

Advisory Workgroup NOTES
Homeless Initiative
May 27th, 2008

In Attendance:

Guests: Holly Barham, Western North Carolina Coordinator for HMIS
Mayor Terry Bellamy, City of Asheville

Members: Brian Alexander, Charlotte Caplan, Lance Edwards, David Nash, Tom Rightmyer, Laurie Tollman, Barbara Marlowe

Staff: Amy Sawyer

Presentation: Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)

See Attachment I for details on presentation.

Issues discussed:

- All HMIS forms and explanations can be found at CHIN's website, www.nchomeless.org
- The office that administers ESG grants has stated that they are using HMIS to evaluate program effectiveness and will ask for money back if agencies aren't showing services provided in HMIS.
- There are methods to use that encourage most people to sign forms so that their information can be put into HMIS (three levels of information sharing available for client to choose from), however, for those that don't, we need to be able to include them in our systems evaluations.
- David Nash stated that he'd like to learn more about how Housing Authority can support HMIS
- Mayor Bellamy suggested that HMIS could be discussed in the city's Affordable Housing Task Force. Robin Merrill will follow up on this.

Discussion: Advisory Group Structure

Mayor Bellamy presented. Group has option to become a formal board/commission of the City Council. The Committee on Boards and Commissions has considered this option and would like the group to consider it, Mayor Terry Bellamy will be the liaison between the group and the Committee on Boards and Commissions. Lance Edwards will report back to the Mayor within two weeks to let her know what the group decided.

The formal group would be city/county wide, it would have an official ordinance, charter, and roles for members, members would serve terms and new members would be chosen by the group/organization they represent. Meetings would be open to the public and advertised as such. See Attachment II for more detail.

Review schedule

- Handout: Calendar w/important dates

Next Meeting: Action Steps

July is an UPDATES Meeting – everyone come prepared with an update to share with the group

Next Regular Meeting:

July 29th, 2008

3:30PM, Housing Authority Board Room

HISTORY

- 2005 Homeless Coalition joined state-wide HMIS network.
- October 2005: Delay due to state-wide HMIS network issues.
- December 2005 re-launch of state-wide HMIS system, called CHIN.
- 2006 local agencies joined signed up to use HMIS.

How can agencies join?

- Contact CHIN Western Carolina representative or Homeless Initiative Coordinator
- Identify who will use the HMIS system & arrange for a training.
- The cost is \$250/end-user, annually

How are we implementing HMIS?

- Homeless Initiative Coordinator is lead for local HMIS implementation.
- Homeless Initiative Coordinator and CHIN Western Regional Coordinator meet monthly.
- Regularly scheduled refresher and new-user trainings
- Technical support from CHIN staff, including grant-funded data entry support through June

Who is has to use HMIS?

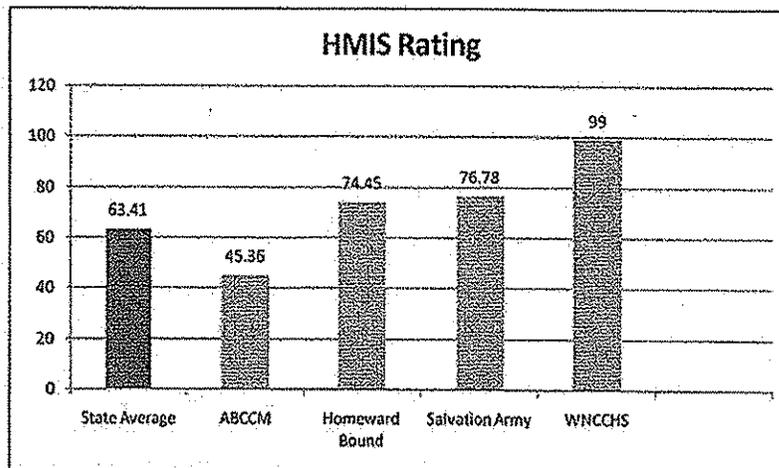
- Agencies receiving McKinney-Vento Funding
- Agencies Receiving ESG funds.
- Agencies contracting with Buncombe County or City of Asheville and provide services to people experiencing homelessness.

How are we doing?

- Quarterly reports provided by CHIN, most recent report covers February 1, 2008 and April 1, 2008.

How do we compare?

