding was granted for this purpose that will be available in July. Other requests are pending.

3. Develop Public Marketing Plan and Messaging

The HSSN WG is not meeting again until April, and CC is not ready to go public. Until we have more staff to make assessments, we are not ready to advertise.

B) Review of Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Consultation Process

Lauren Sechrist reported on proposed policy changes to the allocation of an estimated \$157,499 in ESG funds. The amount is based on 2012 funding; if there are reductions, shelter and street outreach will be kept whole and any reductions would be seen in the homelessness prevention and RRH categories. Lauren handed out three documents: ESG Policies and Procedures Narrative, FY 2014 Decision Document and HSSN Working Group ESG Info. Memo.

Changes are as follows:

- The 60/40 split between serving those who are literally homeless vs. those who are “at risk” has shifted to a 50/50 split, as most of the people served are moving into the “at risk” category. If baseline data can be established to document the 35/65 split mentioned previously in this meeting then we can shift funding to RRH per HUD guidelines.
- Under performance standards, note that the measurement standards are up for discussion. These are similar to the CoC measurements.
 - For street outreach, the proposed measurement is the number of individuals who participate in Community Connect.
 - Under emergency shelter, the measurement is the average shelter stay.
 - Under homelessness prevention and RRH, the measurement is a reduction in new incidences of homelessness and a reduced recidivism rate, with data to be obtained by Community Connect.
- The length of assistance, which was six months, then nine, is now changing to up to 24 months. We figured that it would be a much more useful tool to approach a landlord with.
- There will not be funding for HMIS, as that is already covered via other sources.
- All ESG recipients are now required to use Community Connect.

The next step is to bring this back to HSSN on March 5th for final approval. Lauren asked attendees to review the number of individuals served and get back to her with any changes.

Q&A

Q: The street outreach amount is \$20,000, down from \$25,000 – why? It’s such a small amount of money for each agency anyways; \$8000 each will now be \$6000. Also, why is the amount equal for each agency (HomePlate, Open Door, Luke Dorf) regardless of numbers served?

A: We could shift funding back but it would have to come from another category.

The group debated rent assistance vs. an increased need in the street outreach category for case management. People who are living outside have to get documents together so they can move inside. It might be worth it to lose rent assistance for two families to help 50 people navigate the system, get ID, etc.

HUD prioritizes chronically homeless populations, as they are harder to serve. Judy suggested that the involved agencies get together to discuss reallocating funds. The workgroup will meet in December 2014 to reevaluate the allocation with all involved parties as part of the ESG process.

Motion: Approve ESG recommendations as presented, with possible change to numbers served.

Action: Judy Werner

Second: Jeremy Toevs

Vote: Approved – Unanimous

C) FY 2013-2014 CoC Program Grant application

1. Debrief on CoC Consolidated Planning Application and Project Applications.

Annette posted the application on the county website and extends her heartfelt thanks to all who helped. HUD will announce funding awards within 45 days of the deadline (February 3) so we should hear by March 21. The HUD NOFA identifies a projected timeline for HUD award announcements that includes Tier 1 "renewal" projects announced on or after 45 days from the HUD application submittal date and Tier 1 "reallocation" projects will be awarded after full scoring of the project applications to meet the HUD threshold, along with Tier 2 projects while sufficient funds remain available.

It's time to start planning for the FY 2014 NOFA. Congress enacted appropriation funding for it with the Omnibus Bill signed on January 17, 2014. Within 60 days, so by mid March, they could announce the new NOFA. Also, HUD will be doing project monitoring in July of this year. Annette will make site visits before then.

NOFA Q&A

Annette asked the group to consider some questions that are part of the NOFA:

Q: 3C-11/3C-12: "Describe collaboration with local education authorities to ensure individuals and families who becomes or remain homeless are informed of their eligibility for McKinney Vento education services; and describe established policies in place that require all homeless providers to ensure children are enrolled in early childhood education program or school. "

A: One of the CC questions is, "Are school age children enrolled in school?" If so, the applicant is asked if they want the phone number for the Homeless Student liaison. CC needs a policy on whether to place a homeless family in shelter outside their child's school district.

