CHITTENDEN COUNTY HOMELESS ALLIANCE (CCHA)

Steering Committee Minutes

June 6, 2019, 9:00 – 11:00

ATTENDEES:

- **Guest Presenter: GREG HESSEL**
- Jason Brill, **VA**
- Margo Batsie, **STEPS**
- Linda Amante, **CVOEO/ CCA**
- Caitlin Ettenborough, **ICA**
- Amy Carmolla, **United Way NWVT**
- Melissa Farr, **COTS**
- Nicole Kubon, **COTS**
- Meghan Morrow Raftery, **ICA**
- Valerie Russell, **CEDO**
- Chris Brzovic, **CCHA/ CVOEO**
- Rebeka Lawrence-Gomez, **Pathways**
- Erin Ahearn, **CHCB/ Safe Harbor**
- Jessica Radbord, **VLA**
- Elaine Soto, **HC**
- Travis Poulin, **CVOEO**
- Steven Marshall, **Lived Experience**
- Will Towne, **SPECTRUM**
- Kevin Pounds, **Anew Place**
- Geoffrey Pippenger, **DCF/ ESD**
- Lacey Smith, **BPD**
- Margaret Bozik, **CHT**
- Jane Helmstetter, **AHS**
- Sarah Russell, **BHA**
- Steve Lunna, **SSVF@UVM**
- Sarah Phillips**, VT OEO**
- Erica Da Costa, **CCHA**

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF THE NEW HMIS CHARTER

- (The HMIS software provider is now called WELLSKY.)
- DISCUSSION:
  - ICA will never automatically release anything to police simply by request.
  - (P.I.I. = personally identifying information)
    - **MOVE TO APPROVE**
    - **SECONDED**
    - **VOTE:**
      - **17 yes**

- **None opposed**
- **None abstained**

Regarding the vote on HMIS Policy and Procedure:

- o You can view "2019 to 2020 Both CoCs' Governance Charter.docx" at:
  https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn%3Aaaid%3Ascds%3AUS%3A81c2
  c51a-8c2a-4c1d-bcba-6418d34f2d63
- o You can view "Watermarked VT HMIS Policies and Procedures - 2019 DRAFT.docx" at:
  https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn%3Aaaid%3Ascds%3AUS%3A2d75
  cf0f-0889-41f0-90d4-517b068e8dc8
- o You can view "Bullet points of changes to governance docs.docx" at:
  https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn%3Aaaid%3Ascds%3AUS%3Ac54cf
  1b4-e0c1-47a7-b693-138a8db8465c

GREG HESSEL'S DRAFT PRESENTATION – FINAL VERSION WILL BE DELIVERED IN JULY INCORPORATING INPUT FROM THIS MEETING

Link to the Powerpoint of this draft.

1. **PROBLEMS AROUND CONTEXT & CULTURE**
   a. Extreme slowness in decision making seems to be a common comment. Is this because people are risk averse? Is it because people don't entirely trust each other? Trust issues seem to have surfaced during investigation. It's impossible to have difficult conversations if people don't trust each other.
2. **PROBLEMS AROUND COORDINATED ENTRY (WHOSE GOAL IS TO IMPROVE COORDINATION AND DATA)**
   a. Data problems persist: timeliness and completeness
   b. Housing supply – mainly private – are not at the table. If CCHA had an outside facilitator for this (an outside POV) it might provide some value. The question to ask is: What is it going to take to get people on the supply side (especially private landlords) to come to the table?
   c. Economic Services and UVM MC don't have access to data.
      i. There's no health vulnerability aspect to our V.A. score sheet now.
      ii. UVM MC needs to be able to have some HMIS licenses to pull data. Now, their only option is to call Chris Brzovic.
   d. The HMIS exit report right now doesn't enable you to know what happens to people when they exit. 50 percent of the "reason for exit" fields are blank. 63 percent of the phase fields are blank.
   e. The phase data in general is inadequate. A question to ask yourselves: Do you want to track time from entry to phase 3?
- **QUESTION:** What are the reasons for so many empty fields?
  - o RESPONSE:

- 1. Time (the Housing Navigators are stretched)
- 2. Training and
- 3. No agreed-upon definition of certain terms like "retention" just for one example. Another example: 111 people are listed as exiting the system through RRH – but apparently there's no possibility that many people actually exited through RRH so the definitions must not be understood.
  - **How do you want to measure success**? Once you decide that, then you can tailor your data collection toward that.

3. IDENTFYING RESOURCE GAPS

1. HOUSING STOCK

2. HOUSING NAVIGATORS:

a. People seem to be successfully entering the system without delay, but we would decrease the time to phase 3 with more Housing Navigators.

b. Roughly we've had 1000 unique individual come through the system -- 176 are inactive. While there's no problem with people entering the system, the Housing Navigators don't have the capacity to meet with them weekly.

3. RETENTION WORKERS and RESOURCES:

a. Rough approximation of the amount of time spent with each client per week:
   i. COTS = 36 minutes
   ii. Safe Harbor = 50 minutes
   iii. CVOEO = 24 minutes

b. **QUESTION**: Is the term "Housing Navigator" used interchangeably with the term "Case Manager"?
   RESPONSE: "Housing Navigator" is applied to anyone who provides specifically "housing navigation" and this may be a Case Manager or it may not depending on the organization.

c. There's no one definition of "Retention" either. You likely need more retention workers, but without more data, it's hard to actually show that.
   1. **Let's add retention data element to HMIS.**
   2. Landlords can also offer this data directly because they often know if there are retention services available to a particular client.

