

Housing Continuum of Care – Bucks County, Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2016

Present: Matt Uhler, Don Detweiler, Rich Aichele, Marti Woglom, Joyce Schug, Tracy Mellor, Stefanie Hendel, Joelle Pitts, Deb Neidhardt, Deborah Kirkner, Marlene Piasecki, Roger Collins, Trish Nye, Jon Rubin, Erin Lukoss

Absent: n/a

Minutes of the November 13, 2015 meeting of the Executive Committee (Rich Aichele): Rich called for the approval of the November 13, 2015 minutes. All approved, none opposed.

Sub-Committee Updates

Outcomes (Erin Lukoss): They continue to work on designing a priority waiting list. They will offer a training to HMIS staff and then to the broader group. They are waiting on DCED to make their technical updates. The idea behind this is that once an assessment is completed, individuals will be put on a priority waiting list that can be filtered (and auto-populated) by program. By creating one waiting list, we will be able to look at all of the people waiting for services within the system. The goal is to have this up and running by March with April as a target for implementation. Once complete, DCED intends to use our intake, assessment, and priority waiting list as a model for the rest of the state. This should reduce unnecessary vacancies and increase bed utilization. This will be the topic for the next couple of meetings. The outcomes committee continues to work on the performance improvement calculator. They are currently looking at the investment data and comparing it to the Housing Link data. This tool is not intended to look at individual program or agency performance, but instead will look at how the system is functioning.

LHOT (Joyce): LHOT has a subcommittee focused on identifying beds that are handicap accessible. They are also looking to work with the housing authority to see how they identify and handle people who may need handicap accessible accommodations.

Training (Deb N.): They are planning a Bridges out of Poverty Training for the week of March 14. Tammy Schoonover from BCOC has joined the training committee which has provided some momentum. They are working on a mental health first aid training for the code blue programs, also in March – there would be a \$35 fee for this training. It was suggested that a SPDAT training might be of use and that it could be combined with Montgomery County. Marti mentioned that she met with the Housing Equality Center, and that they expect to have a new executive director on staff soon. They would be a good contact to offer training on fair housing.

Section 8 Local Preference (Rich): Met in December and reviewed another 6 applications. They are looking in to how they can make even stronger recommendations. In aggregate, they are up to having approved 60 applications. Some have not been successful, and the committee wants to look at who is not successful and why. It was suggested that this program be entered in to HMIS so that progress can

be tracked and other supports be provided. It was also suggested that a locator program be established so that good matches are made with landlords.

CoC Follow Up (Deb K.): There will be requests made for documentation and reporting – this will be discussed in greater detail at future meetings. There have not been any notifications about the renewals.

PIT Update (Stefanie): The current focus of the data management committee is on the upcoming PiT count (Jan. 27). HUD uses this information for their AHAR report. The first meeting was on December 17th – the focus was on the survey and the outreach teams. The second meeting is on January 21st. Woody will provide training, the group will review the survey, distribute the hygiene kits and resource guides, and then the outreach teams will meet to coordinate their efforts. All police chiefs and park rangers have been notified of the count, and instructed to notify Stefanie of any encampments that they know of. The survey has been modified to include first and last names (optional). A question has been added to ask about exchanging sexual relations for services. A question was added about whether or not they are receiving benefits and if they have applied for benefits. They included language to incorporate the changes in the HUD definition of chronically homeless. An attachment was added to identify veterans who may be eligible for services. For the sheltered part of the count, they will use HMIS data.

AHAR (Stefanie): Data was submitted in December (combines PiT count data and HMIS data). All categories have been deemed usable, and the data quality was good. Being included in the national report earns extra points on the HCoC application.

HMIS/Housing Link (Stefanie): There is a case staff meeting every month. They have been working on getting questions related to diversion services in to the screening process – this went live today/last night. They will have an annual training on February 23 at 9am. They will review updates, changes from HUD, technical issues, etc.

Veterans Action Team (Stefanie): They are working on creating a master list. Currently working on consent forms and being reviewed by the VA. The goal is to get this information in to HMIS. The VA has a gap analysis tool. According to this tool, we have adequate resources to handle the needs when they arise. This should allow us to reach functional zero.

HAB update (Marlene/Roger): There was a meeting with Jason and he is working on getting updated data. Currently, there are multiple departments working in the housing system, and efforts are being made to ensure that there is a cross-department understanding of how investments are being made.

2017 United Way Allocation Process (Matt): Over the course of 2016, United Way will be making changes to their allocation process and will be moving to a collective impact model of funding. United Way will be focusing on 6 areas as starting points. These are not necessarily the areas of greatest need, but are areas where we might be able to move the needle. The 6 areas United Way will investigate are housing and homelessness (perhaps as a subcommittee of the HCoC), hunger and nutrition, standardizing information and referral, access to public benefits for seniors, early child care and education, and establishing an emergency assistance fund for basic needs.

Community Conversations (Matt): Over the course of 2015, United Way partnered with the County of Bucks to conduct over 30 community conversations in an effort to develop public knowledge about the aspirations, needs, and barriers of Bucks County residents. Because the report is currently being written, the discussion was focused on the process employed in conducting these conversations. A script was used for each conversation, but each conversation had its own theme, which was determined by the participants. Some themes such as connectedness have emerged, as have sub-issues such as trust, willingness to connect, and civility. Some of the things heard include that people want to live in safe communities where they feel connected to their neighbors. United Way expects to complete the report in the next few months.

Items for the January HCoC-BC meeting:

- SOAR presentation
- 2015 Housing Link report
- PIT
- Presentations from Dan Emr from The Well and Lisa from Family Promise
- Training Announcements

Notes submitted by Matt Uhler, Secretary HCoC-BC