



# Interagency Commission on Homelessness

**PRESENTATIONS**

**Wednesday, June 24, 2015 Meeting**

# Committee Reports

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Presenter: Nadim A. Khan

# Community Outreach and Education Committee

Jimmy Frazier-Bey, Chair

Leslie George, Co-Chair

**Introductions:** The overall goal of the Committee is to provide education and outreach to the community on homeless issues.

## **Accomplishments:**

- Developed a Homeless Services Guide Brochure
- Definition of a Veteran: “A Veteran is any individual experiencing homelessness who has served on active duty in the United States Military, regardless of discharge status. The active duty requirement is not time restricted, which means that it applies to any length of service beyond training/boot camp.”

## **Future Activities:**

- Educate and Engage the Public about homelessness and the need to take action
- Collaborate and compile research about best practices
- Explore best practices for connecting veterans to mainstream services.

# Performance Review Committee

Denise Fredericks, Chair

Sharon Sierra-Koscinski, Co-Chair

**Introductions:** The goal of the Performance Review Committee is to create common data standards and uniform performance measures across all project types.

The intent is to identify best practices and determine how to replicate those successes to ensure maximum success in ending homelessness through housing placement or housing retention. Tracking client and program progress keeps everyone on track.

## **Accomplishments:**

- Consulted with all Homeless Service Providers regarding the areas of Measurement by Project Type. Did a comparative analysis of the newly released HUD documentation regarding points of Measure by Project Type and revised the Prioritization.
- Invited National Alliance to End Homelessness to do a presentation regarding the HUD Performance Measurements documentation that was released in May, 2015.
- Established HUD and CoC Performance Measures Comparison chart by Project Type.

## **Future Activities:**

- Complete Performance Review Committee activities related to the Strategic Plan (in process).
- Establish uniform performance measure/outcome appropriate for population and program
- Gather baseline data, track progress and establish target for performance
- Determine by what means the information will be shared with the Provider community
- Conduct HMIS training to help providers with data input needed for outcome measurements

# Strategic Planning Committee

Susie Sinclair-Smith, Chair

Sara Black, Co-Chair

## Accomplishments:

- Implemented survey to determine priorities for inclusion in CoC Year-1 Action Plan and completed analysis of responses
- Developed Year-1 Action Plan priorities aligned with CoC Strategic Plan and identified relevant committees to take the lead on the work. Action Plan goals, priorities and work assignments were reviewed and approved by the Operations Committee.
- A template was created for use by each committee to build out the steps and milestones
- Developed work plan for priorities assigned to Strategic Planning Committee

## Future Activities:

- Support Community Education and Outreach, Performance Review, Operating Committees, and the Interagency Commission on Homelessness to complete work plans for relevant Year-1 priorities and finalize Strategic Planning Committee Year-1 work plan.
- Monitor implementation of Year-1 activities.

# Operations Committee

Nadim Khan, Chair

Priscilla Fox Morrill, Co-Chair

**Introductions:** The Operations Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis and will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Continuum of Care (CoC).

## **Accomplishments:**

- CoC Governance Charter (Approved).
- Point in Time (PIT) – The PIT Survey was conducted on January 28, 2015. The final PIT report submitted to the Council of Government Board on May 13, 2015.
- CoC's Strategic 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness
- Definition of Veterans Approved by CoC
- Homeless Resource Guide Brochure
- Written Standards for CoC Operation
- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Participation Agreement

## **Future Activities:**

- Preparing for NOFA
- Review Federal policies, procedures and regulations
- Promote targeted outreach strategies
  - Identify gaps in services for youth who are homeless and determine ways to fill the gaps
- Develop and promote best practices in crisis response programs
  - Develop CoC policies and procedures to determine prioritization for emergency shelter and transitional housing.

# Montgomery County Continuum of Care 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness

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Presenter: Amy Horton-Newell

# Montgomery County Continuum of Care (CoC): 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness

## Year 1 Action Plan

- Strategic plan priorities included in the Year 1 Action plan were developed with CoC input
- Committees were identified to take the lead on each strategic plan priority
- Time frame for the work includes all activities to date through June 30, 2016.

# Objective: Increase Access to Housing Options

**Strategy:** Support rental subsidies through federal, state and private resources targeted to those experiencing or most at risk of homelessness.

## Action Steps:

- ▶ **Explore new sources of public and private funding, not only for rental subsidies but for all aspects of support necessary for stable affordable housing.**
- ▶ Develop an education campaign/marketing strategy with targeted approaches for the different funders.
- ▶ **Convene/develop multiple groups: corporate; faith-based; foundations to identify and seek federal state/local/philanthropic funding, cultivate political leaders to maximize our connections with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and other relevant local, state and federal agencies.**

# Objective: Increase Access to Housing Options

**Strategy:** Preserve and expand supply of affordable rental homes where they are most needed through federal, state, local efforts.

