



Interagency Commission on Homelessness Strategic Plan Updates

Presentation to Interagency Commission on Homelessness
Wednesday, March 10, 2021

Sharan London and Fred Swan
Co-Charis of the Strategy and Planning Committee

Strategy 1: Address Racial Disparities Across the System

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
<p>Explore reasons for entering homelessness and their connection to race</p>	<p>Review internal tools and assessments</p>	<p>In process</p>
	<p>Conduct an assessment of internal policies and processes to identify any intrinsic bias and include client voice</p>	<p>MCDHHS has partnered with and is engaging the services of CSH to do an analysis of racial disparities within systems that impact homelessness and make recommendations as it relates to racial equity.</p> <p>The identified systems include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal justice, • mental health and • child welfare. <p>CSH will partner with the workgroup to convene community groups as a first step in the data analysis process. The goal is to convene virtual community groups in February 2021.</p> <p>CSH will develop a MOU with DHHS to allow for data sharing to review current trends in the homeless continuum</p>

Strategy 1: Address Racial Disparities Across the System

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
Provide Racial Equity Trainings and Coaching	Conduct training across all agency levels. Create structure and plan to provide ongoing coaching to support ongoing training	In process. The committee continues to consider training curricula and a virtual training format in light of pandemic
	Provide racial equity and implicit biases awareness training for all agency staff across all levels.	In process. As indicated, the committee continues to review training options. A Train the Trainer model is under consideration
	Provide tenants' rights trainings with a lens of racial equity and biases awareness, training for all clients	Not Started

Strategy 2: Build and Support Strong Adaptable Programs

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
<p>Apply Existing Resources and Best Practices for Eviction Prevention and Homeless Diversion / Rapid Resolution.</p>	<p>Target eviction prevention assistance to households most at risk of homelessness</p>	<p>Created a Homeless Prevention Index to identify census tracts most at risk of homelessness. Prioritized these neighborhoods for financial assistance.</p>
	<p>Explore flexible prevention models that allow for multiple months of assistance and case management.</p>	<p>Will utilize new federal funding for rental assistance to provide multiple months of assistance. No case management included.</p>
	<p>Train all shelter staff on diversion and rapid resolution.</p>	<p>Done.</p>
	<p>Create a learning collaborative for diversion workers.</p>	<p>Although the learning collaborative has not started, the CoC implemented Centralized Shelter Intake and Diversion for single adults building on the success of the family homeless diversion program.</p>

Strategy 2: Build and Support Strong Adaptable Programs

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
Expand and Enhance the Rapid Rehousing Program.	Identify opportunities to increase access to existing Rapid Rehousing programs for single adults and families with children.	The CoC is utilizing the ESG Cares Act funding to expand RRH by 150 units annually.
	Modify the traditional Rapid Rehousing model to meet the needs of specific subpopulations including seniors, survivors of domestic violence, youth (age 18-24) and households with no income.	In progress. Working closely with DV providers. New RRH program for survivors of Human Trafficking.
	Implement a Landlord Risk Mitigation Fund that acts like an insurance fund for landlords/property managers renting to participants in a Rapid Rehousing Program.	Funding has been secured and policies developed. Need to market the program to landlords.
	Convene a Rapid Rehousing learning collaborative with a goal of reducing the length of stay.	Done. Additionally, we have partnered with the state DOH to provide intensive training on Critical Time Intervention and RRH.

Strategy 2: Build and Support Strong Adaptable Programs

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
<p>Enhance Employment Services and Job Opportunities for Households Experiencing or At-Risk of Homelessness</p>	<p>Create an Employment Coordinator position to support the work of all Employment Specialists in the Continuum of Care, conduct job development and build relationships with employers, and promote access to local employment programs currently serving households experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>No Progress</p>
	<p>Engage Career Catchers, a local employment service provider, to pilot projects that pairs employment services with housing and shelter programs</p>	<p>Contract in place with Career Catchers to provide employment services to RRH clients</p>
	<p>Request a preference for serving households experiencing homelessness from local employment agencies receiving state and/or federal funding.</p>	<p>Minimal progress- attempting to connect with Work Source</p>
<p>Continuously Improve the Coordinated Entry System.</p>	<p>Conduct annual evaluation to assess fair and equitable access to housing to ensure housing is meeting needs</p>	<p>On hold due to the pandemic. Systems Coordination Committee is now working to stand up the Coordinated Entry Subcommittee who will conduct the CES evaluation.</p>
	<p>Use results to inform focus areas for improvement.</p>	