4. GENERAL INEFFICIENIES IN THE SYSTEM:

a. Screening process (this is the brief screening that takes place prior to the client directly interacting with CVOEO – if they go directly to CVOEO, there is no screening).

b. When clients reach phase 3 and they're housing ready, there is inefficient interaction between BHA and Housing Navigators.
   i. The master-list is re-prioritized/ re-shuffled in ways that aren't always efficient or optimal. Clients – it appears – sometimes get bumped to different positions on the priority list and perhaps they shouldn't be.
      1. There isn't standardization about who even belongs on the list.
      2. Some people on the list never seem to get referred at all.

c. Lack of Coordinated Entry training.

d. Lack of exit ramps. If someone is on the wait list for five years or more, the system is not working and there needs to be a way to "off ramp" them other than the established route.

i. Let's test people with housemates. Even if it only works for 10 percent of people, that's substantial
   e. Lack of housing stock.
       i. Brattleboro has incentives for people to create housing stock – $2000 incentive to create an apartment in your home.
   f. Lack of data and data analysis to find where the bottlenecks are.

COMMENT: There is also a dynamic of: advocates vs. a federally regulated program.

5. INEQUITY IN THE SYSTEM (how work is distributed)
- o It's not reasonable to expect everyone working in these organizations to do everything the same way or the same amount of work. Imbalance is going to be inevitable.

6. CONSUMER FEEDBACK
- o The majority of consumer experience reported was positive.
- o A third of consumers surveyed said "mostly unfair." They tend to be unhappy about their position on the priority list: "I've been working hard to stay sober for three years but someone else is considered more needy."
- o When questioned about whether they know the next step to take in the process, they said yes, but just the next one. Not additional subsequent steps: "It's like a corn maze. I don't know how to get out."
- o A particular desire expressed by consumers: One stop shopping.
- o A particular frustration: Length of time to housing.
- o Feedback loop: Let's keep asking questions like "what does good case management look like to you?" The power dynamic is difficult to overcome, but with questions at the beginning and the end of the process especially, this can be partially overcome.

DISCUSSSION

- Where are housing providers integrated?
- If CHT doesn't have an agreement with a specific provider because of tax credit regulations, the vacancies go to Coordinated Entry.
- How do we get private landlords to the table?
   - o Let's connect the landlord association and see if they can help inform C.E.

QUESTION: The consumers who had a good experience: what was good about it?

GREG'S RESPONSE: They felt respected, they felt connected to their Housing Navigators , they got a lot of support getting Housing Ready.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Recommendation to Greg: Specific workplans would be helpful.
   - o Greg: I'm going to work with Chris to help map out who should be responsible for what.
- **Greg: What has been most important in the presentation so far?**
   1. How many people are we going to need if we want to get more people into the system?
   2. **What about congregant housing?** How do we get creative about it?

RESPONSE: We are doing that now around offender re-entry. It's working but it takes a lot of effort from a support person. Recovery housing is another model.

3. Retention services needs more understanding and exploration. **Retention is defined most simply as: helping people comply with the specifics of their lease.** Everything else flows from that.

   a. How much of retention service is mental health service? Is it worthwhile to try to offload that mental health support to mental health experts.

      RESPONSE: Retention should never replace Mental Health services but Retention workers need to be able to help with mental health supports.

NOFA UPDATE

- The NOFA has not been released yet.
- Marcy Esberg has agreed to do what a consultant would normally do.

BRIEF REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY MEETING

- It was a good sized crowd. The venue and the time (morning) were very successful.
- Can we reach out to the attendees directly and thank them for attending?

Coordinated Entry, Built for Zero (Community Solutions) Update

- On Tuesday we had an on-site meeting with Community Solutions.
- We report approximately 90 people who are consistently chronically homeless.
  - Of these, 56 we've done a needs analysis:
    - 31 of these need PSH
    - 28 need substance abuse treatment – 24 have MH treatment
    - 49 identified as needing MH support
    - 8 were ineligible for mainstream assistance
    - 326 days from ID to housed
- We're going to start having more micro-level data, like more nuanced information about needs and who might be likely to become chronically homeless.
- Steve Lunna: BFZ team commented that they have seen some real progress. I think there's also a lot more communication and collaboration.
- There was a general theme of using the data to help dictate the needs.
- Have a look at the BFZ data on their website. If we could achieve quality data on families that would be a great goal for us.
- Chris: Invest in supportive services above all else.

VOTE on the [Coordinated Entry Partnership Agreement](#)

- **MOVE TO APPROVE**
- **SECONDED**
- **VOTE:**
    - o **14 yes**
    - o **None oppossed**
    - o **2 abstained**

STRATEGIC PLAN

- The Strategic Planning Committee developed these priorities:
    - o Streamlining access to resources
    - o Housing retention

    [Find the priority activities described here.](#)

    We want to have more formal statement about where we are on those 2 things.
    - o **MOVE TO APPROVE THE ACTION PLAN FY 19 - 20**
    - o **SECONDED**
    - o **VOTE:**
        - o **15 yes**
        - o **None Opposed**
        - o **1 abstained**

RANKING COMMITTEE'S REVISED LETTER OF SUPPORT

- This is not a vote but we wanted everyone to have a chance to read it and comment.
- Stephen is happy with the letter of support.

Next meeting: July 11 tentative meeting.

To find the minutes archive go to **cchavt.org**