



Coordinated Entry Committee

9830 Patuxent Woods Drive • Columbia, MD 21046

Minutes of the September 15, 2020 Meeting

Webex

Attendance:

Department of Community Resources and Services Staff: Cara Baumgartner, Jennifer Corcoran, Elizabeth Van Oeveren

Attendees: Bola Afolabi, Karen Booth, Jen Broderick, Shanika Cooper, Kathie DiNoto, Jennifer Dunson, Tina Field, Daniela McDonald, Japjyot Singh, Sara Smoley, Beth Stein, Tom White, Laquandra Williams, Linda Zumbrun

Linda Zumbrun opened the meeting at 10:33 am. Minutes from the July 30 and August 11 meetings were approved without amendments.

Prioritization for Permanent Supportive Housing

Prioritization Workgroup Discussion

The Prioritization Workgroup had met to discuss potentially changing the current COVID prioritization standard as there had been concerns expressed that some vulnerable households were not receiving housing placements. However, during the meeting the discussion focused on whether and how households who are not stabilizing in Rapid Rehousing (RRH) should bridge to Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). Currently, there are a handful of households in RRH who are reaching the maximum program time limit normally in effect (HUD is allowing additional time due to COVID). There is concern that these households would return to homelessness if they were discharged now. During the Workgroup meeting, conflicting points of view emerged about whether households not stabilizing in RRH should receive special prioritization for PSH openings. However, the majority view was that they should not receive priority over others on the By-Name List.

Staff Recommendation

Given that there was significant disagreement within the Workgroup and that staff are not well enough versed in methods of bridging people from RRH to PSH to provide contextualizing information, in forwarding the Workgroup's recommendation to the Committee staff recommended that it propose to the Board (1) that an interim rather than permanent process be put in place, and (2) that during this time households in RRH be split into two groups - one group would get special consideration and the other would be prioritized in the same manner as everyone else on the By-Name List.

Committee Discussion

The Committee discussed training by and recommendations from the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) with respect to RRH's ability to increase system flow and decrease costs. Also noted was the expectation put forward in *The Path Home* that RRH be tried with all households. Though there was not full agreement on whether every household should be required to try RRH before being eligible for entry to PSH, there were no objections to including households housed in RRH in the pool of households eligible for PSH. There was a question about how their vulnerability would be considered in relation to those in shelter or in unsheltered locations. Staff shared the opinion that though they would likely score lower on the VI-SPDAT because being housed would have contributed to health and safety, because the COVID prioritization standard looks at underlying health conditions and age before considering the VI-SPDAT score, it is probably less of an issue right now.

There were no objections to setting an interim policy and there was agreement that the end of the calendar year made sense given the anticipated timeline for PSH openings resulting from the Move-On process.

There was then discussion about whether some of the households who are not stabilizing in RRH should receive special consideration in the prioritization process. Multiple members of the Committee did not want to see an approach that did not leave room for some discussion, and there was also concern that households remaining in non-congregate shelter not be overlooked. The Committee discussed the possibility of using the Move-On assessment – looking for low rather than high scores – to identify households to bridge from RRH to PSH and the important role of a household's ability to increase its income while in RRH. Staff was not aware of a specific tool being used in other jurisdictions for assessing whether a household needed to bridge from RRH to PSH. Staff then suggested and the Committee agreed that with Board approval the Workgroup be empowered to define the criteria for identifying the RRH households who would receive first consideration. There was a brief discussion of voting procedures in the Workgroup when it is addressing process questions; each agency will have one vote when voting is required.

Upcoming topics to cover: CE HMIS Data Standards, Identifying ways to review equity in the system, Evaluation of Prevention Targeting Tool

The meeting concluded at 11:47 am.