April 2015 Steering Committee Meeting

Table of Contents

Agenda ........................................................................................................................................................................2
March Meeting Minutes ...............................................................................................................................................3
Lead Agency Report ......................................................................................................................................................6
Memo: Employment Activities .....................................................................................................................................8
Memo: NOFA Preparation ............................................................................................................................................9
Memo: Youth/Young Adult Activities .........................................................................................................................10
Memo: Rapid Re-housing Update ..............................................................................................................................11
Memo: Performance Dashboards for all programs ....................................................................................................12
SNAPS In Focus: Family Homelessness Part I ........................................................................................................13
AGENDA

I. Call to Order – Daphne Lemelle
   a) Roll Call

II. Approval of Minutes – Daphne Lemelle
   a) March 12, 2015 CoC Steering Committee Meeting

III. Lead Agency Report – Eva Thibaudeau

IV. New Business
   a) Employment Activities – Eva Thibaudeau and Mike Temple

V. Old Business
   a) USICH/HUD Visit – Eva Thibaudeau
   b) FY2015 CoC NOFA Updates – Eva Thibaudeau
      • Monitoring
      • Updating scoring tool and testing
   c) Youth/ Young Adult Activities and Planning – Eva Thibaudeau
   d) Rapid Re-Housing Update – Eva Thibaudeau
   e) Performance Dashboards – Eva Thibaudeau
   f) SNAPS – In Focus – Eva Thibaudeau

VI. Public Comments

VII. Adjournment
The meeting of the Continuum of Care (CoC) Steering Committee was held on March 12, 2015 at the Neighborhood Resource Center, 815 Crosby St., pursuant to proper notification of all Steering Committee members.

Welcome and Introductions
Chair Daphne Lemelle called the meeting to order at 3:40 pm. Barbara Dawson conducted roll call and Lemelle noted that there was a quorum.

Approval of Minutes
The minutes from the February CoC Steering Committee meeting were presented. Lemelle called for a motion to approve the February minutes as presented. Dawson motioned, Weldon seconded. The minutes were approved.

Introduction of New Steering Committee Member
The new representative for the Funders Together to End Homelessness seat is Kelli King-Jackson of The Simmons Foundation -Costis motioned to accept the recommendation, Kindell seconded, motion approved- Welcomed her to The Steering Committee.

Lead Agency Report –Presented by Eva Thibaudeau
- The First Quarter Provider Input Forum was conducted on February 24, 2015 at the NRC.
- Multiple Board Members from the THN Board attended.
- Some items discussed were HUD expectations-rules, regulations and compliance
- Collaborative Communications workshop was held on March 3, it was specifically for Media/Communications.
• CSH/THN is hosting the Supporting Housing=Healthcare Summit in Austin March 31-April 2.

HMIS Administrator Report – Presented by Eva Thibaudeau
• 568 Active Users
• HMIS Team works hard on data quality.
• We are working on a dashboard for Coordinated Access and Housing.
• Want to make sure we are reflecting what is happening, as well as updating the 2013, 2014 and 2015 Action Plan.

New Business

Youth/Young Adult Activities and Planning
  o Upcoming planning activities in May.
  o The CoC will be developing Best Practices and identifying gaps.

USICH/HUD Visit
  o HUD would like to do some system wide planning around youth work.
  o CoC Nofa Updates
    o HUD released the Grant Inventory Worksheet which is the first step that leads up to releasing the FY2015 NOFA

Old Business

State ESG Funding recommendations (Resolution)
  o The competition for state ESG funds has ended and the ESG grant committee offers up these funding recommendations for committee approval.
  o A grant information conference was held 02/13/15-at that time the priorities and guidelines were presented to the community, questions were taken and technical assistance was offered.
  o In accordance with the guidelines that were published, projects were considered based on a number of factors-Alignment with system functioning and services for veterans and chronics and family and youth.
  o The State Restriction was as follows-No application under $125,000 will be considered and no more than six applications will be funded.
  o Awards will be made public. Final recommendations are due to the State 03/27/2015.
  o Dawson motioned, Temple seconded. The ESG Resolution was approved.
Transitional Housing Technical Assistance Updates
  o Robert Pulster and Jennifer Ho will be here April 1st & 2nd to see how Coordinated Access works and our Rapid Rehousing System, and to offer recommendations as we move forward.
  o Irene Peragallo continues to work with our Transitional Housing. One project has decided to voluntarily non-renew in FY2015 competition.
  o Funds will be reallocated once NOFA reopens.

