
TUCSON PLANNING COUNCIL FOR THE HOMELESS

Continuum of Services Committee

October 25, 2006 Minutes

Chairs: Beth Carey and Linda Kot

Next Meeting: November 29, 2006, 10:30am-12pm SAAF, 375 S. Euclid Avenue

Report to TPCCH General Meeting
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TOPICS DISCUSSED

1. Plan to End Homelessness Subcommittee update:
 - Cost Study: Delays in getting contract and other paperwork finalized by Health Systems Research (HSR) for DES money led the UA researcher to write a letter to TPCCH members saying she cannot sign the contract with the current project deadline of February 28, 2007—Subcommittee decided to have Mary Pat Sullivan and Bill Magnotto send letters to HSR and DES to request an extension
 - Letters sent to ADOH, DES, City of Tucson, and Pima County to request funding for Plan activities, including Implementation Coordinator—letter to ADOH also included request for \$35,000 for the Continuum-of-Care Consultant
 - Implementation Coordinator RFP distributed to TPCCH list, ADOH, DES, ACEH, etc.
 - First Responders Training: Met with Richard Harper, who directs training for the Tucson Police Department, to learn about existing TPD training and discuss what TPCCH can contribute to their training program—will have similar meeting with Tucson Fire Department representative
 - New regular meeting time: 2nd & 4th Thursdays, 1:30pm at St. Mark's (but will be 1st & 3rd Thursdays in November due to Thanksgiving)

2. Consultant for Continuum-of-Care Application
 - RFP distributed to TPCCH list, ADOH, DES, ACEH, etc.
 - Need to follow up with Maricopa Association of Governments regarding RFP distribution
 - Deadline for applications is October 31

3. HMIS Monthly Report
 - John Mott distributed the HMIS monthly report for September
 - Exit data numbers are very low for movement of clients from emergency shelter to transitional housing and movement from transitional housing to permanent supportive housing—this is due to several factors: narrow HUD definition of homelessness; inclusion of “other” or “don’t know” as a pre-shelter category; and HMIS not capturing movement from transitional housing to permanent (non-supportive) housing
 - Page 9 of report contains information on “residence prior to program entry”—high numbers under categories of “Other” (208) and “Don’t Know” (719), in part because this facilitates enrollment of clients who may not be considered “homeless” by HUD (e.g. clients citing “Jail” or “Hospital” as prior residence are not considered “homeless”)—HUD definition of “homeless” will become even more restrictive if upcoming bills pass—HUD is placing heavy emphasis on housing, so it is likely that agencies providing supportive services not tied to housing will not receive HUD funding in future
 - Agencies that participate in HMIS are mostly those that receive HUD funding
 - Average time for data entry into HMIS is 72 days, which skews reporting
 - HMIS report given to ADOH monthly

4. Confidentiality and Privacy Issues in HMIS Data Sharing
 - 2 Levels of client information
 - 1) DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: age, sex, social security number, date of birth, etc.—this does not include details about service use—intended to make intake at multiple agencies easier and to provide a snapshot of which services are accessed—provides picture of current use of services and can help in gap analysis
 - 2) DEMOGRAPHIC + SERVICE INFORMATION: detailed information about client participation in programs and client personal attributes (e.g. HIV status, disabilities)—client must authorize the disclosure of this information to other agencies (i.e. a class or group of individuals) or individuals (i.e. the specific individuals)—agencies may restrict the disclosure of this information to other agencies—if clients and/or agencies choose not to disclose information, client data are still entered in HMIS and included in de-identified aggregate HMIS reports
 - Client Authorization
 - Federal (HIPAA) and Arizona state law allow disclosure of certain client information without the client’s authorization under certain circumstances (e.g. for treatment, payment or health care operations); however; agencies are encouraged to obtain client authorization as best practice
 - Disclosure of demographic or de-identified information does not require client authorization; clients determine via the authorization what data may be disclosed and to whom—agencies are responsible for adhering to client’s decision—HMIS system automatically restricts service and personal attribute information, so agencies must check the appropriate box to allow disclosure of this information if the client has authorized it
 - Authorizations and their purpose may be unclear—clients may think their personal information is only shared within the intake agency rather than with other agencies
 - Most clients are not concerned about disclosures to other agencies but are concerned about disclosures to law enforcement or government entities (e.g. Social Security, DES) for fear of losing benefits or being reported for back child support.
 - Clients may sign authorizations without full understanding—consult Advisory Board on this issue to develop a one-page explanation of authorizations and use of data, including caveat that information will not be disclosed to law enforcement or affect receipt of benefits
 - Problematic Issues
 - When some agencies disclose demographic information, it may inadvertently reveal service specifics or other protected health information (e.g. SAAF enrollment automatically indicates HIV+ status)—agencies may de-identify service and/or personal attribute information by choosing a neutral name for their program/s in HMIS (e.g. entering *Community* Housing rather than *AIDS* Housing), thereby reducing the likelihood of discrimination
5. New Business
 - Homelessness Resource Exchange on HUD website contains presentations from the Continuum-of-Care Forum held in Denver September 19-20—visit the website at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/hre/index.cfm>
 - HUD conference “Homelessness 101: Managing HUD Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Grants” will take place January 24 in Phoenix—no cost to attend—CoC Consultant should attend
6. Agenda items deferred to November meeting
 - Review first quarter progress on Exhibit 1 Objectives and Action Steps
 - Low Cost Housing List maintained by Information & Referral is ending on October 31 due to discontinuation of \$15,000/year funding—Bill Magnotto is attending a meeting to discuss cancellation of List—get report from Bill and discuss options at November meeting

Attendance

Jodie Barnes	City of Tucson	Jodie.Barnes@tucsonaz.gov
Beth Carey	Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation	bcarey@saaf.org
Pat Carnes	Compass Healthcare	pcarnes@compasshc.org
Sherri Hutchinson	Tucson Centers for Women and Children	Sherri@tucsoncenters.com
Linda Kot	Primavera Foundation	lkot@primavera.org
Robert Miller	Comin' Home	rmiller@cominhome.net
John W. Mott	HMIS / I&R	jwmott@arizonatc.com
Steven Nelson	Pima County, Jackson Employment	snelson@csd.pima.gov
Mary Ochoa	Department of Economic Security	maryochoa@azdes.gov
Mer Otis	CPSA	mer.otis@cpsa-rbha.org
Val Quadros	La Frontera	vquadros@lafrontera.org
Susanna Rodriguez	City of Tucson	Susanna.Rodriguez@tucsonaz.gov
Martha Valado	TPCH	mtvalado@gmail.com