

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance (CCHA)

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

August 1, 2019

Attendees:

- Jason Brill, **VA**
- David Hurne, **VA**
- Steve Lunna, **SSVF@UVM**
- Chris Brzovic, **CCHA/CVOEO**
- Lindsay Mesa, **Pathways Vermont**
- Elaine Soto, **HC**
- Linda Amante, **CVOEO**
- Travis Poulin, **CVOEO**
- Tammy Santamore, **LUND**
- Melissa Farr, **COTS**
- Stephen Marshall, **Lived Experience**
- MaryEllen Mendl, **Vermont 211/ UW**
- Janet Green, **BHA**
- Alison Harte, **AHS**
- Stephanie Bixby, **BHA**
- Laura Wilson, **CSC**
- Lacey Smith, **BPD**
- Jane Helmstetter, **AHS**
- Margaret Bozik, **CHT**
- Dylan Foote, **Steps**
- Lindsey Hedges, **Steps**
- Jan Demers, **CVOEO**
- Val Russell, **CEDO**
- Amy Carmolla, **UW**

Please note: Unless quote marks are used, text attributed to a particular person is paraphrased.

PRELIMINARIES

- David Hurne is visiting. He works in healthcare for homeless veterans.
- The new half time position was announced officially. It will be mobile and circulate among the agencies to meet clients where they are.
- Dylan is leaving Steps.
- Lindsey Hedges was just hired at Steps (welcome Lindsey).
- Jan Demers: We have 70 farm-to-family coupon books still available for senior citizens (age 60 up for our purposes)

LEGISLATIVE REPORT ON SPECIALIZED VOUCHERS

- Alison from AHS: **Legislative report due Sept 1** on housing and services. We're looking especially at why certain federal subsidies are being sent back. We're interested to hear what all of you have to say about it.
- Here are some highlights from Lindsey/ Pathways:
 - All around the state, there is a mismatch between the subsidy funds and service dollars that providers have to serve people. This is true for RR and Shelter+Care.
Contributing factors include:
 - Who gets served in the grant specifically and when. For example, if you can start serving someone on Jan 1st but they don't appear until March 1st and then they stay in that unit for six months and then they're out of the unit for two months and in the meantime they're contributing possibly 200 toward rent and at other times 0 toward rent – this can be a real challenge for service providers.
 - Additionally fair market increases (FMI) happen which affect our ability to serve.
 - On the service side, when we're committing to grants, we're committing with funding we have at the time and then that funding is static over many years. At best, it means that if we say we can serve 10 people, it's always going to be 10 people (in PSH projects, it has to be 10 people for 10 years). In worst case scenarios, since the funding is static, it means being able to serve less people over time. The cost of staffing a program goes up.
- Margaret/CHT: We've struggled over the years to know exactly how many people COULD be served with subsidy but we don't have the service dollars. It has happened in the past that 9 to 10 people were cued up and ready to go but didn't have service dollars.
- Lindsey: Pathways supports two distinct Shelter+Care grants and we are obligated to fill the older grant first.
- Jessica/LEGAL AID: Question for people providing services. We want people to have the most case management possible. We have someone now who is homeless who is doing the **"Choices for Care"** application. Do you find the kind of case management from Choices for Care, DV services, and other similar programs, might be able to fill some of the needs that you're trying to fill at Pathways? And Chris, how many people might be eligible for that stuff if we had someone to help them fill out those extremely complicated applications?
 - RESPONSE: Lindsey: CHOCIES FOR CARE poses barriers because they're looking to fill someone's physical/health needs but not looking to do retention work. It also requires a sponsoring agency (HUD approved).
 - Jessica: Let's say someone has DD services and they're paired with PATHWAYS do you find you're able to do more.
 - Lindsey/ Pathways: No.
- Jane/AHS: We need teaming. We do have a training coming up. We need more cross training.

- Question for Elaine/HC: What are some of the reasons HC has pulled out of the HUD programs?
 - RESPONSE: The Shelter+Care grants became very difficult to administer because no one was meeting the HUD definition. We don't let people go a whole year without housing, for example.
 - Would Coordinated Entry help this process?
 - RESPONSE: Perhaps, but it's also about meeting the criteria for CRT clients (Community Rehabilitation and Treatment)
- Stephen Marshall: If there aren't enough people to serve that may be a great thing. We want to do everything we can to PREVENT a chronic status.
 - RESPONSE: We know there are a lot more people to serve however.
- Alison: **Only Pathways and Safe Harbor are providers of PSH?**
 - RESPONSE: Yes.
- Alison: This seems very piecemeal. Each agency provides a piece. But no one is comprehensive except for maybe Pathways.
- The V.A. does have PSH outside of what we're talking about here.
- Laura/ Cathedral Square: The SASH program is close to best practice (service embedded in the housing itself). We also have a new program for embedded mental health services that's wildly successful but the funding from ONECARE is going away – while they are also touting us as best practices.
- Lindsey/ Pathways: I do want to emphasize, despite funding challenges though, that we're having a lot of successes.
- Let's talk about FUVs at a future meeting.
- Dylan/ STEPS: Our big challenge recently has been service capacity that was reduced dramatically by the departure & leave of key staff. We've already doubled utilization in the last month.