Public Comments
  o Morris Fountain-Project Manager CFOF

Adjournment

Upon approval, the meeting was adjourned at 4:18 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,       Approved,

________________________     ___________________________
Barbara Dawson, Secretary     Daphne Lemelle, Chairman

_________________________
Date
A. Work/Affinity Group Activities
   a. Networks, Initiatives and Affinity Groups
      i. CoC Provider Input Forum
         1. The Second Quarter Provider Input Forum is scheduled for Tuesday, May 26, 2015 at the NRC from 9am until 10:30am.
      ii. CoC Consumer Input Forum
           1. The first Consumer Input Forum is scheduled for Wednesday May 6, 2015 from 1:45pm until 3:15pm at the Young Adult Resource Center, Salvation Army Social Services, 2202 Main Street. The focus will be on youth/young adult homelessness.
      iii. HMIS Forum
           1. The First Quarter HMIS Forum was conducted on Friday March 19, 2015 from 2-4pm at the Harris County Department of Education and included recidivism reports.
      iv. Housing Houston’s Heroes
           1. HHH met on Friday March 13th at the NRC from 9am to 10:30am. Discussion focused on next steps on the VA Gaps Analysis tool and the CoC plan to end veteran homelessness.
           2. SSVF workgroup meets the first Thursday Monthly from 11-12:30pm. The group met on April 9 to complete the SSVF CoC Plan to end veteran homelessness for delivery to the VA Regional Coordinator by May 1st.
      v. Youth/Young Adult Affinity Group
           1. NEST Steering Committee met on March 31st with TA to address next steps on the Implementation plan.
           2. The HYN Forum will be conducted May 13, 2015 from 11:30am to 1:00pm at 2525 Murworth Drive. The Forum will feature the findings of the Youth Count! 2.0 research project.
      vi. RRH Workgroup
           1. The RRH Pilot workgroup sub-committee is meeting weekly on Wednesday mornings. The CMI procured 3 additional case management vendors (10 cms) who will join the workgroup by May 1st.
      vii. Coordinated Access Workgroup
           1. 1115 team meetings conducted weekly from 2-3 on Wednesdays.
           2. 1185 team meetings conducted weekly on Wednesdays from 3-4pm.
           3. Coordinated Access hosted a visit by HUD Senior Policy Advisor and USICH representative on April 3rd.

B. Other CoC Items
   a. Jennifer Ho (Special Advisor to the Secretary of HUD) and Robert Pulster (Regional United States Interagency Council on Homelessness Liaison) visited The Way Home CoC on April 1st and 2nd to discuss youth/young adult homelessness, Coordinated Access and Veterans Homelessness.
   b. CSH/THN hosted the Supportive Housing=Healthcare Summit in Austin March 31-April 2. Many CoC stakeholders participated. The Coalition will host a community conference debrief for the Summit and the February NAEH Conference on April 10th from 10am to noon.
c. The lead researchers of Youth Count 2.0 provided findings to USICH/HUD during a Houston visit on April 1st – 2nd

d. The Coalition for the Homeless sponsored a bus trip to Austin, TX for Homelessness Awareness Day on April 2. Sixteen individuals (citizens, partner organization staff, and one individual who is currently homeless) attended 10 meetings with state legislators.

e. The Coalition is undertaking an expansion of The Way Home website to include additional resources and information for workgroup members and system implementers as well as community members at large.

f. A system dashboard for communicators is being finalized and should be available in early May. This dashboard will help provide regular updates on data that organizations can communicate with the public in an accurate and uniform manner.
This memorandum is to notify The Way Home CoC Steering Committee of current activities related to employment and homelessness.

Background

In October 2014 a small group from The Way Home CoC was invited to a Housing and Employment Summit to participate in a day-long exercise about how the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Labor could better work together to join housing and employment.

Mike Temple (CoC Steering Committee member and Workforce Investment Board Representative), Cathy Crouch (Executive Vice President, SEARCH Homeless Services), Alberto Uribe (Assistant Executive Director, SER Jobs for Progress) and Eva Thibaudeau (The Way Home Lead Agency Director of Programs, Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County) attended the summit and highlighted efforts within the continuum to match employment services programs with Rapid Re-Housing projects.

In February 2015 as part of The Way Home CoC employment activities, the City of Houston submitted a Letter of Intent to a call from The Heartland Alliance regarding an RFP for the “Connections Project: Expanding Employment and Economic Opportunity for Homeless Jobseekers.” Seventy other CoC’s around the country also submitted and The Way Home was one of ten chosen to go to Washington D.C. in March 2015 to work with Heartland Alliance coaches and refine the potential scope of work being proposed. Mike Temple (see above), Cathy Crouch (see above), Carolyn Watson (JP Morgan Chase) and Heather Muller (Project Manager CSH) were able to attend. The final application is due in May 2015 and five applications will be chosen. If this opportunity comes to fruition there will be technical assistance and some funding for three years.

