

EMERGENCY SHELTER ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE

196 Lancaster Street

Thursday, September 15, 2016
9:00 am – 10:30 am

Minutes

Attendees:

Name	Organization
Adam Harr	City of Portland
Ali Lovejoy	Preble Street
Rob Parritt	City of South Portland
Steve Ellis	FPC
Harrison Deah	City of Westrbok
Nicole Evans	United Way
Wendy Harmon	S. ME LL Association
Claudette Ndayininahaze	TOA

Name	Organization
Vicky Rand	CHOM
Jim Devine	HVJ
Ginny Dill	Shalom House
Cullen Ryan	CHOM
Brian Townsend	Amistad.
Norm Maze	Shalom House

July Shelter Bed Usage Statistics

Rob explained the August 2016 statistics ([see statistics](#)); the overall average daily bed nights went down in August by 49. With the tough housing market, there were 45 city-wide housing placements. 64 people reported experiencing homelessness for the first time which is up from last year, but down from last month. Rob reminded the group to contact Aaron Geyer to access TBRA to help homeless clients pay for security deposits.

Shelter Matrix

Rob explained that OSS Matrix. OSS saw an average of 203 individuals per night in July. Of the 19 housing placements in August, there were a total of 4 Long Term Stayers (1633 bed nights) and 2 veterans.

Rob also explained the Family Shelter Matrix and that the numbers went down due to the cap on hotel overflow. There were 9 placements which is up from last year. Vicky asked if it was possible to note when the shelter actually went down to its current cap to make better comparisons. When the hotels were capped, families that were in hotels stayed until room at the shelter opened up, just no new families moved into the hotels until room under the new cap opened up. Rob will follow-up with Jeff to see when the hotels reduced to the current cap.

OSS Long Term Stayers Report

Rob explained that August was a slow month but that September is off to a good start. He said that he expects double the placements that they had in August. The group is still focusing on getting vouchers, including BRAP.

Unsheltered Update

Ali went over the unsheltered statistics (available on the last page of the linked statistics). 15 individuals who haven't been in contact for the last month nor in shelter were purged from the list. Rob asked if there is a specific voucher that the PATH team focuses on in their housing plans; Ali said they are shifting to try and get BRAP for their clients. The unsheltered population has difficulty piecing together their chronic homeless history.

The PATH grant is up for rfp: under the new rfp, the grantee must be a licensed mental health agency. From first outreach contact to close of the case must be under six months. At the end of six months, it is expected that

30% will have applied for educational or volunteer opportunities, 80% will have started receiving MaineCare or Veterans Administration healthcare, and 100% will be housed.

Rob said that there will be some outreach assistance from public health and milestone to give different messaging to the users routinely seen on sidewalks who do not access mainstream services. He said he heard of a new campsite in riverside near a warehouse and will the HOME Team about it.

Homeless Voices for Justice Update

Jim Divine made some announcements: there are several candidates forums planned throughout the state with two in Portland: October 20th 9:30 at PSRC (City Council) and November 1st (State Legislature) at the same time. HVJ is currently trying to start a chapter in York County. On the 20th of September, the city council will take up the housing security ordinance.

Federal and State Legislation

The Senate and House won't have a budget yet, with a 3 month or 6 month continuing resolution instead. HOTMA was passed and will allow better use of project 8 section 8 and vouchers for youth aging out of foster care. HOPWA was also rolled into HOTMA.

HUD has proposed changes to the Continuum of Care that would cut Portland COC project funding by half. ESAC may want to weigh in on the public comment on the formula change. Cullen asked if ESAC would want to make a comment, Rob made a MOTION to do so, Ginny seconded and the MOTION PASSED.

Other Business

Transportation

Claudette asked if anyone has approached METRO to get discounts or free bus passes for clients. Harrison has asked them and were refused. Rob said that people with MaineCare can get bus passes. Jim and Brian spoke about a pilot program that gave some bus passes, but it expires at the end of the month. Transportation to doctors, caseworkers, etc. is a common concern when clients work on their housing stability plans.

BRAP

Cullen Said BRAP was a focus of the most recent statewide homeless council. Of the \$6 million of available funding, only \$1 million is being used. The council asked DHHS to make a pilot where client paid 40% of their income instead of 51% but it was rejected. There are barriers from the sec. 17 eligibility and clinician sign off requirements, but he said Chet made it clear that someone does not need MaineCare to apply for BRAP. Chet has said that between now and June 2017, anyone who applies for BRAP who is homeless will not be denied for not being section 17 eligible.

Ali said that the reason it is underutilized is the cumbersome application and eligibility requirements. Agencies are not submitting applications until they are complete. Ginny suggested it might be helpful to hear concrete reasons about why more providers and clients aren't applying for BRAP. The reality is that clients want BRAP but struggle with the bureaucratic barriers of applying for BRAP.

Another BRAP barrier is when clients are waiting on SSI, some landlords won't work with such clients because they would need to use GA. Partners will document how many applications they are working on and which parts are delaying the submission so that Ginny can present the barriers for relief from DHHS. BRAP will be added as a standing agenda item to work on using the resource.

Avesta Housing

Avesta recently got a grant for full-time caseworker to support clients in their properties.