Strategy 2: Build and Support Strong Adaptable Programs

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
Identify Youth Experiencing or At Risk of Homelessness, with Intentional Outreach to LGBTQ Youth.	Partner with community stakeholders to conduct annual youth count.	Modified virtual youth count is happening now through mid-March. This will not be comprehensive but is a starting place.
	Create a Coordinated Entry System specific to youth.	Youth Work Group is actively working to develop a youth CES.
Provide Appropriate Housing Solutions for Youth Experiencing or At Risk of Homelessness, with Non-Traditional Housing Options for LGBTQ Youth.	Establish a homeless youth drop-in center coordination with the re-engagement center and in partnership with the Collaboration Council.	Facility has been identified in downtown Silver Spring. Scheduled to open in Summer 2021
	Explore other alternative housing interventions such as host homes and shared housing.	Ongoing through the Youth Work Group

Strategy 2: Build and Support Strong Adaptable Programs

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	<p>Create a Coordinated Entry System specific to youth.</p>	<p>Youth Work Group is actively working to develop a youth CES.</p>
<p>Provide Appropriate Housing Solutions for Youth Experiencing or At Risk of Homelessness, with Non-Traditional Housing Options for LGBTQ Youth.</p>	<p>Establish a homeless youth drop-in center coordination with the re-engagement center and in partnership with the Collaboration Council.</p>	<p>Facility has been identified in downtown Silver Spring. Scheduled to open in Summer 2021</p>
	<p>Explore other alternative housing interventions such as host homes and shared housing.</p>	<p>Ongoing through the Youth Work Group</p>

Strategy 2: Build and Support Strong Adaptable Programs

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
<p>Address the Needs of the Unsheltered Population</p>	<p>Conduct quarterly surveys of unsheltered individuals to better understand their needs and the inflow of new people entering the County.</p>	<p>Done and on-going.</p>
	<p>Ensure all shelters offer low barrier, housing-focused shelter to all individuals including those with substance use disorders, serious mental illness, and chronic health conditions</p>	<p>Continues to be a work in progress. The pandemic has led to a reduction in access to behavioral health services, so the needs of individuals have intensified. We are utilizing hotels for some. Additionally, the medical respite program will begin in the spring of 2021. This program is for individuals not sick enough to need hospitalization but too sick to be in congregate shelter.</p>
	<p>Partner with community stakeholders to including business owners, libraries, police, hospitals, and other County employees to provide adequate street outreach to meet the need.</p>	<p>Engaging with multiple stakeholder groups including the citizen advisory boards, urban districts, etc. Contract in place with Pathways to Housing for street outreach and community liaison.</p>

Strategy 2: Build and Support Strong Adaptable Programs

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
<p>Reduce the Number of Households who Return to Homelessness from Permanent Supportive Housing.</p>	<p>Provide annual training for all housing support staff on Housing First, harm reduction, motivational interviewing, and trauma-informed care.</p>	<p>Minimal progress - Critical Time Intervention training will be provided to PSH staff. Sponsoring CoC members to attend training and national conferences.</p>
	<p>Offer representative payee services for individuals with a history of not paying rent</p>	<p>No Progress</p>
	<p>Allow for program transfers to better meet the needs of the household</p>	<p>Done.</p>
	<p>Maintain high fidelity to the Housing First evidence-based program models and monitor programs on a biannual basis</p>	<p>Minimal progress due to the pandemic.</p>
	<p>Enhance support services to allow individuals to age in place in permanent supportive housing.</p>	<p>Minimal progress. Initial discussions within HHS about creating an RFP for home health care services for people with serious mental illness.</p>

Strategy 2: Build and Support Strong Adaptable Programs

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
Identify Non-Traditional Housing Options for Non-Disabled Single Individuals.	Promote shared housing programs and roommate matching services	Currently happening through diversion and at the shelter. No progress on roommate matching services.
	Explore other extremely affordable housing options like single room occupancies, boarding houses, etc.	Minimal progress although there may be some funding opportunities to purchase hotels and convert to SROs. This funding would be made available through the next federal COVID relief package.