Currently the Texas Workforce Commission has an open RFP solicitation for “The Employer and Community-Based Organization (CBO) Partnerships Initiative II.” Up to $4 million are available to foster connections between CBO’s and employment. Current grantees are not eligible to apply during this round so The Way Home CoC Lead Agency (The Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris Co) will apply on behalf of all system partners. The RFP is due April 13, 2015.

As we have participated in these employment/housing opportunities, the vision that has emerged builds on the great work of those who have paired Rapid Re-Housing with employment services. We envision a system in which every household experiencing the crisis of homelessness receives not only a housing plan at the point of Coordinated Access but also an income plan. Whether the income plan is supported employment, SOAR, Ticket to Work or mainstream employment, all households accessing housing services will also receive income services.
This memorandum is to notify The Way Home CoC Steering Committee of preparation activities for the FY2015 CoC NOFA.

**Background**

In preparation for the FY2015 CoC NOFA Competition the Lead Agency has requested audit findings, proof of drawing down of federal funds and performance reports from all current grantees. These documents will be monitored for scoring purposes in advance of the competition announcement.

A workgroup composed of community providers has been convened to provide recommendations for outcome thresholds in the area of transitional housing. Once finalized, these will be presented to this Steering Committee for inclusion in the Housing Models document.

Finally, the scoring tool is being tested and revised in advance of the competition announcement.
This memorandum is to notify The Way Home CoC Steering Committee of current and upcoming project related to unaccompanied homeless youth and young adults.

**Background**

The following projects are underway or in planning:

**Youth Count! Point in Time and Youth Count 2.0!**

- Risk Factors and profile of Houston area youth
- Recommendations for annual Point in Time

**Hogg Foundation Collaboration with Houston Housing Authority and Harris County Protective Services**

- 100 Housing Choice Vouchers over four years and intensive supportive services for mentally ill Transition Aged Youth who are aging out of foster care
- Piloting and testing Youth/Young Adult Coordinated Access Prioritization Tool

**NEST**

- LGBTQ Youth Homeless Prevention Initiative

**CoC PSH for 18-24 year olds**

- Currently 120+ designated
- Additional twenty-four (24) awarded in FY2014 competition

**Opportunity Youth**

- Chase Bank beginning community discussion on 18-25 year olds who are disconnected from employment and education

**Next Steps:**

- May 2015 Comprehensive Community Conversation re: Homeless Youth/Young Adults
This memorandum is to notify The Way Home CoC Steering Committee of the ongoing progress of Rapid Re-Housing for literally homeless families.

Background

Rapid Re-Housing phase 1 implementation began January 6, 2015. To date all assessments have been for literally homeless families with a minor child due to funding source restrictions. Weekly implementation meetings occur to discuss problems, adjust course and ensure fidelity to the Rapid Re-Housing model. Case managers, supervisors, implementation support staff, the Houston Housing Authority and HMIS staff all participate in these meetings.

The next phase of implementation will begin with the contracting of case management vendors by the Case Management Intermediary, Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. In response to the RFP released by Catholic Charities for case management vendors, seven (7) applications were submitted. Catholic Charities completed a detailed and comprehensive scoring process with the participation of the CoC Lead Agency. Five (5) applications met threshold for consideration. The top three (3) applications were sufficient to fill the necessary case management need and the following agencies were notified of selection:

- SEARCH Homeless Services for three (3) case managers
- The Salvation Army Social Services for two (2) case managers
- Memorial Assistance Ministries for one (1) case manager

The two agencies who met threshold (Houston Area Community Services and Humble Area Assistance Ministries) were notified that their applications would be reviewed if there was a future need to expand case management services.

Orientation training for all rapid re-house case managers is scheduled for the last week of April 2015 and will include technical assistance from Marge Wherley, a national expert on Rapid Re-Housing.
This memorandum is to notify The Way Home CoC Steering Committee of progress with program performance dashboards.

Background

Throughout 2014 performance dashboards were generated from HMIS data for all CoC-funded programs. These dashboards are publicly posted on the CoC website. During 2015 additional dashboards will be processed for other types of programs which may include Emergency Solutions Grant programs, SSVF, VASH, HOPWA and privately funded homeless providers. It is the intent of the Lead Agency and the HMIS Administrator to provide ongoing outcome information to the community in an open and transparent fashion.
SNAPS In Focus: Family Homelessness Part I

Reflecting on our work over the last several months in SNAPS and throughout HUD, we are clearly building momentum on family homelessness – from the release of the President’s 2016 budget request, to the research we are preparing to release on interventions for families, to our participation in the Alliance’s National Conference on Ending Family and Youth Homelessness in February. This message is the first of two on family homelessness, and it is intended to help our stakeholders learn more about where we are nationally, what HUD has learned about family homelessness, and what our priorities are in this area.

