

Individual Services Committee Meeting Minutes – 8/2/10

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In Attendance: Christine Burns, Providence Ministries, Danielle DeBerry, ServiceNet, Yolanda Godard, Friends of the Homeless, Dave Havens, MHA, Janice Humason, Friends of the Homeless, Bill Miller, FOH, Dave Modzelewski, DMH, Tony Pereira, Carson Center, Thomas Poplawski, ServiceNet, Jerry Ray, MHA, Pamela Schwartz, Network, Suzanne Smith, Network, Eryn Tobin, Catholic Charities, Mark Warren, Brien Center, Ron Willoughby, Rescue Mission

Discharge Policy for area institutions:

Yolanda will turn brainstorm on discharge policy into a formal draft. Will bring to next meeting (Pamela will distribute in advance).

Suggestion: frame “discharge policy” as institutional admission policy, i.e., broad principles that everyone agrees on, e.g., universal check-list for shelter consideration, then check with each individual shelters for their particular limitations/criteria

Providers will exchange by email list of institutions to call – including hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, dual diagnosis, substance abuse programs . Will do initial “focus group” calls to select institutions to gauge interest in a regionwide meeting on this issue as follows:

Jerry: Mass. Behavioral Health Partnership

Christine: Arbor House, Providence Detox, Ben Clough (DPH)

Danielle: Cooley Dickinson Hospital (West Five)

Yolanda: Carlson Recovery Center (detox), Heritage Hall, BayState

Dave Havens: BayState psych unit

Mark Warren: Berkshire Medical Center, psych unit

The group acknowledged the importance of communication among shelters to ensure beds are utilized. **We will take up at our next meeting more systematic ways to ensure this communication takes place.**

The group also acknowledged and discussed the issues that stem from a lack of a common admission standard, e.g., some dry shelters, wet shelters, will turn away or not. Friends of the Homeless is in a unique position as the one shelter that does not turn anybody away for lack of space or for sobriety issues. This places a burden on the shelter that needs to be addressed by all. **Discussion on the issue of common admission standards will also continue at our next meeting.**

Right now, Friends of the Homeless is functioning at 20 people over capacity – crisis level in summer!

Question posed as to whether it's possible to track numbers on a weekly basis to analyze population flow and also to keep close track of shelter openings across the region.

Suzanne posed the use of the DHCD bed register to help track openings but this would require a change in practice for providers since the custom is to get on the phone when someone is standing at the door, bed register is not used. This circles back to the communication challenge across shelters, which we will continue to address.

Network future: Pamela gave an update about the continuation of the Network and its committees, sharing the Leadership Council's commitment to sustain the work that is happening. Committee members expressed their desire to see this committee work continue and the great value in building more unity and collaboration among all shelter and individual service providers across the region.

ICHH REACH provider and contract extension discussion

ICHH providers discussed and agreed upon the terms for a request for a 6 month contract extension. The need for a contract extension stems from a combination of factors: a delay in the contract start-up due to administrative processes between the fiscal agent, DHCD and sub-grantees; some staff turnover and some unanticipated challenges in housing unit readiness. The Committee agreed on the following terms:

Mental Health Association (\$77,000): will house 6 additional chronically homeless individuals with transitional rental subsidies and accompanying support services (6 above its current benchmark, which has already been met)

ServiceNet: (\$21,000) – will house at least 3 chronically homeless individuals with transitional rent subsidies and provide accompanying support services (will meet benchmark with this plan)

Brien Center (\$14,300) – will house up to 2 chronically homeless individuals with transitional rent subsidies and provide accompanying support services (will exceed benchmark by 1 individual with this plan)

In each of these extensions, each provider commits to facilitating a transition to permanent housing and facilitating the continuation of support services after the extension ends.

With these extensions, the Network will exceed its benchmark of housing 38 chronically homeless individuals in the region.

Dave Modzelewski will continue to work with the Carson Center to advocate for appropriate housing with Domus and its new Annex housing in ongoing efforts to meet its benchmark.

Center for Human Development confirmed that all of its funds have been spent and they will have exceeded their benchmark by

1 or 2 individuals.

Pamela will put this request into a formal letter to be submitted to Liz Curtis. Draft will circulate to providers by Thursday and to Steering Committee as well. Will be sent to Liz by Friday, 8/6.

Next meeting: Monday, September 13, 9-11 am, Berkshire County, location to be determined