Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)

Coordinated Entry Meeting, Sept 23, 2020, 8:30 AM
Online meeting

ATTENDEES:

- Stephanie Smith, **CVOEO**
- Louise Masterson, **ICA**
- Ciara Kilburn, **Steps**
- Elaine Soto, **Howard Center**
- Emily Taylor, **CHT**
- Jason Brill, **VA**
- Margaret Bozik, **CHT**
- Steve Luna**, SSVF @ UVM**
- Thomas Moore**, UVMMC**
- Mike Ohler, **CHT**
- Meghan Morrow Raftery, **ICA**
- Emily Taylor, **CVOEO**
- Sophia Senning, **COTS**
- Elaine Soto, **Howard**
- Lacey Smith, **BPD**

A Discussion of the Draft Prioritization for Susan's Place (CHT)

- Stephanie Smith/ CVOEO: **For the 30 units that are going to get mainstream vouchers through BHA,** the process is that all households need to be in phase 3 and that we'll have 10 households that have V.A. scores greater than 10 and then the remaining 20 households will have a V.A. score of 9 or lower.
- **For the unsubsidized units,** it will follow our standard referral process to CHT. This is from the homeless unit cue — so households need to have income or subsidy to qualify for the unit and then the households that have that, the priorities will be:
    - 1. Families, those experiencing chronic homelessness and DV
    - 2. All other households. And within these categories households are categorized according to vulnerability.

- Margaret Bozik/ CHT: A few questions: What will we do with the project based subsidy that we'll be getting from the state housing authority and how prioritization will work for those units?   (There's been a bit of a hold up because they wanted us to do an environmental review.). Second question: how does this fit with prioritization for the CARES vouchers (which based more on sustainability scores)? Also, our concern is that we not fill the building with households with very high service needs. This plan goes some way but if we're still prioritizing people based on a higher score, it will tend to put higher V.A. scores into the building.

- Stephanie Smith: For the ESG CARES vouchers, the prioritization is: families, then everyone else (couples or individuals) with a sustainability score of 2 or 3, and then everyone else or those who are elderly or with a chronic health condition.
  - Margaret Bozik: Perhaps we can make a reference <u>in this document</u> to prioritization for the CARES vouchers.

- Steve Lunna/ SSVF: I believe there was some discussion about offering some of these to veterans specifically. [<u>This is true. It was discussed at the last meeting</u> with an implicit approval, but nothing hammered out.] Also most of our veterans are non-chronic and in the 5 - 9 vulnerability range.

- Margaret Bozik: Can we modify prioritization for the unsubsidized units to take out the language about "prioritization for higher scores" and make it a bit more inclusive. Perhaps something about people "with scores of 9 or under including veterans."
  - Stephanie Smith: We have on our referral list 30 households. I don't know how many unsubsidized one-bedrooms there will be. If we prioritize veterans over everyone else, it may be that no one else gets those units.

- Mike Ohler/ CHT: On a related note, it will be easier to speed the process for us at CHT if there is more information about the applicants included. Right now the applications are very bare and it makes us uncomfortable not to know more about the applicants. The case managers have to write a letter for a local preference anyway, so they can just use the same letter.
  - Sophia Senning/ COTS: Do you want us to send in letters of support with the application?
    - Mike Ohler: Yes. It can be the same as the local preference letter.

- Sophia Senning: In terms of prioritization for the non-BHA vouchers, I think we also wanted to take note of people who are about to lose their subsidy.
  - Mike Ohler: Yes, we've done that. There are six households and they're ready to go.

- Stephanie Smith: I'm concerned that we're skipping our prioritization.
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- Margaret Bozik: Maybe we could add language to this document along the lines of: "Prioritization will also be given to households who have vouchers that would otherwise expire."
  - Stephanie Smith: The ESG CARES and the VRS vouchers also have expiration dates. It seems we would be, in effect, prioritizing everyone with a subsidy and de-prioritizing everyone who could afford it on their own.
    - Margaret Bozik: This would be for those who had permanent subsidy prior to Sept. 1st who were going to lose the subsidy because of time limits for finding an apartment.
      - Stephanie Smith: That group is probably not low needs.
        - Linda Amante/ CVOEO: The people who have subsidies already will have their own supports. Also, the two people who I have referred have scores of between 5 and 6.

- Mike Ohler: Just want to remind everyone that there will be an on-site service coordinator as well.

- Margaret Bozik: Do we know how many people in danger of losing their subsidies?
    - Stephanie Smith: I'm looking at the cue now. There are 8 households who are at risk of losing their permanent subsidies who a need a one-bedroom. So if we do this, we would likely be using all of our unsubsidized units on this one group.

- Sophia Senning: I have a question about what happens if we move people into the building with a tenant based subsidy and then we find out that we are going to get 30 VSHA project based subsidies, would they then lose their tenant based subsidy if they're already in the unit? We may not be able to plan for this.
    - Margaret Bozik: There are 68 apartments. We're now down to 62 available to fill from the master-list and if we were to get 30 VSHA vouchers, it would leave only 2 unsubsidized available. It's very hard to plan for this, but I don't think we want to see people's vouchers expire while we wait to see what VSHA will do.
        - Linda Amante/ CVOEO: I agree. What are the vulnerability scores for this group?
            - Stephanie Smith: The V.A. scores are: 14, 15, 7, 6, 6, 5, and 3 but the 3 may not be a regular voucher.