Please send your thoughts/contributions/suggestions to Alison: alison.harte@vermont.gov

PRESENTATION: Burlington Housing Authority PSH Grants (The BHA handout will be added if possible.)

For 2018 – 2019 cycle:

- 29 % rental subsidy unused across all 4 grants
- served 52 households
- ECHO is what we'll send the most money back on (Expanding Chronic Homeless Options— with Pathways)
- Just for clarity: We have two grants with PATHWAYS (**New Horizons** (the older, more established grant) at approx. \$173K and **ECHO** at approx. \$190K). The FMR (Fair Market Rent) goes up every year and so rental assistance goes up slightly. These are Shelter+Care grants.
- **Housing First** has about maximum utilization. They have only about \$2700 going back which is realistically about as low as it can go.

- Beacon has about \$29K that will be recaptured and New Horizon has about \$24K that will be recaptured (unused).
 - We have done better this last year than the year before.
 - These are annual grants which are very hard to manage. HOP three-year grants are so much easier. In terms of advocacy, we'd love to lengthen the time span of the grants.
 - 100% of all chronically homeless clients we work with are now coming through Coordinated Entry
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PRESENTATION: Pathways – Rapid Rehousing Grant ([Click here to find the handout supporting this presentation.](#))

- We are not actually at the end of our first year grant cycle yet (ends at the end of August) so keep that in mind.
 - We have about \$142K and this year in the form of 2 applications that included bonus money (RR and RR expansion).
 - We served 10 households this year.
 - 100% of those exiting literal homelessness are coming through Coordinated Entry.
 - We had 3 people exit the program.
 - We won't be able to access roughly 60K this year (won't know for sure until the end of August) and this is largely because we were in the first year of the grant.
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PRESENTATION: Steps to End Domestic Violence – Rapid Rehousing Grant

- In the past year we had about \$147K in rental assistance.
 - In terms of supportive services, we're shooting for about 8 households.
 - We only had to return 2.3 percent of that money which is basically full utilization.
 - We have had, however, a lot of turnover recently that caused both capacity and data to suffer.
 - In the last grant ending November 30th, we had 31 beds utilized and 19 households served.
 - We've already doubled utilization since Lindsay came on board a month ago to be the new Economic Justice Advocate.
 - We create a payment plan & can pay up to 6 months of rental assistance and it tapers off after that. After six months there's a calculation made that takes into account income and so forth. 24 months is possible at the maximum end.
 - During that six-month period, the client will be referred to Opportunities Credit Union, Vermont Works for Women and other resources.
 - QUESTION: When you run out of rental assistance to offer, are there other options for the client at that point? Is there a different transition plan?
 - This program exists in complement with our transitional housing program which allows people to connect to section 8 vouchers.
 - **The need is staggering.** Even if people cannot establish full self sufficiency inside of 2 years, they now have a wide array of options.
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PRESENTATION: CVOEO – Coordinated Entry

- The grant through the COC funds Chris Brzovic’s position as C.E. Administrator.
- Chris chairs the C.E. committee, manages the assessment process, facilitates the CHRC (Community Housing Review Committee) meetings, manages the master-list, manages the Built for Zero database, etc.
- The new part-time position will streamline the front-end of the process. He/she will be the point person for front-line access.
- Have a look at the EXIT DATA below:

