CONTINUUM OF CARE OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary Notes
Wednesday, May 27, 2015

Attendees	Agency	Attendees	Agency
Ball, Kim	DHHS/Special Needs Housing	Khan, Nadim	DHHS/Special Needs Housing
Bird, Diana	Housing Opportunities Commission	Kirk, Susan	Bethesda Cares
Black, Sara	DHHS/Special Needs Housing	Korona, Luann	Department of Housing and Community Affairs
Blasco, Anna	National Alliance to End Homelessness	McMillan, Linda	County Council Staff
Dorsey, Bob	Montgomery Avenue Women's Center	Schaak, Gina	Technical Assistance Collaborative
Fuje, Ferework	Catholic Charities	Sinclair-Smith, Susie	Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless
Frederick, Denise	Stepping Stone Shelter	Soni, Nili	DHHS/Special Needs Housing
Gandell, Miriam	The Dwelling Place	Swartz, Kristy	People Encouraging People Outreach
Hochron, Jean	DHHS/Public Health Services	Todd, Chapman	Zero: 2016-MC Coalition for the Homeless
Kelly, LaSonya	DHHS/Public Health Services	Williams, Edith	Helping Hands Shelter

INTRODUCTIONS AND APPROVAL OF THE APRIL

Nadim Khan convened the meeting with introductions and motioned to approve the meeting notes for the April 22 Operations Committee meeting. The meeting notes were approved as written.

UPDATE ON THE HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Kim Ball distributed the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Participation agreement that HUD requires all HMIS participants to review and approve annually. The document highlighted the changes made such as:
- updating the confidentiality agreement;
- the ability to lock a client's information when the client has requested the information not be shared system wide
- adding the permission to give out information

➔ **ACTION**: Continuum of Care members were given week to review and approve the HMIS Participation agreement. The due date for finalizing the agreement is July 1 for the contract fiscal year.

➔ **ACTION**: Client privacy policies will be checked by Stacey Matthews, Service Point Dedicated User Support Specialist, after the HMIS HUD data standards are distributed. Stacey will perform a data check in the HMIS and review the privacy policy for updates.

<u>**HOUSING INVENTORY COUNT**</u>

Kim Ball distributed the Housing Inventory Count. Kim shared the challenge in counting Permanent Support Housing (PSH) clients because HUD's definition of PSH is housing people with disabilities. Montgomery County definition of PSH is broader housing people with disabilities as well as housing people who are vulnerable and those with medical needs. In preparing the housing inventory count to comply with HUD's definition, we have to break down clients in permanent housing into categories (PSH, Rapid Rehousing and other) to distinguish those with and without disabilities. The number of designated beds for chronically homeless is 210. At this times we are prioritizing beds for veterans and chronically homeless.

<u>**PRESENTATION ON WRITTEN STANDARDS**</u>

Gina Schaak distributed the latest draft of the written standards. Written standards are a HUD requirement for local Continuum of Cares to standardize their system of care. The written standards will outline the coordinated entry or assessment system detailing eligibility criteria and the assessment tool (vulnerability index) that will be used to determine priority and/or service need. Gina stated that the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) registration closed recently and one of the expectations of HUD is that Montgomery County has written standards. Finalizing the standards will not mean that they cannot be revisited and revised.

Gina gave a brief overview of the draft emphasizing the need to decide which assessment tool that will be used. After a lengthy discussion, the following action was agreed upon:

➔ **ACTION**: Assessments wording will be changed to read: The Housing Option Targeting tool for families and individuals are generally assessed with the VI-SPDAT (Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization and Decision Assistance Tool).

➔ **ACTION**: Under the section Client Decline Policy the example that consumer may decline participation in programs requiring sobriety will be removed.

A more appropriate example would be a client declining because they are comfortable at the shelter or because they want specific housing criteria that cannot be met. The Committee engaged in a lengthy discussion about client choice. The issue was tabled due to the difficulty deciding how to standardize handling clients who refuse appropriate units because of their specific preferences or because of their mental illness. Handling these declines may need to be left to the case managers of the organization or agency on a case-by-case basis

After much discussion, the Committee identified additional changes

➔ **ACTION**: Gina will make these changes and forward a final draft to Nadim. Early June before the NOFA release, Nadim will forward the draft electronically to the Committee for approval. In accordance with the Governance Charter, there will be one vote per organization.

➔ **SUGGESTION**: The Committee proposed the creation of a sub-committee to examine the various assessments tools.

<u>**ZERO:2016**</u>

Nadim Khan reported that the County Council included $500,000 in the FY16 housing initiative fund budget to possibly provide 10 rapid rehousing or 10 permanent supportive housings for veterans. The County Council has asked that a spending plan be transmitted by July 15. Linda McMillan shared that the $500,000 are flexible dollars that can be used for rents or gaps in service support.

Chapman Todd distributed a Zero:2016 summary document. Chapman highlighted the following items:

1. The Zero:2016 Campaign's focus is to get the number of homeless veterans in Montgomery County down to a functional level of zero by the end of 2016 by working within the system as well as using potential new resources. A functional zero level means that when a veteran enters the system, there will be a housing placement or an opportunity to more the veteran quickly out of homelessness to a housing setting.

2. A master list of veterans who are homeless has been created and is being updated and refined daily. The list is identified through a number of different sources, including Veterans Administration (VA), Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) and information from HMIS. A committee that meets after the Housing Prioritization Meeting and a separate meeting with the VA and the SSVF providers meets monthly to review the names on the list and working to identify housing placement. Currently, there are 25-30 veterans on the list.

➔ **ACTION**: HMIS will be used to capture names of veterans entering the system. However, to ensure all clients presenting as veterans are included on the master list, providers were encouraged to contact Nili Soni, Chapman Todd or Kari Smith with the names of those entering their specific programs.

3. The HMIS is designed to anticipate the type of housing needs for people who will enter the system during the years based on Montgomery County and national trends.

4. The analysis of the names on the list we are looking at the types of housing: PSH, Rapid re-housing and light touch (not needing assistance coming in). Federal resources are the highest priority (such as VASH) before reverting to local resources.

SERVING PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES:
Priscilla Fox-Morrill shared that many of her InterFaith Works program directors have expressed concern about serving people with serious cognitive disabilities. Susie Sinclair-Smith and Sara Black both shared their observations of the challenges in serving this population.

➔ **ACTION**: Serving people experiencing homelessness with developmental, cognitive and/or intellectual disabilities will be added to the July 22 Operations Committee meeting agenda.

MEETING ADJOURNED