Strategy 3: Build and Support Strong Affordable Housing Solutions

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
<p>Increase coordination, collaboration and communication among public and private partners involved in housing solutions</p>	<p>Build PSA track at HOME and Affordable Housing Conference</p>	<p>Deferred - no in person meetings</p>
	<p>Develop formal working group with public and private partners to address development of permanent housing solutions include public partners (DHCA, MCPPC, DHHS) as well as nonprofit and for-profit developers</p>	<p>Need to expand membership in MHA</p>
<p>Ensure the 6-year fiscal plan of the Housing Initiative Fund include the funding required to meet projected housing needs</p>	<p>Annually updated the gaps analysis to identify projected housing needs.</p>	<p>Not started</p>
	<p>Recruit more landlords in other geographic areas</p>	

Strategy 3: Build and Support Strong Affordable Housing Solutions

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
Increase landlord and property management participation with the goal of increasing available units	Expand ACT teams	
	Establish 24-hour hotline for case management	
	Create central website/resource for people seeking/receiving services	
Create a risk mitigation fund that offers added protection for landlord partners	Shape and operationalize risk mitigation fund	Done. Need to get information out to nonprofit housing organizations
	Advocate to get risk mitigation fund into budget	
	Define roles and responsibilities, needs and expectations to landlords and service providers	
	Create risk mitigation fund	

Strategy 4: Coordinate Effectively Across Other Systems of Care

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
Support co-location of services	Review existing co-locating models in Montgomery County. Identify what is and is not working and why	The formal effort to co-locate services has been hampered by the pandemic. Homeless Resource Day has been postponed. Focus groups with clients are scheduled for May.
	Use these insights to develop a shared vision for co-locating services and revise MOU	
	Roll this vision out to provider community. Pilot the vision and MOU. Review and revise	

Strategy 4: Coordinate Effectively Across Other Systems of Care

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
Increase representation of homeless service providers on boards and committees across the county	Identify where homeless serving organizations are already partnering/directly engaged outside of homeless services.	Compiled list of boards/committees. Action to explore further has been deferred
	Identify where ICH would like to be present with systems outside of homeless services. Build relationships with those organizations and ask for role on their board.	Not started
	Identify specific people to sit on boards and share back with ICH	Not started

Strategy 5: Increase and Diversify Funding

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
Identify and agree on shared vision with County agencies and local jurisdictions	Establish funding and partnership committee	Completed
	Gather/analyze all current funding applications	Completed
	Gather funders	In process. Shared draft with members of the ICH and its committees with include funders. Need to expand reach
	Meet with council staff to understand and align with budget changes	Not started
	Document, share and seek feedback	
	Build performance-based contracts	Not started
	Develop infrastructure/capacity too evaluate programs	Not started

Strategy 5: Increase and Diversify Funding

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
Conduct further research in alternative funding models	Conduct research, building on existing models and research that exists	In process. Received overview presentation on Pay for success. Plan to outreach to communities implementing alternative funding models.
	Host a convening to share learnings	Not started
		The committee reviewed funding applications from agencies. A draft of the shared vision statement has been shared with ICH and committees. Outreach is being conducted now to secure buy in.
	Finalize operations and structure of fund, contract, etc.	In process

Strategy 5: Increase and Diversify Funding

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
Establish a Housing as Healthcare Fund	Finalize concept in partnership with funders and community	Completed
Secure alternative Federal and State funding	Secure fund manager	Finalized concept and secured partnership with Community Foundation.
	Identify potential funders	Completed
	Develop marketing materials	In process of review
	Finalize operations and structure of fund, contract, etc.	In process
	Launch	Had preliminary conversations with potential funders

Strategy 6: Educate and Advocate for Change

Priority	Objective/Action Items	Status Update
Create a coordination education and advocacy effort with supporting infrastructure to heighten the issue of homelessness across the community		This work has been deferred due to COVID workload