Q: 4C-1: "Systematically provide information about mainstream resources and training on how to identify eligibility and program changes for mainstream programs to provider staff."

A: Pat said that the SSA presentation at the recent HSSN meeting, he came back and made that part of opening salvo for new client orientation, to show people how to access website and monitor applications for SSI. The Good Neighbor Center does this as well.

Q: 4C-5: "Steps CoC has taken to identify other sources of funding for supportive services."

A: We are doing as best as we can in that area.

Q: 4A-4: "Steps CoC has taken to reduce length of homelessness."

A: This is measured internally with shelter stays, which are 35 to 40 days. Transitional housing is 100 or so days. Once CC is going, this measurement may change. Katherine pointed out that it may be challenging, as we start measuring from time we talk to them not time of shelter.

Q: 4A-5: "Steps CoC has taken to reduce returns to homelessness."

A: HopeSpring finds that clients have not signed up for public housing. CAO finds this as well - Saul tells clients to get on the lists for Aloha Park etc., sees them a year later and they're still homeless, and he asks if they got on those lists, and the answer is always no. HopeSpring has applications and tells clients they have to turn in four. Each complex is separate and their applications change, so it's a challenge to keep current applications stocked. CAO hopes to have a contract soon with DHS welfare office to increase staffing by one housing specialist, to do real time outreach to landlords and keep up to date with changes to project based section 8.

2. Discuss HUD NOFA question regarding removal of barriers to enter CoC-funded projects.

Q: "Removal of barriers to enter CoC and ESG-funded projects (Housing First) to include income eligibility, lengthy period of clean time, background checks, credit checks, criminal background, etc. (3C-7)"

A: Judy pointed out that almost all of the items on that list are landlord controlled – credit checks, background checks, income eligibility. The only item on list we can impact is whether or not we ask for clean time.

3. Discuss “turnover” of non-dedicated CoC-funded beds/units to serve the chronically homeless individuals and families

HUD is refocused on ending chronic homelessness and veteran homelessness by 2015 by taking non-chronic beds and reprioritizing them to chronic beds. Annette found 20 beds through turnover in SPC that could be turned to chronic homeless individuals. The issue is outreach – how to step up engagement to get those leased up by the January 2015 PIT date. How do we best get folks off the streets and into those beds?

Pat reported that the PIT count at Sonrise revealed people there we’ve seen every year. They don’t want to come inside. These are folks who are not functioning well in regular market housing. They’ve been out of mainstream loop for a long period of time; they don’t work out in regular market housing. Other challenge is access, they’re really poor.

Judy asked, how do we get harm reduction housing in this county? Regular apartment complexes won’t take them. Not normative behaviors. Building harm reduction housing will take money. One option is to repurpose current housing, but local affordable housing units have fiscal strings and the nonprofits are very concerned with who we take in. Another option is old school SPC, project-based SROs.

D) HSSN Workgroup Membership (the CoC Board)

This group serves as the CoC Board. There are two positions open: the McKinney-Vento Homeless Student Liaison position and a business position. For the business position, their focus needs to be on connecting to employment. For the most recent application, CoC members collectively did not meet the goal of 20% employment for the first time – the total was 18.75%. This will negatively impact our application. Andrea Logan-Sanders offered to contact the Jobs Connect liaison. Annette will send out an email to the HSSN so that members can forward it to suitable candidates.

III. WORKGROUP MEETING SCHEDULE – SAVE THE DATE

- Friday, April 11, 2014
- Friday June 13, 2014
- Friday, August 8, 2014
- Friday October 10, 2014
- Friday, December 12, 2014

IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OPEN DISCUSSION

Lana Winnie announced that the Hillsboro Budget Inn had a fire. Of the 20 units at the complex, five units have been permanently displaced and eight people are sheltered at a school. Annette reported that the American Red Cross is organizing a meeting to bring together multiple agencies together to support displaced residents. Lana would like to attend, as LifeWorks NW has residents in the complex.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Minutes prepared by Amanda McCloskey, Washington County Department of Housing Services.

To be added to HSSN Workgroup email list, or the HSSN Coordinated and Centralized Assessment System, contact Annette Evans at Annette_Evans@co.washington.or.us.