



Community-wide Shelter Strategy October 31, 2023 Provider Conference

Notes:

FACILITATOR:

- James Schroeder, Managing Principal, HMA,
- Anthony Federico, HMA

ZOOM MODERATOR: Anna Plumb, Deputy Director, JOHS

NOTE TAKER: Andrea Matthews, Shelter Project Manager, JOHS

Intro to Strategy Work:

- Homelessness Response System - Align City & County around this
- Steering Committee is convening, including elected officials
- Role of shelter - develop and execute on community wide shelter strategy
- Planning will go into December
- Short-, Medium-, and Long-term goals
- Not just a shelter-bed goal
- Pre-shelter, during shelter, and supports for people in housing
- Started meetings with Family Shelter System overview, Adult is nex

- Data-driven - challenges with data - will use HMIS data
- People with lived experience are not participating in the Steering Committee but HMA will work with the Lived Experience Advisory Council. This will come more into play during the execution phase.
- Stella-M tool provided by HUD
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Select Breakout Notes

Goals for shelter system:

- Right to housing like New York City
- Range / continuum of wrap around services - mental health, addiction, sobriety, job training services, job prep services, family services
- Request for explanation of how we got here? Why is there so much visible homelessness as compared to other locations? Are people coming here to receive homeless services? The data does not seem to show that - people experiencing homelessness are coming here for the same reasons everyone comes here.
- Reduce wait lists. People are being placed in a market-rate unit that they won't be able to afford once they get a job.
- Different kinds of sheltering. Ways to support people in shelter better to succeed when they exit shelter.
- Internship program, mobile health, mobile hygiene.
- Job training at shelters - maintaining affordable rent - hope & dignity comes through work and getting paid
- Putting people into housing that they won't be able to afford
- Case management - work on housing retention
- Staffing ratios at shelters - if case load is too high there is not enough attention on the participants.
- Living wage for staff to avoid turnover
- Connect housing vouchers to shelter system.
- Ensure shelter system implements partnerships with DHS such as Social Security, TANF. Have DHS partners come on site regularly. Shelter participants hesitant to go out to DHS - afraid to be judged - have systems come meet shelter participants on site. Social service agencies could set up appointments on site.
- Leases are strict in the market rate system. Housing system sets up vulnerable

folks to fail. Resilient documents and leases - leases have requirements that make it tough for anyone to follow. Then evictions make people ineligible for housing

- DHS is available to send folks to your site and you can set that up. Goodwill Job Connections is available to come to your site. Other CBOs are available to send services on site.
- Mental health care.
- Job training not funded by JOHS. SE Works will help.
- Need transparent information about what is available.
- Case management team meetings need to happen at shelter sites to share resources. Internal resource sharing.
- No centrally located info. Shelters could be service hub and re-imagine what is provided. Service point center. Partner with other organizations. Let go of protecting funding and embrace being for and with the people.

Culturally Specific Shelter Goals:

- Equi Institute - Trans / Queer services in Portland
- Shelter providers have caused harm to LGBTQ participants - no follow through on equity

- Trans / Queer cultural safe spaces
- Ensure shelter spaces are working to become safer
- Gendered shelter spaces - tough for trans and nonbinary to navigate
- Undocumented, elderly - how to get them services - how to get them an id card
- Cascadia Clusters works with people without documentation - no bank account - helping get id cards
- Cultivate Initiatives - gives jobs to people without ids and helps them get ids at their hubs
- Electronic document locker is in the works so people don't have to start from scratch

Selected Chat from breakout:

- [Provider] Agreed that Mental Health systems should be woven into the system so the shelter doesn't have to go outside its eco system to get mental health support and help.
- [JOHS] our shelter system has expanded significantly over the last few years. In my opinion, a goal would be to slow that growth down a lot and focus on the services that can support folks in moving from shelter to housing.
- [Provider] More resilient housing. It's often difficult for folks who haven't been "chronically" unhoused to abide by a strict lease, so it becomes a huge challenge for folks who have been living outside and creates an eviction cycle that is hard to mitigate and support folks through.
- [Provider] Yes Agreed Retention would be a valued assets to the system. Supporting people for 1 year after housing will help establish new norms.
- [Provider] Once people are out on the street instead of feeling that they need rescued they want to do the rescuing of others including animals or people or things that seem to have been mistakenly thrown out (it is how they feel about themselves but in order to feel like they are still human this is how they feel better)
- [Provider] Creating culturally specific shelter options I think should be a goal, as well as ensuring that existing general shelters are affirming and reflect the community.
- [Provider] Having a shelter system with people with lived experience in actual positions of leadership. It often feels like we're trying to explain the effects of homelessness and poverty to leaders at various orgs and government officials
- [Provider] Before the pandemic there were a lot more case management meetings
- [Provider] People may need help to relearn how to survive without spending every thing they make everyday in order to survive. Also they could use a person to come in once a week and become a friend and to help them gain a routine to keep

their new place livable they could even bring in a friend to help encourage them as they are transitioning. When someone moves from streets to housed that is actually dramatic because they can have street family upset they became housed causing them to isolate themselves which is not a positive outcome We need to help to keep them connected to their street family as they start a new journey into housed life. By doing this they could help their street family to become housed by referrals and as they learn what it is to be housed and neighborly they can help their street family to be prepared for what they will face.