



Housing Assistance and Models
Meeting Minutes
June 8, 2009

Items Relevant to Other Workgroups

- *All Workgroups:* Under “Introductions and Cross-Workgroup Focuses.” There is some concern around duplication in survey work. Nancy M. will compile the data around the surveys in question.
- *Training Workgroup:* Maybe get the workgroup involved in correcting weaknesses around the HQS inspections.

Attendees

Present:

Sally Harrison, Chair
Stacey Vandenberg, Co-chair
Christine Miller
Jim Yarborough
Joe Heaphy
John Peterson
Michelle Wildman
Nelson Grit
Suzanne Gaffney
Michael Appel
Sharon Kivikko

Absent:

Beverlee DeJonge
BriAnne McKee
Char Kangas
Christine Sickle
Debra Hendren
Ellen Kissinger-Rothi
Gary Bell
Patti Geisert
Vera Beech

Holly Pomranka
Janet Irrer
Jillian Fitzsimmons
Kim Heberd
Pat Caruso
Molly Chambers
Sharon Ott

Staff:

Nancy McCrohan, PPA
Joe Quick, PPA

Discussion Items

Introductions and Cross-Workgroup Focuses

- Nancy McCrohan had each workgroup member identify him or herself and introduced herself as the new facilitator of the HA&M workgroup.
- Sally Harrison explained that Stacey Vandenberg and Christine Miller would lead this meeting, as Sally missed much of the content and context of the May 7th convening, having been in the Community Building and Communications break-out session for part of the morning.
- Nancy discussed two cross-workgroup items that were discussed at the convening.
 - Several surveys have been issued across the five statewide workgroups. There was some concern that duplication might have occurred. Nancy will compile the results of these surveys and present a short summary of them to the group to anticipate where there might be crossover or duplication.

- As discussed at the convening, and within PPA, all workgroups should review the outcomes in their Action Plan to revisit, update, and tweak them, if needed.
 - ◆ Sally explained that this workgroup had evaluated the action plan fairly recently, and that it made most sense to stick to the current plan as written and look for the areas in which the workgroup could have the most impact. The focus should be on homeless prevention and rapid re-housing discussion.
 - ◆ It was decided at the convening that the Action Plan would be evaluated and discussed with respect to which of the current strategies may fit into the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP), and whether some new strategies needed to be developed.

Update on the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP)

Big picture and Michigan plan for HPRP

- Because of the need in Michigan, MSHDA moved quickly on HPRP.
 - MSHDA started putting it together even before HUD came out with its guidance. Some modifications may be needed once guidelines are released.
 - ◆ HUD has a 45-day waiting period and then local communities would need time to construct their plans. Starting now on this work would alleviate some of the waiting.
 - Before the HPRP was submitted to HUD, MSHDA met with HUD representatives in Detroit to discuss the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA).
 - ◆ There was a positive response at the Detroit meeting. The representatives liked that the plan was a little restrictive and focused primarily on leasing assistance and the housing resource specialist's case management role.
 - ◆ The Michigan plan is now under review in DC.
 - HUD is conducting meetings around the country with stakeholders. Janet attended in Chicago. The State's plan is being used as one of the models for the country.
- A draft application is now up on the MSHDA Web site under the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA) link. MSHDA is recommending to communities that they start working on applications now.
- Some technical changes had to be made because MSHDA was asked to administer Battle Creek and Dearborn's direct allocation HPRP. Now, MSHDA is getting closer to \$24 million (up from \$22 million).
- A lot of the HPRP NOFA comes from best models and practices that this workgroup is doing out in the community, which speaks to the quality of services we have out in the field in our state.
- Modifications to Michigan's plan can be made once it is reviewed and returned by HUD; it can be resubmitted with changes.
- MSHDA has set up a Q&A session regarding HPRP application submission:
 - There are currently two on the schedule. The first is on June 23rd.
 - Should these Q&A sessions open with more background than they typically have in the past?
 - It was suggested that MSDHA should encourage people to submit their questions prior to the question and answer session.
 - Communicating well with folks in the community about where to find things is very important.

