

Somerville Arlington CoC Homeless Providers Group Meeting Meeting Minutes for November 13, 2018

- ❖ Introductions and sign-in
- ❖ DV training: Screening, safety planning, and alternative shelter— Victoria Helberg, High-Risk Coordinator, RESPOND
 - HUD requirement that coordinated entry appropriately accounts for/meets needs of survivors
 - Screening
 - Adding layers to proactively identify DV survivors (supports clients have, current restraining orders, whether children are involved and how visitations take place, etc.)
 - use approach that communicates client/survivor safety is the priority (i.e., “we want to partner with you to keep your family safe”)
 - entry as opportunity to start over, with confidentiality—are they entering a safe community?
 - Be aware of social desirability bias—questions may be answered in a way that clients believe provider wants to hear in order to be accepted into program
 - Shelters cannot deny family due to older males in family unit
 - Shelters are broadening definition of “family”
 - Families should answer honestly, esp in light of housing scarcity
 - Learn areas where client feels safe (or doesn’t), where there are connections to abuser, and if other providers are better fit
 - Even if situation not current, this information is useful to know
 - Important to prep clients (esp for DHCD and screening) so that they fully report DV history—offer reminders, coaching, support
 - RESPOND can support with safety planning
 - safety planning
 - while waiting for emergency transfer to come through: restraining order, no trespass order, change locks to unit—RESPOND can support with funding and assistance, and connecting with a DV agency, has PD connections as well
 - follow site emergency plan in place to ensure safety of other clients (i.e., in a congregate setting) and be prepared to accommodate needs of family (e.g., a “stay-in” pass)
 - General guidance:
 - Focus on empowerment (not requiring action such as obtaining restraining order)
 - Engage with a DV provider, either client directly or as a provider on behalf of client
 - RESPOND can assist
 - Reach out to RESPOND if someone is in an emergency situation (they work in all communities and have connections to PDs)
 - DV provider for Arlington: REACH

- RESPOND can engage statewide network of DV providers to move people (permanently and temporarily, both within and outside of MA)
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- **Victoria will send a handout with screening questions, safety planning ideas, tips on getting court orders and what qualifies for them**
- **next step: developing emergency transfer plan for COC**

- ❖ Emergency Transfer Plan
 - Continuing emergency transfer plan from Oct meeting
 - Somerville Housing Authority—no written plan available
 - Developing a written plan and will have draft for Dec meeting

- ❖ PIT count
 - Date: Jan 30-31; teams meet at CASPAR 12-1
 - Collaborate with Cambridge as in past years
 - For Arlington: plan forthcoming (from Heidi/Julie)
 - Format:
 - Teams of 4 assigned to neighborhoods, planned routes and “hot spots” (Heidi passed out printed route)
 - Regular street outreach provider on each team and Boston Health Care for the Homeless nurses working with teams
 - Person with car needed for each group
 - **Agencies can recruit volunteers, and CoC meeting members invited to participate**
 - **Please suggest any additional areas to be added—offer feedback by 12/3**
 - Sign-up will be online and ready by next meeting

- ❖ HMIS data warehouse update
 - Update on changes to past provider payment system
 - COC renewing contract with Simtech for HMIS services; time divided by agencies and HSC as HMIS lead
 - HMIS dedicated to grant starting Dec 1—job posting to be shared by end of week so please share in networks

- ❖ State data-sharing meeting update
 - in Jan 2018, our COC voted to participate in statewide data-sharing effort
 - handouts from Heidi: Guiding Principles, Mission Statement, Cross-COC Data Sharing and Use Policies
 - all COCs participating, with COC member on statewide committee as COC representative
 - Massachusetts Homeless Data Warehouse handout shared; reviewed mission statement
 - For purposes of coordination and reporting (ex: can look at length of homelessness more easily)
 - Logistics still being worked out—state will put out RFP for data warehouse management by early next year, possibly end of this year
 - Client consent to be broadened to reflect statewide sharing; clients will be able to sign on for varying degrees of privacy/confidentiality within system (e.g., de-identifying data)
 - **Heidi will share consent form in draft form**
 - **Members to review Guiding Principles and direct questions to Heidi**

❖ Additional items:

- MHSa awarded additional funding from state
- Possible partnership with Arlington PD and Housing Corp to coordinate engagement and housing for people around Thorndike Woods
- Kelly sending 100 Homes materials to listserv

Next meeting: Tuesday, December 18 at 2:00