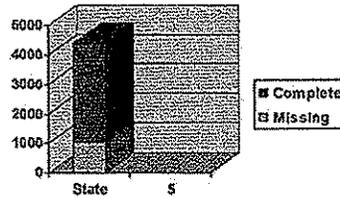
Asheville-Buncombe average HMIS rating: 73.9



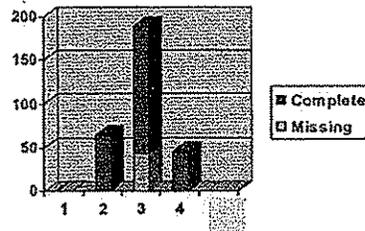
The average HMIS rating is 63.41

That rating averages the percent of new client files created with complete demographic elements, the percent of clients enrolled with complete HUD elements, and the average occupancy rate for the agency's shelters. If any of those items are missing because the agency did not create new files, enroll clients, or does not have a shelter in the HMIS, the item was excluded from the

Data quality report: New clients created

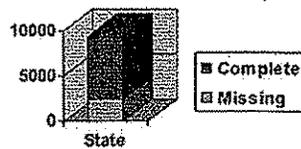


Demographic elements – name, date of birth, social security number (Don't Know or Refused are options), ethnicity, race, veteran status, zip code of last permanent address (Don't Know or Refused are options)

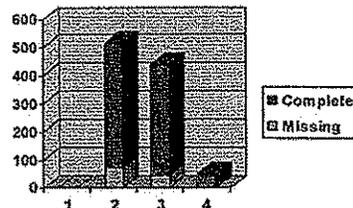


1. ABCCM
2. Homeward Bound
3. Salvation Army
4. WNCCHS

Data quality report: Enrolled Clients

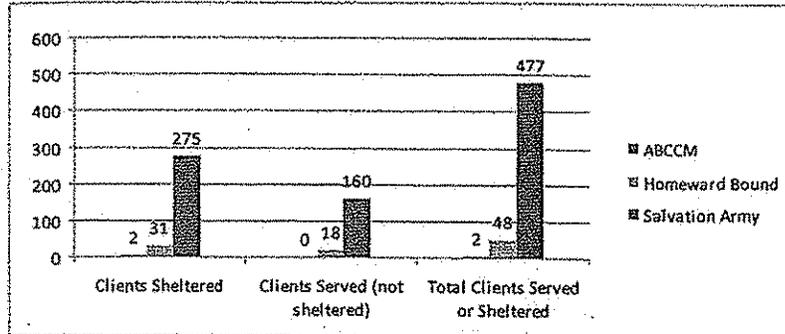


HUD elements – homeless Y/N, chronically homeless Y/N, homelessness reason, living situation, length of stay, domestic violence victim, disability of long duration Y/N, is client a juvenile parent* (the juvenile parent question was recently added to the system so is not included in the current calculations but is a required question)



1. ABCCM
2. Homeward Bound
3. Salvation Army
4. WNCCHS

Clients & Services



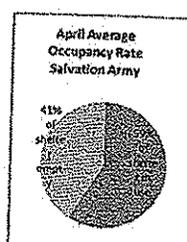
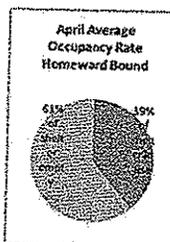
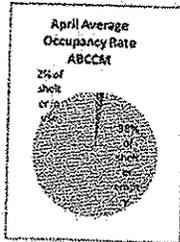
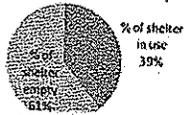
Occupancy Rate

The occupancy rate for the month of April is determined as follows:

$$\frac{\# \text{ of stays}^*}{\# \text{ of beds} \times \# \text{ of nights}}$$

Average April Occupancy Rate
State-wide

*# of stays Example: Client A stays in a shelter 10 nights=10 stays
Client B stays in a shelter for 3 nights, leaves for 2 nights, returns for 2 nights=5 stays
Total for that shelter=15 stays



Looking Ahead

- Quarterly report presentations to Homeless Advisory Group and Homeless Coalition
- HMIS user's group
- New members

Potential New Members

First at Blue Ridge	211
Housing Authority	Department of Social Services
Mary Benson House	RHA Behavioral Health
Neil Dobbins	Eblen Foundation
Western Carolina	Caring for Children
Rescue Ministries	VA Medical Center
	Next Step Recovery
	Lifeboat Recovery
	Safe Haven for Men
	Swain Recovery

Attachment II:

Summary of Advisory Group's considerations for becoming a formal board of City Council

Proposed Group Name:

Homeless Initiative Advisory Council

Purpose:

The Homeless Initiative Advisory Council exists to provide oversight for the implementation of the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness by sharing, applying, and tracking groundbreaking strategies that make a permanent and measureable difference in homelessness in Asheville and Buncombe County.

