



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY HOMELESS SERVICES CONTINUUM OF CARE

## INTERAGENCY COMMISSION ON HOMELESSNESS QUARTERLY MEETING

Wednesday, June 14, 2017

3:30 – 5:30 pm

Rockville Memorial Library

21 Maryland Avenue, First Floor Conference Room

Rockville, Maryland 20850



# Gap Analysis Draft Results

Presenters: Amanda J. Harris  
Darlene Mathews

# METHODOLOGY

- SERVICE PROVIDER SURVEYS
- FOCUS GROUPS WITH INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE
- HOMELESS MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM
- BEST PRACTICE EVALUATION TOOLS: The US Interagency Council in Homelessness Supportive Housing Opportunities Planner (SHOP Tool) and Homeless Evaluator Tool which was designed by the Center for Capacity Building for the National Alliance to End Homelessness
- COUNTY SOURCE DATA: County budgets for local investments, state investments and federal investments were provided to inform the costing analysis

# SINGLES SYSTEM OUTCOMES AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Singles System	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Description
<b>Inventory</b>	190	138	This is the total amount of beds in the Continuum of Care (CoC) inventory broken out by component type
<b>Total people served in 1 year</b>	1495	242	Total Clients Served in the Period from HMIS
<b>Average Length of Stay</b>	41	306	Average time in the CoC for everyone who exited during the year
<b>Total Exits to Temporary or Unknown Destinations</b>	90% (1,042)	42% (55)	Total exits by program component that were not identified as positive outcomes
<b>Positive Exits to Permanent Housing</b>	10% (113)	58%(75)	Total exits by program component that were to Permanent Housing solutions
<b>Cost per bed</b>	\$19,696	\$18,537	The annual cost to provide the bed by component type
<b>Cost per POSITIVE PH Exit</b>	\$33,118	\$38,340	The return on investment organized by component type. This calculates the investment in the system that the community makes from the perspective of how many positive outcomes can be achieved during the period. The more positive outcomes during the year, the greater the rate of return and the lower the cost of the intervention.

# FAMILY SYSTEM OUTCOMES AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Families	Motel and Emergency Shelter	TH	Rapid Re- housing	Description
<b>Inventory</b>	181	146	198	This is the total amount of beds in the CoC inventory broken out by component type
<b>Total Served in 1 Year</b>	1,086 people	204 people	279 people	Total Clients Served (people) in the Period from HMIS
<b>Average LOS</b>	51	473	346	Average time in the CoC for everyone who exited during the year
<b>Total Exits to Temporary or Unknown Destinations</b>	936 people (57%)	26 people (25%)	17 people (16%)	Total exits by program component that were not identified as positive outcomes
<b>Positive Exits to Permanent Housing</b>	405 people (43%)	77 people (75%)	90 people (84%)	Total exits by program component that were to Permanent Housing solutions
<b>Cost per bed</b>	\$15,886	\$15,171	\$5,784	The annual cost to provide the bed by component type
<b>Cost per family</b>	\$50,836	\$48,548	\$18,319	The average homeless family size is 3.2. Applying that family size to the costs gives the community a per family/unit cost
<b>Cost per POSITIVE PH Exit</b>	\$15,866	\$28,766	\$12,710	The return on investment organized by component type. This calculates the investment in the system that the community makes from the perspective of how many positive outcomes can be achieved during the period. The more positive outcomes during the year, the greater the rate of return and the lower the cost of the intervention.



## **RECIDIVISM (RECURRENCE OF HOMELESSNESS) 2014-2016**

### **SINGLES SYSTEM**

INDIVIDUALS WHO EXITED THE SYSTEM TO A POSITIVE DESTINATION AND SUBSEQUENTLY RETURNED TO THE SHELTER SYSTEM

27%

### **PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

FAMILIES WHO EXITED THE SYSTEM TO A POSITIVE DESTINATION AND SUBSEQUENTLY RETURNED TO THE SHELTER SYSTEM

24%



# Internal Recommendations

# BUDGET ORGANIZATIONS

- Segregating budget information by component type and project capacity
- Track costs of program models by subpopulation (family and single) is also critical to determining the true investment in certain interventions. This will give you a “by unit or bed” cost for individual programs.
- The County can then use this information to derive consistent bed/unit costs across the system.