- Margaret Bozik: For people with higher scores, we're going to need to see a service plan in place.
    - Mike Ohler: The six households from this group that I can view already have services attached. I'm not concerned about the six I'm looking at right now.

- Stephanie Smith: We would be prioritizing people with permanent subsidy over everybody else if we follow this type of prioritization and I'm not comfortable with that. Other groups will also lose their subsidy if they don't find housing.
    - Margaret Bozik: From CHT's point of view, temporary subsidy is always a risk for us.

- Mike Ohler: I had believed until now that our 6 were the only ones who had permanent subsidies about to expire. This is the first I'm hearing that there is a longer list.

[It remains unclear how many households are actually in this group.]

- Lindsay Mesa/ Pathways: If CHT's practice is to prioritize people who have an existing subsidy, perhaps it will be all the same. We might be over complicating this.
    - Margaret Bozik: That may well be true and I want to make sure it's transparent.
        - Stephanie Smith: It would technically involve a denial process for other referrals however.

- Stephanie Smith: Referrals for the mainstream process don't seem to be an issue, so I want to put that on the floor for consideration now. Here it is in the current draft form:

- Households must be in phase 3 (active on the BHA waitlist and ready for referral) and eligible for a Mainstream voucher to be considered for referral
- Households meeting the above criteria will be prioritized for referral according to vulnerability score (higher to lower)
- There will be no more than ten (10) households referred that have a vulnerability score of 10 or greater
- The remaining households referred must have a vulnerability assessment score 9 or lower.
  No objections registered.

- Stephanie Smith: So now the unsubsidized units. Let's discuss what the remaining prioritization would be, setting aside those in question who have subsidy they are about to lose.

- Margaret Bozik: We want a total cap of 10 households with scores of 10 or higher.
  - Stephanie Smith: This might mean that more than one person on the list of those with subsidies they're about to lose will not get placed because they have high V.A. scores.

➡ **Lindsay Mesa/ Pathways: Part of the trouble we might run into is that our system of preference for people with higher vulnerability scores means, by definition, that the people with higher needs are the ones who are more likely to have permanent subsidy. So if we are trying to create a mix of people for this building AND also we're preferring people who have a permanent subsidy, it creates a built-in conflict.**

- Emily Taylor/ CHT: Perhaps I could suggest something like 20 units have households of V.A. scores of 6 - 9 and 20 units with scores of 3 - 6.

- Linda Amante/ CVOEO: I just want to re-visit the idea that it's ultimately CHT's decision.

- Stephanie Smith: So we should make a decision about whether to prioritize permanent subsidy or V.A. score. I do like Emily's suggestion (above).

- Linda Amante: How many smaller families are there on our list who could be referred to the two-bedrooms at Susan's Place (about 15 units will be available)?
  - Of the families on our list, at least 40 will have subsidy, so I anticipate being able to fill up the 15 units at Susan's Place.

- [not sure who was speaking]: Any household receiving a CARES voucher will still be classified as literally homeless so they will still be eligible for the FUVS and the "move-on"

preference other subsidies. I'll be assisting residents directly at Susan's Place in this. I have a question: if CHT is approved for project-based vouchers, if households move into the building on a temporary subsidy, is it possible to have the project based vouchers take the place of the temporary subsidy so they can complete their year and then request a permanent subsidy?

- Lindsay Mesa: That would be an ideal transition.

- Margaret Bozik: We could go with what Emily suggested or we could use language like "referrals will be prioritized with a mix of vulnerability scores." This captures what the goal is for the building.
  - Stephanie Smith: It would be easier to "chunk it out" in the manner Emily suggested. We could do it as a percentage. We could include the families in that or separate them out and prioritize them slightly differently.
    - Emily Taylor: I would lean toward a percentage instead of a number if we're going to use the "chunking" method.

- Margaret Bozik: I don't want to have a flat exclusion for someone with a score of 10 or higher but I also couldn't commit to saying 30 percent of the remaining 30 units because now we've got 19 households that are really high needs in one building. I'm hoping we could say "the goal is….." This gives us more flexibility.

  This was a draft proposal offered:
  - **10 percent with a score of 10 or higher.**
  - **70 percent with a score of between 5 and 9.**
  - **20 percent between 0 and 4.**

  - **Stephanie Smith: I think saying 90 percent below a score of 9 would amount to the same thing.**
    - **Margaret Bozik: Yes that sounds fine.**
    - **Lindsay Mesa: Yes that sounds simpler.**

- **Stephanie Smith: So for the remainder of the list, prioritization would be for families, those fleeing DV, those experiencing chronic homelessness. Would we want to add veterans to the first order of priority?**
  - **Jason Brill: Including veterans in the group of scores that are 9 and below would be fine.**
    - **Margaret Bozik: Let's consider saying "at least" a certain percentage of veterans.**
      - **Stephanie Smith: How about 10 percent?**
        - **Jason Brill & Steve Lunna: Yes, sounds good.**

✳ Let's have a vote on this:

- ✓ **MOTION: I'm going to move that we make this recommendation to the Steering Committee.**
  - ✓ **SECONDED.**
  - ✓ **None opposed.**
  - ✓ **None abstained.**

[Please note: The proposal voted on above should be double-checked. It shifted several times quickly.]
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Next Meeting: October 28

Please go to <u>cchavt.org</u> for meeting dates, events, etc.