

Transitional Housing Meeting

November 4, 2015

Attendance: Freddy Crawford, Sandy Jeffers, Jeremy Turner, Audrey Nannenga, Alan Witchey, Cindy Thomas, Gabie Benson, Lara Chandler, Nate Ferrera, Gabie Benson, Dr. Karen Quick, Lori Casson, Yvonne Hyatt

Meeting began at 12 p.m.

Introductions

The group went around the table and introduced themselves.

Recap

If you want to pass along email, please give it to Paul so he can get you added to the email list. Alan recapped the takeaways from the last meeting.

Written statement

Alan said this group should create a strong written case statement as a way to educate funders and the general public about the importance of transitional housing.

Alan defined and provided examples of written case statements. He added that this is a way to create instant value.

Members agreed about the importance and value of creating a written case statement. The case statement would be beneficial to approach funders with so that everyone is on the same page.

Different funding streams

Jeremy brought up approaching different funders and seeing if they were funding projects that could be funded by Continuum of Care funds so those dollars could then be freed up to fund Transitional Housing. Jeremy added that he was not sure which organizations to approach, but added that going through the Continuum would provide a solid foundation. During their education on TH, funders could also be educated on the CoC.

Alan discussed the importance of increasing our Annual Renewal Demand and how many communities around the country are increasing their ARD annually.

There was discussion about broadening the Continuum of Care's focus beyond HUD's dollars.

Housing First and Housing Ready

There was discussion about Housing First and Housing Ready. Housing First is being discussed prevalently. Alan said he believes Housing First and Housing Ready do not need to be in competition but should exist together and said this group needs to explain the differences in the philosophies. It was reiterated that Housing First is not secure housing like a transitional housing unit would be for survivors of domestic violence.

Importance for different sub-groups

Some people need the urgency of a two-year program to get sustainable housing. There needs to be flexibility so different sub-groups can be supported. Those sub-groups are domestic violence, veterans, mental health, substance abuse and youth.

Lori recently explained a situation about a family at Dayspring where Housing First would not have worked. There was a family with a mom, dad and child. After a month of living at Dayspring, it was discovered that severe domestic violence was occurring and the woman was hooked up with appropriate services. Dr. Quick emphasized the importance of treatment for individuals with mental health and substance abuse.

Education about PSH/Housing First/TH

It was reiterated that Permanent Supportive Housing must follow Housing First. And we need to educate people that not everyone is eligible for Housing First.

Members said they need to discuss what happens if Transitional Housing disappears and show cost savings to community. They also discussed the different measurements between PSH and TH. Need to find other communities who are dealing with similar issues.

Gabie said the case statement needs to include personal stories/testimonials of people who had success in transitional housing.

CHIP will fund the case statement of this group.

Jeremy emphasized the importance creating a no wrong door philosophy, but that philosophy must extend beyond Housing First. He added that TH programs would have landed in top 50 percent if not for the adjustment made to satisfy HUD.

TH in to RRH?

There was discussion about folding some TH programs in to RRH. Alan said he did not want this discussion to become focused in to a HUD-lens.

It was reiterated that HUD is in the business of housing and not services.

Who's missing?

Sandy said they need to recruit more partners such as FSSA, Department of Mental Health, National Veteran's Foundation, Domestic Violence Foundations, SAMHSA, among others to the table. She added that there are re-entry and criminal dollars available too.

United Way needs to be added to the table. Are there programs that United Way funds that can be funded through the CoC? United Way is Housing First and United Way is influential among other funders and will try to convene with them and change their philosophy.

The Lilly Endowment and CICF need to be engaged. Alan did want to be cautious in engaging funders too early so they do not perceive this group as disorganized.

Nina Mason Pulliam also recently changed their requirements for their funding.

Future possibilities

There's a possibility of setting up a facility that is part TH and part PSH and be supported by CoC funds and private dollars. A program such as this will emphasize the no wrong door philosophy.

Need for supportive services

Freddy discussed a RRH program he was involved in and how a RRH program without supportive services acts as a band aid. He added that people who were housed through RRH on Washington Street have returned to the street.

Models to follow?

This group could take the Ryan White model. In an ideal world, this is what the model looks and what are we going to propose based upon this population.

Next Steps

Next meeting: December 2nd, Noon, MIBOR

Draft statements and what we need for our group. Alan will create a questionnaire to submit to TH service providers prior to the next meeting. Also need to think about anyone else this group wants to invite. Send Alan those names and emails.