The Homeless Initiative Advisory Council provides recommendations & updates to decision making bodies (including the City of Asheville and Buncombe County) regarding policy and funding actions that can be taken to address the root causes of homelessness. Recommendations typically do not require frequent vote or action from Asheville City Council.

Group Membership:

The 10-Year Plan is centered around results-based systems change. Homelessness affects a large cross-section of the community and subsequently, the oversight efforts to combat this problem must reflect this cross-section. Extensive collaboration, new partnerships, and creative problem solving that both maximize existing resources and leverage new funding will only be successful if representatives from all relevant sectors of our community are involved in this initiative from start to finish.

The Homeless Initiative Advisory Council believes that , in order to maximize the effectiveness of the Homeless Initiative Advisory group, at least 12-13 voting members are necessary . This is more than the 7-11 typically serving on City bBoards & Commissions. In other communities with active 10-Year Plans, oversight groups have upwards of 15 people, each representing a separate focus area. For example:

- Knoxville's Task Force Membership, <http://www.ci.knoxville.tn.us/boards/homeless.asp>
- King County's Governing Board, or <http://www.cehkc.org/committees/committeeGB.aspx>
- Denver's Road Home Coalition for the Homeless Board of Directors. <http://www.coloradocoalition.org/site/PageServer?pagename=board>

Recommended Membership:

Focus Area	Nominated By	Person	Position
Consumer (Homeless or Formerly Homeless)	Homeless Coalition**	TBA	TBA
Community Member at Large	City Council	Tom Rightmyer	Church of the Advocate
Buncombe County	Buncombe County Commissioners	Angie Pitman	Human Services
Homeless Coalition Co-Chair	Homeless Coalition	Brian Alexander	Co-Chair & Homeward Bound

			Staff
Prevention	Homeless Initiative Advisory Group	Robin Merrell	Pisgah Legal
Shelters/Transitional Housing	Homeless Initiative Advisory Group	Scott Rogers	ABCCM
Supportive/Permanent Housing	Homeless Initiative Advisory Group	David Nash	Housing Authority
Non-Profit Service Provider	Homeless Initiative Advisory Group	Philippe Rosse	Affordable Housing Coalition
Health Care	Homeless Initiative Advisory Group	Barbara Marlow	Mission Hospitals
Mental Health/Substance Abuse	Homeless Initiative Advisory Group	Laurie Tollman	Western Highlands
Veterans Administration	Homeless Initiative Advisory Group	Allison Haberfield	VA Hospital, Homeless Outreach Coordinator
Funders/Foundations	Homeless Initiative Advisory Group	Lance Edwards	United Way

**Consumer participation may not occur if the member is selected by Council or a council committee, because people who have experienced homelessness often feel intimidated by such processes..

Additional focus areas that should have representation (through at large, or as a replacement for members rotating off the group):

Business	Educational	Faith
Domestic Violence	Downtown Resident/Property Owner	Media
Legal	Project Connect Coordinator	

Additional city/county staff who should attend

Department	Person	Already involved?
Planning	Amy Sawyer, Homeless Initiative Coordinator	Yes
Asheville Police	Rae Ferguson	Yes
EMS	TBD	No
Sheriff/Jail	TBD	No
School	Emily Walters, Buncombe County School	Partially
Library	Ed Sheary	Yes

Advisory Workgroup AGENDA

Homeless Initiative

June 24, 2008

Updates

Formalizing the Advisory Group –

- The Committee on Boards & Commissions met on 6/17 and had a helpful discussion about the Advisory Group.
- They support the process of formalizing the existing group's role by making it a board of City Council.
- They would like to see membership of 16 people to broaden community representation, including representation from businesses and residents.
- They will be meeting again to discuss the group's mission/charge.
- Mayor Terry Bellamy is the liaison from the Committee on Boards & Commissions for the Advisory Group and will work with the group to keep it informed.
- Once details are finalized, and ordinance will be drafted and presented to City Council for approval.

SOAR: SOAR program in contract proceedings now, working w/community foundation to get a grant written for August.