Workgroup role

- How far should this workgroup go in helping CoCs identify these strengths and weaknesses with regard to this process?
 - Even though this is one-time money, HUD is looking to this use of funds to transform the system (including, CoCs, regions, etc.).
 - ◆ HUD is looking at ESG and McKinney money; specifically, how MSHDA administers it and how they target the funds.
- The likely areas in which the workgroup can assist the CoCs in preparing for HPRP:
 - Toolkit
 - Identifying resources locally
 - Housing asset map
 - Guidance on how to select an agency and how to implement the program

Toolkit sharing

- At the May convening, we discussed the possibility of toolkit for the Continuums of Care (CoC) to identify what their strengths, weaknesses and gaps are when executing this NOFA
 - Maurie Weathercamp put together an informational tool that Stacey forwarded to everyone. These materials are being distributed by Maurie at regional meeting. Many of the regions have held meetings and received the materials in May.
 - A planning checklist on the National Alliance to End Homelessness' Web site acts as this toolkit. A document with the link to this checklist was e-mailed to workgroup members about an hour before this HA&M meeting.
 - So toolkits already exist, so we could make sure that people are aware of such resources.
 - ◆ The workgroup needs to move quickly and does not have a lot of time. The applicants need help this month. A lot of them are already moving forward.
 - ◆ Paul is doing regional coordinating, and Maurie's been delivering this planning checklist to the regions. It would be interesting to collect feedback from that, and to perhaps develop a strategy to identify gaps, strengths and weaknesses at the CoC and regional level in relation to the HPRP.
 - ◆ But Region Two's next meeting is in August. So we need to get this out to the CoC;s, not just the regions

Concerns raised about HPRP

- Concerns were brought up by the team around Housing Quality Standards inspections for eviction prevention.
 - This depletes a lot of resources in the rural areas.
 - Sally will look into this concern.
 - The plan cannot be modified while it is under review in the HUD office, but questions and concerns about this issue will be heard, and Sally will look at what the intent was in the way it was written.
 - ◆ What are people's concerns and needs with what the plan states?
 - ◆ What are the biggest obstacles and strengths for each region?
 - What might be done to overcome this burden to get people what they need in a timely fashion? Perhaps engage the Training Workgroup to figure out how to remedy these weaknesses.

- While HPRP has a component of case management in it, the vast majority of dollars are going for leasing assistance.
 - Applicants need not only complete the application forms, but everything has to be pulled together to create implementable programs in very short order.
 - This workgroup should be looking to see what support it might be able to lend.

Identifying resources locally & Housing asset map

- It was suggested that an HPRP strategy be added to the Action Plan: Assess CoCs' abilities to execute and plan (strengths and weaknesses) the HPRP.
 - Different areas will have different obstacles and possibilities to execute the plan and, as a workgroup, it might be important to incorporate the HPRP into the plan.
 - **“Housing Asset Mapping”** action to be added under new HPRP strategy.
 - ◆ Questions are being asked by developers and service providers about resources that are available at their CoC. Could some sort of resource list be put together? What resources are and are not engaged? Need to be sure these resource providers are communicating with the CoCs.
 - ◆ Barb Ritter used the state case management module to form a list of most commonly used resources to effectively get people out of homelessness. This gives top three or four 2-1-1 resources – which will end up being those that each continuum will want as subcontractors.
 - Get this updated list broken down by regions by Barb Ritter and deliver these lists to the regions to share with the continuums. Stacey will send everyone this list.
 - The workgroup could provide guidance with these resources, but does not have to create these from scratch.
 - Providing technical assistance to should also include creating a guide of all the places that applicants can go to get some technical support, make suggestions and have questions answered. This should be a one-stop where people can get all the answers they need.
 - A mailbox was set up that can be used to take in these question. This message would then be passed on to the appropriate person.

