



## INTERAGENCY COMMISSION ON HOMELESSNESS

Housing for all = A Stronger Montgomery

[www.montgomerycountymd.gov/homelessness](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/homelessness) | [HousingForAll@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:HousingForAll@montgomerycountymd.gov)

Tuesday, November 6, 2024 | 3-5p

Approved January 14, 2025

Present	
Margarita Bohorquez	Dr. Gwendolyn Harter
Scott Bruton	Manuel Hidalgo
Jeff Goldman, Chair	Christine Hong
Dr. Ebony Grey, Co-Chair	DaVida Rowley-Blackman-representing Chelsea Andrews
Stacey Gold	Karishma Sheth
Courtney Hall	Dr. Earl Stoddard
Dr. Kathryn Kelly	

**Welcome, introductions and approval of the August 7 meeting notes:** Jeff Goldman convened the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

**Approval of the August 7 meeting notes:** Ebony Gray motioned for the approval of the August 7 meeting notes. Courtney Hall moved to August 7, 2024, and the motioned was seconded. Meeting minutes approved unanimously.

**Recent Overdoses and Client Deaths:** Christine Hong reported that there have been three fatal opioid overdoses among the population we serve. Other partners have reported death in their permanent supportive housing program that may have been overdose related. Christine paused to reflect on the impact that these fatalities have on staff who have built relationships with these clients and who want them to succeed and live productive lives.

Preventive measures that are being implemented:

- Police are increasing their vigilant about the possibility of overdose.
- The manager our Prevention and Harm Reduction Program with BHCS and his team are open to:
  - conducting presentation training at the shelters and
  - distribute Narcan and test scripts to partners.
  - partnering with the Outreach teams to engage people who are “sleeping rough.”
- MCCH is currently distributing Narcan and test scripts and conducting trainings.
- Peer efforts have been increased.
- Interfaith works have sent 50 individuals to treatment.
- County seeking funding from the Opioid Abatement to fund a program called LifeGuard Digital Health which is an overdose prevention technology device.
- County also looking into a program called “Never Use Alone” which allows users to call and be monitored by someone as they use. If the user goes “silent,” the person on the other line will call life-saving crisis response and medical intervention services.

**Zero for All Data Discussion:** Paloma Arroyo-LeFebre, Built for Zero Coordinator. Paloma shared that the goal is to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. This is doable by breaking the task down by subpopulations. The goals by subgroups and the numbers as of September 1:

Goals	Numbers as of September 1
Youth A fully operational Coordinated Entry System for Youth	Youths are accessed by the SPDAT to appropriate housing match. A survey is being developed a survey to gather data to help us serve unhoused youth.
Families An average length of time from ID to Move-in of 45 days.	An average of <b>178 days</b> .
Seniors Decreased the number of seniors entering homelessness by 50% (from 6 to 3)	There were <b>4 seniors as of September 1</b> . (August 7 and July 1 only 1 senior)
Vulnerable Adults An average length of time from Assigned to Housed of 45 days.	An average from assigned to housed <b>69 days</b>
Veterans No more than 7 Veterans experiencing homelessness (down from 10)	There were <b>11 veterans</b> in the homeless system. The number fluctuates from 11-13.
Other Adult-Only Households Housed 350 individuals.	As of September 1, <b>1038, individuals</b> housed in continuum.

### Highlights

- Four staff members from DHHS-SEPH will attend the Build for Zero Conference next week in Minneapolis which will give them the opportunity to learn from other jurisdictions around the country.

**Update on Safety and Security Concerns:** Christine Hong reported that security continues to be a concern. In addition to the earlier assault on a staff member at Progress Place, there has been another assault and additionally over 100 calls to Police. SEPH, County security services and ICH members met to discuss solutions on how to restrict someone from the shelter and how to enforce the restriction. The following procedure was proposed:

- The community partners would take the lead in identifying the person with the disruptive behavior.
- The County Security and/or the Police would issue a Disruptive Behavioral Order (DBO).
- The DBO which could be in force for up to 90 days.
- The Police will enforce a DBO issued by a county employee.

The next step is to establish a set of criteria to determine what is a reasonable amount of restriction for any given behaviors. Commissioners were encouraged to join the Safety and Security concerns meeting. Dr. Gwen Harter asked that people who are sheltered be invited to participate in the Safety and Security concerns meeting to share their experiences and input. Christine assured that the invitation will be extended to people with lived expertise.

Manny Hidalgo proposed hosting an in-person Town Hall meeting to engage people with lived experience in the discussion on Safety and Security Concerns in the shelters. Manny reported that listening sessions are well attended with upward to 25 people. People are receptive to come together to talk about this important issue.

### **Are shelters at capacity? Families facing eviction being told by Crisis Center that there are no room at shelters or hotels.**

Christine shared that shelters and hotel overflow shelter are at capacity. Hotel overflow space is low because of the increase in evictions, families needing large and multiple rooms, unavailable hotels space due to hotels not wanting to shelter the unhoused. Due to the increase in evictions, there is an increase in demand for housing stabilization leading SEPH to create a waitlist to prioritized families needing assistance. SEPH is encouraging providers and case managers to utilize diversion services for families. SEPH has diverted up to 60% of families presenting.

**Committee Evaluation and Review Board (CERB) Questionnaire review:** Ebony Johnson and Christine requested feedback from the Commissioners on the questionnaire submitted by the CERB. Commissioners were asked to review the yellow highlighted questions and to provide their answers to Rozina Adhanom in one week (November 13).

**Anticipating the Impact of the new Administration:** Courtney Hall asked whether there will be conversations around the potential policy changes under the new administration. Dr. Stoddard shared that at this time the County is unsure of what the changes will be but suppose the first impact will be funding and then policy. There will be conversations and reviews by the County to manage and advocate for the changes that will be coming.

### **Committee Updates**

Workforce Development - Letter of Support – Stan Seidel

- The committee is now meeting regularly.
- Workforce Montgomery has joined the committee.
- The committee is planning to host an Employment Fair for the unhoused.
- Letter of Support—The ask is to review the letter of support and send the letter back. We will forward on to CE and variety to contractors.

Outcomes and Improvement – Deborah Taylor

- Committee continues to meet and are planning a series of education meeting next March as the committee moves into next performance and memo planning.

People's Committee – Rozina Adhanom

- Assisting the MCCH shelter for their proposal into rapid exit
- Review the shelter case management system to help people have an exit plan.
- To send a survey to all shelter providers to understand their depth of case management.

Youth Workgroup – Paloma Arroyo-LeFebre

- The workgroup is working on the youth survey for and
- Building out the workgroup which includes collaborating with MCPS.
- Sharing data information. MCPS will provide demographic information to make sure youths experiencing homelessness have the resources they need.

Racial Equity Workgroup – Ralph Belk

- Working with CSH to review our goals, strategies, and metrics.
- Next meeting is 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 3p.
- Reaching out to People Committee to do more collaboration.

Partnership and Funding Committee – Rozina Adhanom

- Recruiting a chair and meeting with project applicants for a debrief session.

### **Announcements:**

- **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025, Zoom Webinar only.
- **Point in Time Count** is scheduled for ~~January 22, 2025~~. **NOTE DATE Changed to January 29, 2025.**
  - Stan Seidel requested that the PIT survey question be changed to “Have you ever served in the military?” instead of “Are you a veteran?” He believes we miss people because of the wording of the question.

**Meeting adjourned.**