

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Meeting Minutes November 17, 2011

Bob Duranleau	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division
Cindy Namer	MaineHousing
Heather Rhoda	Frannie Peabody Center
Rob Parritt	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter
Josh O'Brien	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Oxford Street Shelter
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division
Jeff Tardif	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Family Shelter
Leah Bruns	The Opportunity Alliance
Shana Pike	StepUp! Family Resources
Aaron Shapiro	Cumberland County
Phil Allen	Preble Street Veteran Housing Services / SSVF
Cathy Paglio	Maine Kids-Kin
Elizabeth Szatkowski	The Opportunity Alliance
Pat McKenzie	The Opportunity Alliance
Patty Robinson	Preble Street – Florence House
Annmarie Rotolo	ADRC-SMAAA
Cullen Ryan	Community Housing of Maine
Leanna Bruce	Shalom House
Christa Haberstroh	Mercy Recovery Center
Pat Konon-Carroll	Family Crisis Services

I. Introductions

Bob Duranleau, ESAC Tri-Chair, welcomed everyone and brief introductions were made.

II. October Bed Usage Statistics – Bob Duranleau

Bob reviewed the monthly shelter statistics for October 2011:

	<u>October 2010</u>	<u>October 2011</u>
Adolescents	13 Individuals	12 Individuals
Adults	243 Individuals	255 Individuals
Families	<u>79 Individuals (31 Families)</u>	<u>104 Individuals (41 Families)</u>
Total	335 Individuals	371 Individuals

Adolescent Shelter

The total adolescent bed nights for October 2010 were 397 while the total bed nights for October 2011 were 367. These figures indicate a decrease of 30 bed nights, or 8% between October 2010 and October 2011. Two (2) individuals stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time, which represents 40% of intakes for the month.

Cindy asked if they've determined of the people who are turned away how many actually go to Oxford Street. She mentioned that if we were able to de-duplicate this we'd be able to see exactly how many are turned away and don't seek other shelter. Cindy asked how their data was kept. She said that it may be possible to track this through HMIS. We referred Cindy to Preble Street.

Family Shelters

There was a total of 3215 bed nights used for all Family Shelters in October 2011 as compared to 2447 bed nights in October 2010. This represents an increase of 31% in Family Shelter bed usage between

October 2010 and October 2011.

The Family Shelter placed 18 families for a total of 65 individuals into housing in October. The Family Shelter received 28 new families (intakes) for a total of 87 individuals in October. Based on self-reporting 13 families for a total of 40 individuals stated they had never been homeless before, of these 10 families for a total of 30 individuals were refugees.

Cindy asked what units are most lacking in the City. Jeff stated that it's a combination, one bedrooms, two bedrooms, and three bedrooms are presenting the biggest problem, however finding housing for the larger families is very challenging as well. Bob mentioned that families are beginning to move to Biddeford and Westbrook where housing appears to be more affordable.

Adult Shelters

Adult Shelter bed nights usage increased by 5% in October 2011 compared to October 2010. Total bed night usage during October 2010 was 7524 while it was 7903 during October 2011, a difference of 379 bed nights.

During the month of October, there were 170 intakes at the Oxford Street Shelter, 135 men and 35 women. An Intake or New Arrival is defined as an individual that has not stayed at the Shelter for a period of three (3) months or longer. Based on self-reporting, 32 individuals stated they had never been homeless before (28 men and 4 women).

Oxford Street Shelter Support Services team placed 44 individuals into permanent housing (33 men and 11 women), with five (5) individuals returning to the shelter within 90 days of housing placement.

Florence House Women's Shelter served a total of 51 women during the month of October, including 17 new intakes. Based on self-reporting, 9 of these 17 intakes stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

The Shelter placed 75 individuals into housing, with 1 woman returning.

First Time Homelessness

For the month of October 83 individuals, or 30% of all new intakes, reported experiencing homelessness for the first time.

2-1-1 Maine Housing/Shelter Calls

Amy was unable to attend the meeting so Vickey gave the 2-1-1 Maine Housing/Shelter calls update for October 2011. There were 1,823 total calls in Cumberland County; of these 163 calls were for housing/shelter. There were a total of 6,517 calls statewide; of these 435 calls were for housing/shelter.

III. Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) - Updates –

Bob presented the Portland HPRP stats for the month of October. In the month of October the Portland HPRP Program housed 24 households, for a total of 46 individuals. These housing placements represent 878 bed nights at the Oxford Street Shelter for Men, and 628 bed nights at Florence House.

Bob stated that the City is in the process of wrapping up the program and that October was the last month with financial assistance. Josh stated that they're waiting for a few checks to clear and the financial portion will be over. The Diversion and Prevention program has been reconciled; they will be focusing on reconciling the Engagement and Stabilization program. Josh mentioned that they're transitioning clients and so far that's going well. The last day of the program will be December 23rd. Bob mentioned that they're working with Tom McLaughlin on the program close out report for best practices which should be done by the end of January.

Leah presented the Cumberland County HPRP stats for October 2011. In the month of October 2011 the Cumberland County HPRP Program had served 41 individuals, composing 14 households (including 22 children). In the month of October 13 households attained permanent housing without a subsidy, and 1 household attained permanent housing with a subsidy.

Leah stated that they are also out of client funds, but the program will remain open for case management through July 2012. Leah mentioned that prior to HPRP they existed under CDBG grants, and it's highly unlikely that this program will be fully funded through CDBG funds. Since the likelihood of funding similar to HPRP will be available in the near future Leah stated that they're looking to collaborate in any way to expand the vision and get creative in order to continue the great work with prevention. Additionally, Leah stated that they're having a "resource road show" where they're going out to all of the food pantries and GAs to educate people on available resources. Cindy mentioned presenting resources at the MDWA meeting/training on December 9th. She asked people to email her who are interested in having resources and contact information for agencies presented.

IV. Milestone Foundation Shelter Update

Tom was unable to attend the meeting and will be added to next month's agenda. Bob mentioned that the 41 bed emergency shelter is back at the India Street location. Josh mentioned that Milestone still does not have female beds and are not able to cook/serve food for the shelter beds. Intoxicated women are still reporting to Oxford Street. Bob asked if the HOME team base was back at India Street. Josh stated that it was. Rob stated that the collaboration with Milestone during the transition period was incredible and wanted to thank them for all their hard work. Pat stated that they activated crisis services right away and they were very proactive. She mentioned that proactive approach is very useful and suggested keeping that crisis process intact. Cullen congratulated Rob and Josh on their efforts and making the transition look seamless. Pat and Cullen both recognized ESAC and the provider community for their proactive response to this issue.

V. Use of Community Overflow – Update

Josh mentioned that they're continuing to struggle with the number of men experiencing significant physical difficulties. Josh stated that they pretty much have a whole medical wing at the shelter, which impacts the amount of space they have which leads to needing to place more men in overflow at the Preble Street Resource Center.

VI. Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) Grant – Update

Phil stated that the new program is called "Preble Street Veteran Housing Services" (PSVHS). Phil mentioned that they're fully staffed both on the City side and the Preble Street side. They started conducting intakes last week. Three intakes have been completed and only one person was ineligible. They will be doing a limited roll out over the next couple of weeks to ensure that all of the programs are working correctly. They will be working with people who have already been waiting and working with a case manager and just need small financial assistance (security deposits etc.). The program will be serving Cumberland County and will be doing intensive outreach in the area. Guidance from the VA and people who have been doing this work has advised that they approach outreach by asking people if they've served in the military/armed forces rather than asking if they are veterans because most people will not classify themselves as veterans based on their type of discharge. They will be working with all people who have discharges other than dishonorable discharges. Phil stated that his staff will be meeting with the community to provide more detailed education regarding the program. Potential clients will need DD214s to prove their discharge status. Rob mentioned that Jen Thorne, the embedded VA worker at Oxford Street can help with this process. In order to qualify for the program people have to be in imminent risk of homelessness or literally homeless. Phil stated that they will be working with veteran families, but a family can be

one person. People calling the referral line at Preble Street should ask for SSVF or the Veteran Housing Services Program. The grant is slated to be a year-long grant. The NOFA will expire in April to re-evaluate the program and it will be decided at that point whether or not it will be re-awarded. Phil stated that they're anticipating that this will go for more than one year. Phil mentioned that they're funding is extremely limited and they will have to be creative.

VII. *Portland Schools Homeless Liaison – Bonnie Violette*

Bonnie was unable to attend the meeting and will be added to next month's agenda.

VIII. *Families and Children Together - Maine Kids-Kin*

Cathy stated that they work with people who are raising relatives' children. The main office is in Bangor, but she works out of the Westbrook office. She stated that the program primarily fields phone calls regarding resources. Maine law states that when a child is removed from a home they must go with a family member; often time's relatives are not knowledgeable on services and resources, such as where to find food, etc. There is a clothing exchange currently in Bangor and one will be starting in Westbrook. The program can help with money for food, diapers, cribs, etc., though funds are limited. The program also has peer support people who take calls from people in similar situations, and court volunteers, who act solely as supports for people going through the court process (they do not provide legal aid). Trainings are offered throughout the year, such as legal roundtables regarding power of attorneys and guardianship. Jeff asked if they have a lot of refugee families. Cathy stated that they do not. Jeff stated that they see a lot of refugee families where grandparents, aunts, uncles etc. are raising the children and that he could make a lot of referrals to the program. Rob asked if they have access to interpreter services. Cathy stated that they do not but as the need arises they will make arrangements. She mentioned that public health was able to provide information on interpreter services, but she has not had to utilize them.

IX. *Federal and State Legislation*

Cullen stated that on the federal level, on Monday November 14th congress agreed to a series of cuts that will dramatically affect HUD, including CDBG; a total of \$3.8 billion will be cut. However, because of advocacy McKinney Vento is going to hang at its present state which is \$1.901 billion, which was nowhere near what is needed to fully fund the Hearth Act. Cullen stated that he's implored Senator Collins and Senator Snowe of the need to funding McKinney Vento fully. Aaron Shapiro stated that the CDBG in Portland will be reduced by approximately 12% and that the Housing Investment Partnership Program will be reduced approximately 32%. Cullen stated that there will be \$250 million for ESG. These cuts are expected to pass today and go to the president tomorrow for signature. Cullen did pass on thanks from everyone to Senator Collins and Senator Snowe for their support in ensuring that these cuts to HUD did not include any cuts to funding for McKinney Vento. Cullen mentioned on the State level, the discussion around PNMI continues. There will be an all-day discussion in Saco tomorrow from 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM at 45 Industrial Park Blvd. These small meetings are demonstrating to the federal government that they're attempting collaboration. Cullen encouraged anyone who receives PNMI funding to attend the meeting, as this is the last in the series. Cullen added that the State Treasurer is taking aim at MaineHousing and affordable housing projects and tax credits for the cost of construction. He is looking at several affordable housing projects and attaching figures on the costs of the programs that do not necessarily coincide with other information on cost on hand; the other side of the story is not being told. Cullen mentioned that he wanted this group to be aware because this issue very much effects homelessness. Cullen stated that he's trying to get a comprehensive media story that presents the other side of the story. These costs are due to quality construction/environmental costs which will reduce building operation costs for decades: fuel, water, etc.

X. Other Business

Elizabeth wanted to give recognition to Sarah Donlin, who will be moving on after being a part of the 22 Park Ave Teen Parent Program for 6 years. She mentioned that Sarah has been instrumental to the young parent program, especially amidst numerous changes.

Jeff stated that the Community Infant Toddler Team met and developed that name for the new program: the Playroom at the Army. This will be a program at the Salvation Army opening in Mid-March of 2012, open Monday-Friday from 9:00-11:00 AM and will be a place for parents to take their kids. There will be a computer room for parents to search, and volunteers will care for the children. Leah stated that the Salvation Army is putting in the staff person and the space. As it gets closer they will update the group.

NEXT MEETING:
Thursday, December 15, 2011
8:30 – 10:00 AM
Refugee Services Area
190 Lancaster Street

Please contact Robert Duranleau, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division at 775-6315, extension 224; John Shoos, United Way at 874-1000, or Tom Ptacek, Preble Street at 775-0026; if you should have any agenda items for the next meeting.