Coordinated Entry Exit Data 9/1/18 through 7/10/19

Exit Category (by sub-population)	Number
Chronically Homeless	
Total Permanent Exits to Housing	39
With rental subsidy	29
Rental with no subsidy	7
Family or Friends (permanent)	3
Average Length of Time from ID to Housing (mean)	251 days
Veterans	
Total Exits to Housing	19
With rental subsidy	10
Rental with no subsidy	7
Family or Friends (permanent)	2
Average Length of Time from ID to Housing (mean)	174 days
Median LOT to Housing	120 days
Families (households with children)	
Total Exits to Housing	31
With rental subsidy	25
Rental with no subsidy	6
Family or Friends (permanent)	0
Average Length of Time from ID to Housing (mean)	164 days
Youth (under 25)	
Total Exits to Housing	12
With rental subsidy	6
Rental with no subsidy	4
Family or Friends (permanent)	2
Average Length of Time from ID to Housing (mean)	236 days
Single Adults (Not chronic, not vet, not youth)	
Total Exits to Housing	84
With perm rental subsidy	63
With RRH time-limited subsidy	6
Rental with no subsidy	39
Family or Friends (permanent)	6
Average Length of Time from ID to Housing (mean)	180 days

continued

CHRC Referrals since 9/18		
Type of Resource	Households type	# Households referred
Permanent Supportive Housing (Pathways, Safe Harbor, Dettman Place, Sarah Cole House)	Individuals	18 (all chronically homeless)
Rapid Rehousing (Pathways)	Individuals	8
BHA Mainstream Preference	Individuals	30 (17 chronically homeless)

Assessments since 9/1/18 (clients currently on List)		
Agency Assessed at	Number of households	
ANEW Place	21	
COTS	174	
CHCB/Safe Harbor	26	
CVCEO	182	
Howard Center	13	
Spectrum	11	
UVM - SSVF	12	
Total Clients assessed since 9/1/18	453	

- We have a very limited capacity and a shortage of supply of smaller sized apartments.
- **Over 200 households were housed in less than year by the CoC. Yea!**
- Jessica/Legal Aid: At the Council on Homelessness meeting, Daniel Blankenship said that there's wiggle room to do SSOs (supportive services only) in the application. Could BHA/ Sarah Russell's division be funded this way?

- RESPONSE: To take funds from the CoC, the amount of ADMINISTRIVIA [best word ever] is too onerous. We cannot do it.
 - Val/CEDO: I had a question from a potential grantee: “If we had NON-CoC rental assistance, could we put in an application for supportive services only?” So I put in an AAQ to HUD and they said it’s possible, but there’s a high admin burden. You apply for a PSH grant, but then you put zero dollars toward rental assistance and all toward services. (Pathways is trying this.)
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DISCUSSION ABOUT THE COMMUNITY MEETING

- MONDAY SEPT 23 does NOT work for most people, so it is **moved to TUESDAY SEPT 24 in the morning at 8AM**. This is our business meeting. There will be elections of officers, votes on charter changes and elections of steering committee seats. We’ll be voting to add a veterans committee and to add rules around committee participation. We have one vacant seat and are recruiting around lived experience.
 - HUD wants us to do an analysis of racial disparity.
 - We’ll do an exercise around shared values.
 - A discussion around inclusivity (around disability and LGBTQ) and transparency.
 - Jason: We’d like to claim that we’ve ended veteran homelessness in Chittenden Co and possibly all of Vermont and we’d like space to talk about that.
 - [PLEASE FIND A LINK TO THE MEETING POSTER HERE.](#)
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COMMITTEE UPDATES & ONE VOTE: Coordinated Entry

- Greg just finished his report. C.E. will be incorporating what we’ve learned from that report. C.E. is revising forms. We’re also coming up to the second annual training and we’ll be preparing for that. We’ll be improving coordination between assessment hubs.
- We’ll also be working on **Built for Zero** improvement projects. The BFZ team = Sarah Russell, Linda Amante, Nicole Kubon, Meghan Morrow Raftery, Lindsey Mesa, Erin Ahearn, Steve Lunna, Jason Brill, Chris Brzovic. **The question is, do we want to participate for another year? Quicken Loans will underwrite us (it will cost us nothing to participate except travel expenses for conferences).**
- Stephen Marshall: What have you accomplished the BFZ? What’s the value?
 - Nicole: Working with partners from across the country to find out what other communities are doing has been valuable.
 - Chris: The improvement projects have also had value. For example, focusing efforts on people who AT RISK of homelessness rather than simply homeless. Also, identifying people who are accessing Coordinated Entry but are not moving through the phases to discover what is happening.
 - Nicole: We’re just getting momentum with BFZ so it makes sense to keep going for one more year.
 - Jason: The point now is that we have the data. We can find out how to build on that. It would be a missed opportunity not to continue on this path.
 - Community Solutions does also supply \$1000 for travel for everyone combined.
 - **VOTE: For continuing to participate in BFZ.**
 - **Seconded**
 - **All those in favor: 11**
 - **Opposed: 0**

- **Abstention: I**

Please go to cchavt.org to find the minutes archives & upcoming dates.

Next Meeting: 9/5