HMIS: Our local United Way's 2-1-1 and CHIN have made an agreement to run a beta program that will populate our local HMIS with resource data from the 2-1-1 data base. Will allow people greater access to finding resources and we'll know resources are up-to-date.

Homeless Coalition: Action groups are continuing to meet and are starting to develop plans of action around areas of Housing, Discharge & Health Care.

Continuum Grant: Robin reported that the grant will be released by HUD soon, will be an electronic application this year, and awards will be announced in early 2009.

Project Connect/VA Stand Down: September 14th, 2008. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED.

VA CHALLENGE: July 18th, 2008 @Veteran's Quarters

Presentation: Homeless Initiative Systems Research Design

In response to need for data, systems research design presented to the group. Discussion centered around need for data, feasibility of study, other alternatives. Group members asked to forward comments to Amy before next meeting.

Get to on-line survey at: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=QUMPeLaby5yPQRoe8flx3w_3d_3d

Next Meeting: Action Steps

July is an UPDATES Meeting – everyone come prepared with an update to share with the group

Amy will let everyone know specific ways to help w/Project Connect and VA Stand Down

Everyone is invited to the VA CHALLENGE on July 18th at 9:30

Robin will keep group informed about the Continuum Grant

Everyone will review research design and provide Amy with feedback

Next Regular Meeting:

July 22th, 2008

3:30PM, Housing Authority Board Room

Advisory Workgroup NOTES

Homeless Initiative

July 22, 2008

The Homeless Initiative Advisory Group exists to provide oversight for the implementation of the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness by sharing, applying, and tracking groundbreaking strategies that make a permanent and measurable difference in homelessness in Asheville-Buncombe.

In Attendance:

Brian Alexander, Lance Edwards, Barbara Marlowe, David Nash, Angie Pitman, Tom Rightmyer, Laurie Tollman, Laura Willis

Staff: Amy Sawyer

June Minutes Approved

Brian motioned, Angie seconded the motion. No discussion.

Updates

- Eleanor will take notes at the September meeting.
- Amy will attend the National Homeless Conference. Group reviewed conference agenda and provided feedback about sessions of interest.
- Research Project – additional information from existing databases needed to augment new research being collected. Laurie Tollman can work w/Amy re: Western Highlands information. Angie will consider the possibility of adding a housing question to the new Medicaid system. The group would like to invite lead researcher for the HST grant to meet w/them.
- Project Connect & the VA Stand Down is scheduled for September 12, 2008. Need volunteers, donations, promotion.
- In September, City Council will hear the proposal to make the Homeless Initiative Advisory Group into a committee/board of the council.

Group member Updates

SOAR – Buncombe County is contracting w/Pisgah Legal to implement a SOAR project. Community Foundation funds may be available, but not in this round of funding. Additional funds are needed to make the SOAR position a full-time position and pay for community training, records acquisition, and data collection.

Continuum of Care – The application process is underway. There is new funding available (\$86,000) for rapid re-housing, but Asheville-Buncombe wouldn't be competitive for it at this juncture. There is also a \$44,000 bonus available.

VASH – The VA has 35 Section 8 vouchers available to veterans with a disability, women, parents with children, and those experiencing homelessness. There is a new staff member at the VA who will help w/tenant referrals, selection, and support. The Housing Authority will administer the vouchers.

VA CHALLNG: The issues that were identified at the VA CHALLENG on 7/18/08 were: dental health, permanent housing, and emergency housing.

Discussion: VALUES/PRINCIPLES

The group reviewed the values & guiding principles, narrowing suggestions from 15 down to 6 – they were:

- Everyone has the right to housing
- There are achievable solutions to homelessness & actions should be based on those solutions

- People experiencing homelessness should inform planning, and be informed of plans
- Consistent, accurate data and measurable results should inform decisions
- Resources should be used responsibly, in a coordinated fashion
- People and the groups that support them have unique and diverse needs that require and multiple solutions.