## Action Steps:

- ▶ Explore opportunities to leverage funding (e.g. State Bond Program).
- ▶ **Identify additional funding sources to reduce housing development costs in order to facilitate the development of rental units affordable to lower income households with an emphasis on those with the lowest incomes (e.g. at or below 30% of area median income).**
- ▶ Increase advocacy regarding affordable housing priority in the zoning code re-write; partner with the Affordable Housing Conference and the Nonprofit Roundtable for new housing development.
- ▶ Research best practice models for house sharing and analyze the HOC “Operation Match” program for ‘lessons learned’.

## Objective: Integrate Primary and Behavioral Health Services with Homeless Assistance and Housing Programs

**Strategy:** Increase availability of behavioral health services, including community mental health centers, to people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

### Action Steps:

- ▶ **Assess population to determine who is at risk, identify availability of services and understand barriers to services.**
- ▶ Engage service providers in developing creative strategies (e.g. providing space for psychiatrist to see Medicaid clients).
- ▶ Work with service providers to develop a protocol to identify risk factors.

## Objective: Advance Health and Housing Stability for People Experiencing Homelessness with Frequent Contact with Hospitals, Criminal Justice, and for Unaccompanied and Youth Aging Out of Public Systems

**Strategy:** Improve discharge planning from hospitals, VA medical centers, psychiatric facilities, jails and prisons to connect people to housing, health support, income and work supports and health coverage prior to discharge.

### Action Steps:

- ▶ Establish a formal process for regular communication regarding high users among mental health, somatic health and housing providers to promote planning and services.
- ▶ **Expand relationships with hospitals and jails to promote planning and services.**
- ▶ Create a process to track high users for diversion to the appropriate services.



**2. Improve discharge planning from hospitals, VA medical centers, psychiatric facilities, jails and prisons to connect people to housing, health support, income and work supports and health coverage prior to discharge**

**2.1 Expand relationships with hospitals and jails to promote planning and services**

Lead:	Team Members:	
Milestones:	Start Date	End Date

### 3. Support Rental Subsidies targeted to those experiencing or most at risk of homelessness

3.1 Explore new sources of public and private funding, not just subsidies, for all aspects of support necessary for stable, affordable housing

Lead: ICH Resource Committee

Team Members:

Milestones:

Start Date

End Date

Milestones:	Start Date	End Date

**3. Support Rental Subsidies targeted to those experiencing or most at risk of homelessness**

3.2 Convene/develop multiple stakeholders (corporate/faith based/foundations to seek funding and cultivate political leaders to maximize connections to HUD an other relevant agencies.

Lead: ICH Resource Committee	Team Members:	
Milestones:	Start Date	End Date

**4. Preserve and Expand Supply of Affordable Rental Homes through federal, state, local efforts**

4.1 Identify additional resources to reduce housing development costs in order to facilitate development of rental units affordable to lower income households.

Lead: ICH Resource Committee	Team Members:	
Milestones:	Start Date	End Date

# **ZERO: 2016 Plan**

# **MONTGOMERY COUNTY**

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Presenter: Uma S. Ahluwalia

# Background

- Zero: 2016 is a national effort of 71 communities across the country who have committed to **ending Veteran homelessness by December, 2015** and **chronic homelessness by December, 2016**.
- Montgomery County's Zero: 2016 Initiative, is a rigorous follow-on to its successful 100,000 Homes Campaign and will build upon these past efforts.
- Montgomery County will continue to use a Housing First model as the basis for its plan.
- The following plan is the result of collaborative discussions between Department Health and Human Services (DHHS) and key stakeholders including family and single adult shelter providers, Veterans groups, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) providers and others.

# Who is a veteran?

- Montgomery County CoC Definition of a Veteran is any individual experiencing homelessness who has served on active duty in the United States Military, regardless of discharge status. The active duty requirement is not time restricted, which means that it applies to any length of service beyond training/boot camp. This definition includes persons who are not eligible for some homelessness programs and services provided through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

# Take Down Number

- Our goal is to house 56 Veterans who are Montgomery County residents experiencing homelessness into permanent housing by December 31, 2015.
- This does not mean that there will never be a veteran experiencing homelessness but, rather, that the community has reached sustainable functional zero.
- Functional Zero = Homeless Veteran  $\leq$  Veteran Monthly Housing Placement Average

# Take Down Number

The goal or “take down number” is based on the following:

1. the current number of homeless Veterans who have been identified in the County’s Homeless Management Information System (HMIS),
2. the 2015 annual Point-in-Time Survey, (24 veterans identified)
3. by the Department of Veterans Affairs staff working at the Veterans One-Stop Center located in the Montgomery County Crisis Center, and
4. by the staff of the regional Supportive Services for Veterans Families (SSVF) contractors as being connected to Montgomery County.