## Scope of the County Role in Ending Homelessness: Leadership, Oversight, Management, Direct Service Provider

- What role does Montgomery County want to play in ending homelessness?
- County plays a critical and important role in
  - Leadership on homeless issues
  - Direct service in homeless services
  - Monitoring program and system outcomes
- Explore conflicts of interest
- County's role should be focused on where its expertise lies

# Data Focused Decision Making

- Data and Research Manager at a leadership level whose focus is on ensuring that the community has enough information to make data informed decisions, report development and outcome tracking
- Manager could ensure that there is confluence between the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and the County's new internal data system.
- Establish and monitor local and federal outcomes measures that would be used to drive decision making and create Data Dashboards that could be helpful at demonstrating accountability and transparency to oversight groups

# Data Focused Decision Making

- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is also understaffed
- Hire additional System Administration
- HMIS should fall under Data and Research Manager

# Critical Parts of the Homeless System that are not in HMIS.

- Prevention Programs must be entered into HMIS to ensure that there is no duplication in services within a period and to track recidivism
- Exit Assistance must be entered into HMIS to ensure that there is no duplication in services within a period and to track recidivism
- Diversion is a relatively new service model that is becoming popular in homeless services. To track the effectiveness of this technique, the average financial investment and the quality of the services provided this information should be in HMIS. It's also critical to be able to track how many clients received diversion that ultimately entered the shelter system.
- Intensive Team Meetings are a case management technique that has been identified as having success at exiting families from shelter. Tracking when this occurs and the outcome would be critical to determine the technique should be expanded or perhaps provided earlier.
- Clients Who Do Not Enter the System: Clients who are denied shelter because they are not from Montgomery County and clients who are interested in making an application for shelter but change their mind during the process should also be tracked in the system. This information will help identify trends in regional homeless issues.

# DHHS Response to Internal Recommendations

- Contract Review to separate by project type and population
- Additional HMIS Staff
- Exploring SNH Structure and leadership capacity

# Policy Considerations

1. Remove Substance Abuse Screening as a required activity to obtain shelter
2. Reasonable Accommodation Policy
3. Family Separation Act and Equal Access

# DHHS Response To Policy Considerations

- Removing drug testing as a requirement for shelter effective July 2017
- Full assessment of reasonable accommodations policies in all programs



# **Initial Draft Right Sizing Recommendations for the Operations Committee**



# Create a Person Centric Continuum of Care

- A person centric system is one where there is community acknowledgement that the only real resolution to homelessness is housing.
- Housing solutions must be applied with immediacy in every client circumstance
- Housing is the essential function of the Continuum of Care (CoC) and creating the most immediate connection to housing resources and stabilization factors will get the results needed for the persons served

# Steps to Creating a Person Centric System

- Ensure that leadership is bought into the idea of a person centric Continuum of Care
- Both sides of the CoC (families and singles) are bought into this model
- Contracts should be specific and outline outcomes and performance expectations
- Training on evidence based service strategies: critical time intervention, motivational interviewing
- Focusing service providers on providing ONLY the services for which they have expertise; create a coordinated system of care
- Program re-design support for service providers

# Singles System

- Build out Coordinated Entry
- Focus on achieving a 60 day Length of Stay with positive outcomes. Provide more robust services through the Coordinated Entry System (CES) and assessment on the singles side.
- Build in more employment services on the front end (perhaps by bringing in service providers with this expertise)
- Comprehensive assessment and direct connections to Rapid Re-housing at shelter
- Identify clear case management ratios and explore offering different kinds of engagement strategies.

# Singles System

- Need for more comprehensive assessment—perhaps expanding access points so comprehensive assessment can be done where people present instead of sending them back and forth from County sites to be assessed (focus groups)
- Identify an existing program that could be reorganized to provide crisis beds with no barriers. These beds should be controlled by outreach programs so that extremely vulnerable chronically homeless people high on the prioritization list can wait for their housing or be taken there to be assessed.
- More Assertive Community Treatment teams providing case management

# Family System

- Analyze intake process and workflow for families; consider breaking out triage (for eligibility and placement) and assessment to reduce barriers and shorten the intake process.
- Provide comprehensive housing search assistance for families in motels.
- Ensure that evidence based assessment are used to prioritize housing and service needs.
  - Remove zip code barrier for assessment
- COLLABORATION WITH MAINSTREAM SERVICES
  - Childcare
  - Employment
  - TANF

# Project Expansion

- I. SCALE RAPID RE-HOUSING -Based on three years worth of trend analysis on employment,
  - 49% of families have employed heads of household
  - 24% of singles are employed

Montgomery County could expand its Rapid Re-housing program by 450 units annually to help working individuals and families exit the system.