Guidance on how to select an agency and how to implement the program

- *Selecting lead agencies:* There may be some issues and confusion about who should be the lead agency and who should be the subcontractor(s); as well as concerns about who would be the priority subcontractors, if only a few can be listed.
 - Potential subcontractors will need help, such as how to use an intake assessment. A lot of the continuums would like training on executing the TBRA process, and how to entwine a support services model with the intake assessment tool.
 - Indiana is getting attention for their plan. Indiana is doing training for all case management staff on a single model and single assessment processes, due to onerous data collection process.
- How we can help with subcontracting issue
 - Guidance should be given about why it is important to be selective on who you decide to subcontract with because of the burdensome reporting requirements.
 - These burdensome requirements may end up keeping some people from coming out of the woodwork as a subcontractor.

- There was an idea to create a list of the top five service providers in each area. This list could act as a guideline for who to contract/subcontract with.
 - ◆ This list would highlight what their minimum capacities need to be.
 - If the subcontractor is going to be doing live HMIS reporting, it would be required that they already be on HMIS and familiar with the system (already a requirement of the NOFA).
 - It was noted that as a contractor or subcontractor there are three or four main areas that have to be covered or taken care of; they include increasing the client's income and taking care of any medical concerns or disabilities.
 - Provider's goal is to assist clients properly, figure out how long they need TBRA and then work towards the goal of clients being self-sustaining and in a stable housing situation by the end of that term. Three or four significant wrap-around services will be needed to accomplish this.

- *Domestic violence and short-term leasing assistance:* This is another area where providers at the local level will have questions.
 - What is the model for integrating data into HMIS without violating privacy, favoring one particular group over another, etc.?
 - Where is guidance on such questions? Are these questions answered on the Web sites, such as HUD HRE? Yes, HPRP FAQ section on the site provides a lot of information with regard to these questions. DV provider not permitted to enter data in HMIS but must do so in a comparable database and report aggregate numbers.

Other notes on HPRP

- *Administrative Issues/Expense:* There are some communities who are not applying for the money because of the administrative time and costs required to do so.
 - These administrative requirements were mandated by legislation and cannot be changed.
 - The lead agency has so much responsibility and liability in making sure the reports are accurate and everything goes well. It is not very clear in the NOFA that agencies can actually take more than what is allotted for the administrative costs. There is money above and beyond that allotted for administrative costs, but people do not understand this.
 - ◆ MSHDA tried to spell a little bit of this out under the service part (What is considered admin and what isn't?). It's not the people who provide the case management. Their costs are not included in the administrative funds.
 - It will take two to three MSHDA employees to cover the administrative portion of this as well, so MSHDA is having to use some of their budget on this. MSHDA will likely have to pick up administrative costs for others around the state from their budget.
 - In some cases, local communities who just lost revenue sharing will try to move administration of the HPRP to MSHDA.

- Communities should not forget that the purpose of this federal stimulus funding was to act as a safety net and get the new homeless on their feet. It is to assist those who have just lost their jobs and/or homes and would take only a short amount of time to be up and running again.
 - In Chicago, HUD discussed not allowing MSHDA to use it for any population but this new homeless population.

- The funding will then be denied to some of the most needy in the community, which could cause some political backlash.
 - ◆ This population will still be covered under programs and funding that pre-existed the federal relief funds (though these programs are underfunded).
- Once something has been written up to address this new HPRP strategy, it can be discussed in Lansing in front of partners that would be able to help with the training. Through this meeting, the workgroup could also discover opportunities to be helpful to the process.

Current Action Plan

- The current Action Plan is progressing and will be modified to include the new HPRP strategy.

Tasks Completed

- Discussed additional strategy for our workgroup, and found volunteers to take charge of this HPRP strategy.

Tasks Assigned

- Stacey Vandenburg, Suzanne Gaffney, John Peterson and Christine Miller will begin developing the HPRP strategy / tool kit. Nancy McCrohan will help to pull this meeting together. Michael suggested, from his agency, getting Andrea and/or Chuck involved. This group will provide feedback to the full workgroup at the July meeting.
- Per suggestion at the May 7 convening, PPA (Nancy) will make sure that about three succinct bullet points discussed in each meeting for the purpose of reporting out to the regions.

Next Meeting/Upcoming Events

- Monday, July 13th at 1:00 p.m.