In addition to the number of homeless Veterans in the County who have previously been identified through these sources, a projection of the number of Veterans who will become homeless during the course of 2015 has been developed using both national trends as well as past experience specific to Montgomery County.

# National Guidelines for Projecting Housing Placement for Homeless Veterans

Chronically Homeless – 33%		Episodic and Short Term Homeless – 67%		
Need Permanent Supportive Housing		Do Not Need Permanent Supportive Housing		
VA eligible - 85%	not VA eligible - 15%	Rapid Rehousing, VA Eligible – 37.5%	Rapid Rehousing and Other Housing, Not VA Eligible– 37.5 %	Self-Resolving – 25%
Montgomery County Projected Targets Based on Available Data				
7 – VASH (VA)	12 – VPH	14 – SSVF (VA)	14 - VRRH	9 - No intervention necessary

# Master List

- Using this definition, a master list of all persons identified as Veterans and are currently homeless in Montgomery County has been developed.
- The list is updated regularly – in most cases, daily in order to ensure it has the most up-to-date information on veterans in our community.
- The Master List is not a waiting list; veterans on this list may already be accessing programs, waiting for a housing unit, or may self-resolve their homelessness.
- This list is meant to get the key partners involved in ending veteran homelessness in our community.

# Prioritization Of Existing Housing Resources for Homeless Veterans

- The Montgomery County CoC has developed a coordinated entry system and written standards for access to housing resources to assure transparent and uniform decision-making when assessing need and referring persons to housing.
- The Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization and Decision Assessment Tool (VI-SPDAT) is used to assess individuals who are in need of housing intervention(s) and
- The locally-developed Housing Options Targeting Tool is used to assess families.
- The CoC will prioritize Veterans over non-veterans when referring individuals and families to permanent housing options.

# Federal Housing Resources

## HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (VASH)

- The HUD-VASH, which is a Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) which provides long-term rental assistance vouchers and social services specifically targeted to homeless veterans.

## Supportive Service for Veteran Families Program (SSVF)

- The SSVF which provides time-limited financial and supportive services to individuals and families who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness to enable them to quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing a housing crisis and/or homelessness.

# New Resources

- As part of Montgomery County's Fiscal Year 2016 Budget, an appropriation in the amount of \$500,000 was approved to provide housing and supportive services to homeless Veterans in the County. This additional program funding will be made available as early as July, 2015.
- Montgomery County has received six (6) new HUD VASH Vouchers for permanent housing.
- Possibility of receiving up to 10 Housing Subsidy Vouchers from the Housing Opportunities Commission.

# New Housing Resources

## Veterans Permanent Housing with Supports Program (VPH)

- The VPH will be targeted to 15 Veterans, who may or may not have documented disabilities, but have significant behavioral health, medical, or other significant barriers that will require ongoing rental assistance and social services support.

## Veterans Rapid Re-Housing Program (VRRH)

- The VRRH will be targeted to 15 Veterans who need assistance in obtaining housing, short or medium term assistance with rental payments, and some time-limited social services support.

# Gaps

- Lack of affordable and diversified housing stock in general, and particularly for seniors, especially those who may need some level of assisted living
- Barriers for persons with limited or no income to access the affordable and supportive housing which is currently available.
- Lack of ability to quickly access affordable housing for populations such as domestic violence victims
- Resources for programs providing models to assist in ending intergenerational poverty.
- Programming focused on long-term economic security.

# Sustainability

The following strategies will be used to sustain the efforts of ending Veteran homelessness:

- Continuing to serve Veterans with the Housing First approach and provide individualized pathways to permanent housing.
- Reducing the unsheltered status and minimize the time spent being homeless.
- Improving access to mainstream benefit programs, such as Social Security disability benefits and Veteran benefits.
- Providing prevention assistance includes but is not limited to rental and utility assistance; down payment assistance; legal assistance; employment assistance; vocation assistance; mental health and substance abuse assistance; and housing counseling.

# Conclusion

- The Montgomery County Continuum of Care (CoC) is delighted to join the Zero: 2016 National Campaign.
- The CoC's goal is to end homelessness for all Veterans, not just those with honorable discharges.
- The strategy to achieve this vision is of making homelessness a rare, brief, and nonrecurring event for Veterans in Montgomery County.

# QUESTIONS

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