- Design a comprehensive service strategy utilizing evidence-based interventions such as critical time intervention and place people into this solution early; the program should consider scaling the rent subsidy provided based on need, identify person focused time frames for providing assistance instead of standard time frames and explore the option of placing individuals outside of the County.

# Project Expansion

- II. Expand Diversion Programs: Anecdotally, the County has demonstrated acumen in diverting homelessness.
  - Evidence is emerging on the success of diversion programs at helping vulnerable families at risk of homelessness avoid entry into the system.
  - The County should consider expanding these programs for families and piloting them at CES for singles.
  - However, this information must be put into the HMIS to track outcomes.

# Project Expansion

## III. Expand Permanent Supportive Housing:

- United States ICH Supportive Housing  
Opportunity Planner used to derive 2017  
Chronic Homeless development goal: **193**



# COC Update on Right Sizing System

- Increased Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) stock
- Reviewing family coordinated entry system and testing various assessment/screening tools
- Removing the zip code barrier over the next few months



# Areas Worth Exploring

# Using Rental Assistance Program as a More Strategic Homeless Resource

- Shallow Subsidy Program- Montgomery County uses the Rental Assistance Program (RAP) shallow subsidy to exit families from Rapid Re-housing.
  - This RAP program is an innovative locally developed tool that supports vulnerable County residents.
  - Is there a way for Montgomery County to expand this program for the working homeless people in CoC who may be consistently under-employed and never earn enough to live without a small ongoing subsidy?
  - Prioritize Homeless families for the RAP program?
  - Manage RAP out of Coordinated Entry for immediate placement for working families that need subsidies but not services

# Housing Initiative Program

Another innovative program that was developed locally is the Housing Initiative Program (HIP).

- The County has been especially thoughtful and innovative in trying to ensure that the right service model is created to chronically homeless people that are housed.
- Is there a way to tie HIP to some kind of public housing or Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) so that the County money can just fund support services and potentially serve more clients?

# Consistent Decision Making Models

- Communities like Salt Lake use a Collective Impact Model to make funding decisions. Would a formal decision making strategy around funding be well received?
  1. Common Agenda: All participants have a shared vision for change that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving the problem
  2. Shared Measurement: Agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported, with a short list of common indicators identified and used across all participating organizations for learning and improvement.
  3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities: Participant activities must be fleshed out. Not everyone will do the same thing. However activity should be coordinated towards a common objective
  4. Continuous Communication: Structured and open communication across the many players to build trust, create common motivation, thoughtfully discuss what's working and what's not.
  5. Backbone Support: Ongoing support by independent, funded staff dedicated to the initiative, including guiding the initiative's vision and strategy, supporting aligned activities, establishing shared measurement practices, building public will, advancing policy, and mobilizing funding. Backbone staff can all sit within a single organization, or they can have different roles housed in multiple organizations.
- Communities like Salt Lake use a Collective Impact Model to make funding decisions.
- Would a formal decision making strategy around funding be well received?

# Expand Relationships That Work Well

- The Montgomery County Public Housing Authority (PHA) is a strong and meaningful partner in achieving the goal of ending homelessness
  - Section 811 vouchers
  - Section 202 vouchers
  - Expand *MOVE UP* program

# Forming New Relationships With Mainstream Agencies

- Onsite Services At Coordinated Entry
  - EMPLOYMENT SERVICES
  - TANF/FOOD STAMPS
  - CHILD CARE RESOURCES

# NEXT STEPS

- Operations Committee to make recommendations about what to include in the formal Gaps Analysis Report
- Operations Committee to make recommendations about priorities
- Report and priorities for rightsizing the system presented to ICH in September
- In the fall, host a community-wide meeting to review the Strategic Plan to End Homelessness, Gaps Analysis Report and develop an implementation plan