In December, Secretary Castro announced the results of the 2014 Point-In-Time Count with the release of the 2014 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR): Volume 1. Between 2013 and 2014, CoCs reported a 4.7 percent decline in the number of households with children experiencing homelessness on a single night in January. This is important progress – especially the 20.5 percent reduction in the number of households with children living in unsheltered situations. To continue making progress, we know we need to do more, and we need to use the resources we have in more efficient ways.

Right now, about 40 percent of CoC Program funds serve households with children, a number that is roughly proportional to the number of people in families in the point-in-time count. But CoC and ESG funded projects are only a part of the overall plan to end family homelessness. Reaching our goal will require a systems-level approach in each community. A community’s homelessness response system must be able to respond to the housing and service needs of every homeless family regardless of their income, family size, substance use history, or any other barriers they may have. It has to be able to do this in challenging housing markets, as rents are high and rising in most of the country. And it must accomplish all of this with a limited amount of resources and many competing priorities.

With this in mind, I thought it would be useful to discuss some key steps that all communities can take to ensure that as a nation we end family homelessness by 2020.

Use Data to Evaluate Current Resources

- Communities should be analyzing local data to determine what interventions are most successful and most cost effective at helping families exit homelessness. We recently released system performance measures to measure community-wide performance. These will become an increasingly important part of how we evaluate communities.

- Using data, communities should reallocate existing projects to more successful and cost effective types of assistance. For example, emerging evidence shows that rapid re-housing is more cost effective and successful at ending family homelessness than transitional housing for most families.

Eliminate Barriers

- Coordinated entry processes should make it as easy as possible for families to access housing and services. When families are assessed, the questions should be directly relevant to their immediate needs, and families who go through a coordinated entry process should have a clear understanding of what assistance they will receive and what will be expected of them.
• Families with the most severe needs and those living on the street should always be prioritized for assistance.

• Providers should eliminate eligibility requirements that prevent higher need families from accessing their programs, especially requirements related to employment, minimum income, rental history, or substance use history. Providers who don’t have the skills to serve these families should be increasing their capacity either internally or through partnerships.

• Providers need to be able to serve every kind of family, regardless of the ages and sexes of the adults and children. Involuntarily separating families based on the gender or age of their minor children is a violation of our regulations.

• In high-cost, low-vacancy housing markets, landlords can be very selective in who they rent to. Communities need robust strategies for recruiting and engaging landlords and other housing providers to provide them with a better understanding of the value of renting to those families and incentives to do so.

• If providers find that families are not participating in services or progressing on case plans, the providers should be modifying their services to make them more engaging and relevant to those families rather than punishing them for failing to meet program expectations. The purpose of homeless assistance is not to reward good behavior on the part of families, but to work with families to end their homelessness as soon as possible.

Maximize the Use of Emergency Shelters

• Emergency shelters are a valuable resource for families who would otherwise have to live on the streets or in an unsafe place. In addition to their role in providing decent, safe shelter for families, shelters should be helping families find permanent housing as quickly as possible. This may involve helping families identify housing options or formally partnering with other housing and homeless assistance providers.

Tailor Assistance to the Unique Needs and Preferences of Families

• Families endure a tremendous amount of chaos and trauma when they experience homelessness. The assistance provided to each family member should be tailored to their unique situations. Providers should focus on families’ strengths and offer choices whenever possible, and no intervention should use a one-size-fits-all approach.

• To the maximum extent possible, providers should be connecting families with mainstream benefits and community resources, such as Medicaid or TANF, and ensuring that their children are going to school, pre-school or, if appropriate, childcare. These connections will provide more stability for families.

• Where you live and the type of housing you live in is a personal choice. To the maximum extent possible, families should be deciding what neighborhood they want to live in, how much they can afford, and what services they need. This may mean, for example, that a family would pay more for housing than it appears they can afford. And while we should help to inform families about what affordable options are available, ultimately that is their decision to make.

Ending family homelessness is about more than units and types of intervention. It requires attention to all parts of the family homelessness system to ensure that it is using an approach that helps families move quickly into housing and prevents returns to homelessness. It requires that we pay attention to the unique circumstances of each family and tailor homeless assistance to meet their needs.
If we make the changes we need to make, we can end family homelessness by 2020. I appreciate that we have so many partners around the country that are working with us to make that happen.

As always, thank you for your hard work on behalf of the people we serve.

Regards,

Norm Suchar
Director
Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs