

## Philadelphia Continuum of Care (CoC) Advisory Committee

Wednesday, August 22, 2018, 9 – 11 am

### Meeting Minutes

#### Present Committee Members

Carly Mauer – ACHIEVEability  
Don Price – APM  
Tina Pagotto – Bethesda Project  
Mark Jones – CATCH, Inc.  
Hugh Organ – Covenant House PA  
Robin Ingram – Center for H.O.P.E.  
Bill Kaiser – Calcutta House  
Marsha Cohen – Homeless Advocacy Project  
Carla Williams – Horizon House, Inc.  
Mary Ellen Graham – My Place Germantown  
Syreeta Owen-Jones – Philadelphia DHS

David Dunbeck – PHMC  
Rachel Yoder – Project HOME  
Jim Piasecki – Resources for Human Development  
Susan Brotherton – Salvation Army  
Colleen Landy – School District of Philadelphia  
Nicole White – TURN  
Virginia Sims-Riley – UESF  
Khari McKie – VYH  
Kathy Salerno – VMC  
Nikki Drake – Women Against Abuse  
Francine Williams – CTS/Youth Transition Center

#### Absent Committee Members

ACF/RHY/FYSB  
ACT UP  
The Attic Youth Center  
Broad Street Ministry  
CARIE  
Catholic Social Services  
Center City District  
Community College of Philadelphia  
Depaul USA  
Dignity Housing  
Drueding Center  
Eddie's House  
Episcopal Community Services  
Families Forward  
Forget Me Knot Youth Services  
Free Library of Phila  
Friends Rehabilitation Program  
Gaudenzia  
Hahnemann Hospital  
HELP  
Homeless Assistance Fund, Inc.  
JEVS Human Services

Juvenile Law Center  
Lutheran Settlement House  
Men & Women for Human Excellence  
Mental Health Partnerships  
PathWays PA  
Pathways to Housing PA  
People's Emergency Center  
Philadelphia FIGHT  
Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network  
Potter's House Mission  
Raise of Hope  
The SHARE Food Program, Inc.  
The Sheller Family Foundation  
Sunday Breakfast Rescue Mission  
The Village of Arts and Humanities  
West Chester University  
Whosoever Gospel Mission  
Women of Excellence  
Women's Community Revitalization Project  
Youth Build Charter School  
Youth Service Inc

#### Present Office of Homeless Services (OHS) Staff:

Roberta Cancellier  
Kataney Couamin  
Michele Mangan  
Sara Pagni

Gina Ruggieri  
Jessica Sonos  
Leah Staub  
Lauren Whitleigh

**Background Materials:** The following background materials were emailed to Committee members on August 16th: draft August 22nd meeting agenda; 2018 Continuum of Care (CoC) Funding Competition – Overview; 2018 CoC Project Review and Rating Procedure; 2018 Process for Reallocating CoC Program Funds; Office of Homeless Services Report (August 2018); CEA-BHRS Update (August 2018); draft June 4th Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes.

**Materials Distributed at Meeting:** Meeting agenda.

**Welcome and Introductions:** Rachel Yoder (Advisory Committee Chair) began the meeting at 9:05 am with a welcome and introductions. As this was Lauren Whitleigh’s last meeting as Director of CoC Planning, everyone noted what they would miss most about Lauren. Then, those present broke up into small groups for community meetings.

**Approval of June 4th Meeting Minutes:** Marsha Cohen, Housing Advocacy Project, moved that the Advisory Committee approve the [minutes of the June 4th meeting](#). Virginia Sims-Riley, UESF, seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

**2018 Continuum of Care Program Funding Process:** Gina Ruggieri, CoC Program Manager, reviewed the timeline for the remainder of the CoC Program funding competition, before submitting the [Consolidated Application](#) by September 18th, as well as the activity to date. She noted that there are some changes to the Application questions this year, with increased emphasis on System Performance Measures (continued increase in points), and to the way that questions are asked. Also, instead of simply asking for a data point, in several questions, HUD specifies a threshold (5% decrease/increase) that CoCs need to show in order to score all points. There are also fewer opportunities to explain performance or to talk about efforts that are underway but not complete. Tina Pagotto, Bethesda Project, noted that the way the Quality Improvement & Evaluation Subcommittee has been redesigning our local renewal competition mirrors what HUD has been doing. Roberta Cancellier, OHS Deputy for Housing Services noted that this is why OHS contracts have performance targets now. Gina mentioned that the performance on which we are scored is not just for CoC-funded projects – it is for the system’s performance as a whole.

Gina reviewed the figures:

- Philadelphia CoC’s total 2018 funding eligibility: \$38.7 million<sup>1</sup>
- Annual Renewal Demand (ARD): \$32.5 million
- Bonus funding: \$1.9 million (not all or nothing)
- Domestic Violence bonus funding: \$3.2 million (\$50M nationwide)
- Planning grant

Philadelphia will probably not apply for all of the DV Bonus funding for which we are eligible.

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<sup>1</sup>Shortly before posting the Consolidated Application, OHS learned that Project HOME's Willard School should not have been included on the Grant Inventory Worksheet, as the new construction project has not yet closed (expected on or around 12/11/18, with a 12-month construction schedule). Project HOME cannot begin to spend its current rental assistance grant until after the units are occupied (current January 2020 target). HUD advised that this project should be removed from the 2018 application and instead renewed during the CoC Competition in which it will expire. This decreased the CoC’s Annual Renewal Demand (ARD) slightly and changed the Tier 1/Tier 2 division and bonus funding eligibility, which are calculated as percentages of ARD. The CoC Board approved a revised Project Priority Listing and ranking on September 14. The numbers in these minutes reflect the revisions.

At the time of the meeting, OHS estimated that the CoC would have \$1.4 million in reallocated funds (repurposing dollars from renewal projects) for new projects, making the total available for non-DV new project funding \$3.3 million (including the bonus). In the end, the reallocated total was \$1,515,468. Reallocations were made based on underspending (most recently sent back \$1.5-2M, better than \$3-4M previous year), project elimination based on performance, voluntary self-selection.

Gina reported that the New Project Review Panel met the previous day and details of project selection and budget adjustments were still being worked out. She also stated that OHS would be applying for two Supportive Services Only (SSO) for Coordinated Entry projects – one to fund the youth access points that have been operating to date because of in-kind support of providers who have not received any funds for this effort and one for use of DV bonus dollars to develop and provide customized trainings for housing assessors.

Tina Pagotto asked how many units would be lost to the eliminations for poor performance. We did not have that information on-hand, but the 2 PSH and 1 TH projects had a total of 57 units. The new projects for which the CoC is submitting applications for reallocated funding have a total of 80 units.

Gina then reviewed the ranking strategy, which determines each project's likelihood of getting funded. A Ranking & Reallocation Working Group established the following priorities for this year's competition:

- Rank according to 2018 local competition scores
- Rank Permanent Housing projects over Transitional Housing Projects
- Rapid Re Housing (RRH) projects above Permanent Supportive Housing Projects (PSH)
- Projects in the bottom 25% are reviewed carefully in order to determine the best ranking strategy to preserve as many units as possible

Because the primary basis for reviewing and scoring renewal proposals is performance data from the Annual Performance Reports (APRs), first time renewal projects not operating long enough to have a year of performance data are not reviewed by the Renewals Review Committee.

Accordingly, Philadelphia CoC project applications for the 2018 Consolidated Application were ranked as follows:

1. Renewal HMIS projects
2. Projects that are renewing in 2018 for the first time and do not have 1 year of performance data to receive a score
3. First Time Renewal PH projects not operating long enough to have a year of performance data
4. Top 75% scoring renewal Rapid Re Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Transitional Housing projects
5. New SSO for Coordinated Entry, Rapid Re Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Joint TH-RRH projects created through reallocation funding
6. Bottom 25% scoring renewal Rapid Re Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Transitional Housing projects
7. New Rapid Re Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and SSO for Coordinated Entry projects created through Bonus funding
8. DV Bonus Projects

This produces a Tier 2 containing 196 units. Because some of the renewal units are in TH projects, they are targeted to different subpopulations. All Tier 2 projects nationwide compete against each other for funding. HUD gives each project a score, which determines the likelihood that it will be funded. OHS was

currently considering different options for ranking the projects, balancing subpopulation needs with the priority of preserving units. The [ultimate ranking](#) reflects the best possible score for each renewal project, and thus the highest likelihood that each will be funded.

**Coordinated Entry & Assessment-Based Housing Referral Process (CEA-BHRS) – Check-in:** Sara Pagni, OHS Senior Program Manager for Coordinated Entry, provided a brief update on the CEA-BHRS roll-out and next steps.

CEA-BHRS Policies & Procedures Training via webinar are offered continuously, occurring on a monthly basis, and HMIS trainings also continue. Training information is on the [OHS website](#). OHS has heard the request for more in-depth training options. As OHS staffs up its new Training Unit, more robust training will be offered going forward.

Providers have expressed challenges related to referrals of people with a higher level of need through this matching process, as we target the most vulnerable. Currently, the two youth access points are testing case conferencing about individual participant challenges, including both access point and outreach staff. We would like to move in this direction at the system level, but it is difficult to scale the model with such a large system.

Thousands of assessments have been completed (below), but only 545 matches have been made, and that number includes multiple matches for a single vacancy. As of August 22nd, 494 vacancies had been entered in the system: 165 TH, 232 RRH, 96 PSH.

	<b># of assessments (need)</b>	<b># of matches made</b>
<b>1 bedroom</b>	1665	360
<b>2+ bedroom</b>	610	185
<b>TOTAL</b>	2275	545

This is why we have to prioritize our resources. The VI-SPDAT was a starting point for prioritization based on severity of need. We are now thinking about how to refine the assessment and prioritization processes. The system has conducted 76 flag reviews, where an independent review panel determines whether the assessment accurately reflects vulnerability. Sara is keeping track of common causes of flag review requests. We are also looking at data matching through CARES, but we know that some of the most vulnerable don't touch any public system of care. Prioritization conversations are happening internally to produce recommendations for comment.

Going forward, we will be publishing an RFP for BHRS mobile assessors to connect those who are on the street to CEA-BHRS, using funds awarded in the last CoC competition. HMIS is being configured for prevention and diversion assessments, so that shelter will really be the absolute last resort. Additionally, Ecovia is working to build functionality for locking records of those fleeing domestic violence to keep them as safe as possible. The Veterans system has had their own version of Coordinated Entry for a long time, currently running parallel to CEA-BHRS; OHS is now meeting monthly with that system to make a plan to marry the two processes.

An Advisory Committee member asked how many people have been housed as a result of the 545 (duplicative) matches. We do not have a reliable count because there seem to be many matches remaining as "pending" in the system, even once the participants are enrolled, so we do not know how many of the matches "stick". This also skews our measures of how long it takes for people to be housed. Anecdotally, we have seen that some programs have difficulty filling their vacancies, in some part due to

eligibility criteria. The Policies and Procedures include parameters for the number of days a vacancy should be held while trying to contact a participant, but practice is not consistent across the system. The Clearinghouse staff match vacancies 3 days each week, but are being told by receiving providers that participants are “not a good referral.” There is a data accuracy issue where participants’ housing assessments do not indicate a disabling condition (despite having one), so they will not be matched to PSH. Also, client choice impacts how quickly vacancies may be filled. The system is learning a lot.

In terms of the youth access points, there are about 200 people on the By-Name List and about 40-50 matches have been made, very similar to the system as a whole.

OHS is working with DBHIDS to get Outreach contact data into HMIS, but developing a solution that meets privacy/confidentiality standards requires a new contract with Ecovia and the contracting process is slow. It is important to realize that as we get more data into HMIS, our System Performance will likely fluctuate. For example, as DBH begins entering outreach data, the length-of-time homeless will get longer. However, more complete data will give us a better understanding of our system’s needs and the ability to plan to fill gaps.

Soon, there will be a CEA-BHRS email address to contact for all CEA-BHRS questions, rather than guessing who the right person is.

**SEPTA Elimination of Paper Transfers & Tokens:** OHS had surveyed providers about the impact of SEPTA eliminating paper transfers as of August 1st and tokens as of the end of the year. The big takeaway was that most providers had not been giving out money for transfers, so the tokens are a much bigger issue. After discussing their wide-ranging experiences and challenges, the group came up with the following messages and requests for SEPTA:

1. The minimum order requirement and \$9 shipping fee are barriers for providers who want to order 2-trip cards; can they pick cards up in person?
2. The keycards say they are non-transferable. Some providers are concerned about putting people in precarious situations with transit police by lending them an organization keycard for the day.
3. Those who did give out money for transfers are either giving out more tokens (costly) or leaving their participants needing to walk, which is not ideal for their safety. Could SEPTA produce a trip plus transfer card?
4. Non-profits would like to ask about discounted rates.

Susan Brotherton noted that on the positive side, participants can now get their checks put onto their Key Cards and avoid check-cashing fees. Committee members suggested that we use the survey results to frame the message to SEPTA: these providers, who purchase \$\_\_ in fares each month.

**Announcements:** Colleen Landy, new Assistant Director in the School District of Philadelphia’s Educating Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness (ECYEH) Office, announced that there is a new vendor for [Uniform Assistance](#), so procedures have been changed for this school year. EH or TH programs that had not received an order form were advised to contact [Colleen](#): 215-400-4830, Option 4.

[Nondiscrimination Posters](#) were available at the meeting; they are available through OHS if providers need more.

The new [Strategic Plan](#) implementation will launch on September 12th, along with the new [Intergovernmental Council on Homelessness](#). OHS is working to align itself internally with the plan, which elevates all the [voices](#) that were heard during the planning process. We are assessing what needs to happen next and preparing to move forward.

**Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 10:58am.