Action Steps

Action Step	Lead Person/People	Time Line
Work with Western Highlands research team to provide information to the Homeless Initiative	Laurie Amy	Initiate process w/in months, ongoing information sharing
Look into the possibility of including a housing question in the new Medicaider system.	Angie	August
Invite Jennie Vaughn to a Homeless Initiative Advisory group meeting to discuss current permanent housing research	Amy	Invite her for September or October meeting.
Review Strategic Directions to prepare for the August Advisory Group meeting discussion. (see attachment on p.3-4)	Everyone	August 26 th meeting

NEXT MEETING:

August 26th, 2008 3:30PM @Housing Authority Board Room

2008 Homeless Initiative Advisory Group Strategic Planning: MISSION/VISION/PRINCIPLES

Mission: *End Homelessness in Asheville and Buncombe County by 2015*

Vision: The 10 Year Plan implementation process, through the Homeless Initiative, will end chronic homelessness and reduce all types of homelessness over the next decade by investing resources in a coordinated, sustained effort that addresses the underlying causes of homelessness.

Guiding Principles:

- Everyone has the right to housing
- There are achievable solutions to homelessness & actions should be based on those solutions
- People experiencing homelessness should inform planning, and be informed of plans
- Consistent, accurate data and measurable results should inform decisions
- Resources should be used responsibly, in a coordinated fashion
- People and the groups that support them have unique and diverse needs that require and multiple solutions.

10-Year Plan Goals:

Designate a lead entity: To ensure progress towards the goal of ending homelessness in Asheville and Buncombe County, a lead entity will coordinate the implementation of the plan and be accountable to the homeless community, service providers, and local government.

Develop infrastructure: Establish a “no wrong-door” for entry into the homeless network by people in a housing crisis. Use the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) to link all intake forms, service plans, referral protocols, and housing resources with HMIS, and to screen for applicable programs.

Prevention: Stop discharging people into homelessness. Coordinate and strengthen relationships and partnerships among people experiencing homelessness, government agencies, nonprofits, institutions, businesses, and landlords to leverage funding and resources available to people in a housing crisis.

Housing First: Address the most critical issue facing all people experiencing homelessness, which is the lack of permanent housing. Create new units, using the existing market and by building relationships with landlords, fostering effective rent assistance programs and bolstering outreach to people experiencing homelessness.

Housing Plus: Pair wraparound services and links to the larger community, which are key to keeping formerly homeless people in housing, with permanent housing. Develop and expand ACT teams/housing support teams and develop formal integration strategies so that people can access mainstream services in the areas of affordable health care, mental health, substance abuse services, employment /and or income supports, and childcare.

Advisory Group/Homeless Initiative Strategic Directions (action steps to reach 10YP Goals)

- 1) The Homeless Initiative, guided by the collection and coordination of data, develops and supports actions that will end homelessness.
- 2) Homeless and formerly homeless individuals have greater access to permanent employment, education, health care benefits, and support services.
- 3) The Homeless Advisory Group evaluates and prioritizes public and private funds to ensure outcomes based on the implementation of the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness and on annually evaluated goals.
- 4) We house 180 chronically homeless people.

2008: Homeless Initiative Strategic Planning Worksheet: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

(Based on March, 2008 strategic planning session held by the Advisory Group)

Strategic Direction: The Homeless Initiative, guided by the collection and coordination of data, develops and supports actions that will end homelessness.

Desired Outcome: *This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when...*

- All homeless people are in the HMIS system
- We're able to articulate existing resources and unmet community needs
- Reduction in unnecessary duplication of services
- All major providers are using HMIS
- Accurate data readily available to educate the community and advocate

Strategic Direction: Homeless and formerly homeless individuals have greater access to permanent employment, education, healthcare benefits and support services.

Desired Outcome: *This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when...*

- Expansion of A-Hope
- SOAR fully implemented
- 8 new Case managers coordinating supportive services
- CIT - trained police utilize homeless services instead of
- ACT is put in place and full operational

Strategic Direction: Homeless Advisory Group evaluates and prioritizes public and private funds to ensure outcomes based on the implementation of the Ten Year Plan to End Homeless and on annually evaluated goals.

Desired Outcome: *This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when...*

- At every HAC there are at least 2 people who have been impacted
By homeless directly
- Each year HAC works with a Senior Leader to champion homeless issues
- HAC developed methods to measure public perception and has consistently shown improvement
- HAC conducts a quarterly interagency training and providers are knowledgeable about other resource

Strategic Direction: We house 180 chronically homeless people.

Desired Outcome: *This goal will be satisfactorily achieved when...*

- Increase of beds and homes
- Construction of 25-50 new supportive housing unites
- Adding transitional housing beds for targeted populations
- Identify paths/means from traditional to permanent/supportive housing
- Multiple entry points with common intake that places tenants in appropriate hosing
- Coordinate hosing placement agencies – AHC, HB, WNCHHS