

## YYA Committee Meeting Notes

January 20, 2022

4:00-5:30pm

**Participants:** Phil Ringwood, DIAL/SELF; Shelby Dempsey, BCRHA; Simone Barrows, YAB; Ben Hernandez-Kliman, YAB; Stacy Parsons, McKinney-Vento Liaison; Emily English, Gandara; Olivia Bernstein, MHA; Shaundell Diaz, CAPV CoC; Michele LaFleur, CAPV CoC; Olivia-Gilbert-Lilly, YAB; Matt Attesi, Gandara; Lydia Davis, CAPV Youth Programs; Georgia Welch, CAPV YAB/Youth Programs; Olivia Morris, YAB; Heather Welty, CAPV Youth Programs; Rhea/Kaia, YAB; Carolyn Murray, MHA; Kris, YAB; Alta Millar, CAPV Youth Programs; Teri Koopman, CAPV CoC

### Introductions/Check-Ins-Simone

#### YHDP Project Updates

##### DIAL/SELF (DS)-Phil

- DS is funded for a 4 bed RRH project
- Currently, three youth are enrolled and one just exited; Two are in housing search & one is in housing
- YYA from BNL are under consideration for the open slot

##### Gandara-Matt

- At present, four youth are in TH, three are in RRH, & many are in housing search
- Housing is difficult to find; Looking for 2 bedroom housing

##### MHA-Olivia

- MHA has eight YYA in PSH & have increased Navigation/RRH to 12 total (which is significantly higher than a few months ago)
- Carolyn Murray was introduced as MHA's new Lead Housing Navigator

##### CoC Updates- Teri

- Total Number of Youth Referred: 6 new referrals (5 to MHA Navigation and 1 to Dial/self RRH)
- Total Number of Youth Housed: Currently 17 Housed, 4 recent
- Total Number of Youth Currently on BNL: 73 on the BNL (including 11 youth who are no contact and are slated to be exited from BNL if there is no contact for 6 months)

#### Other Updates

##### Coordinated Entry (CE)-Shaundell

- The current BNL is being phased out
- New CE Assessment Tool has been developed and is being rolled out (old assessment was not working well)
- Assessors have been identified and are being training (including many of you); The training has been recorded

- New CE tool shared on screen & sections briefly reviewed: Basic Information; Current & Prior Living Situation; Triage Homeless Status; Housing Location and Preferences; Housing Problem-Solving Notes, Assessment of Housing Barriers and Vulnerability; Housing Match Considerations; Additional Notes & Info to Assist in Service Planning
- New CE Assessment goes up to 100 points & is more inclusive; Old assessment went up to 30 points total

#### **HMIS - Michele**

- New assessments will be entered into the CoC's new Clarity HMIS system which will now be used in lieu of the old HMIS system
- New system is easier to navigate

#### **People with Lived Experience (PLE) Plan-Shaundell**

- Equity and Inclusion Committee has been working on engaging PLEs because we want their voices to be heard
- The PLE portion of the Racial Equity Plan Expansion is now its own stand-alone plan
- Updated PLE Plan shared on screen
  - Lived Experience was Strategic Priority 5 under the Racial Equity Plan
  - Key Activity 5.1: Involve people with lived experience of homelessness who are racially diverse, in work groups and committees, and pay them
  - Key Activity 5.2: Make committee and work group structure more accessible through: child care, transportation, technology and other support
  - Key Activity 5.3: Train racially diverse people with lived experience to step into leadership roles
  - PLE Work Group met yesterday
  - CoC has submitted a Letter of Interest for grant funding to pay for technology (to better enable PLEs to participate in remote meetings) and to pay for their time
  - Key Activity 5.4: Commitment to Transformation
- Shaundell will forward the updated PLE Plan to Teri so it can go out with the meeting notes; contact Shaundell via email ([sdiaz@communityaction.us](mailto:sdiaz@communityaction.us)) if you have suggestions or wish to participate in this group

#### **YAB Updates -Lydia**

- Building Bridges: A meeting is scheduled next week at a new time: 4:00-5:00 pm; Topic for discussion will be how different types of architecture and policies are hostile to people experiencing homelessness and poverty
- DCF Care Packages: Georgia and Lydia met with Sam Pepe of DS re how to connect with TAY exiting DCF and foster care
  - Stacy informed that she is meeting with DCF tomorrow and offered to share info re the DCF Care Package initiative; Lydia is not certain if they are ready to expand beyond population identified in the scope of funding (youth exiting DCF)
  - Teri noted that there have been no TAY referrals in any of the three counties to date, but one of the TAY Providers (BCRHA) is working with young adults who have exited DCF and have applied for/received an FYI voucher

- Suggested talking to Shelby to see if she has FYI youth in need; In a meeting this morning, EOHHS was even considering giving BCRHA “credit” for all the FYI youth they are working with since there have been no official TAY referrals to date
- Shelby would love to discuss; She is working with over a dozen FYI vouchers for DCF youth and there are items they need for move-in and other that they can’t afford; Lydia will connect with Shelby
- The project has a care package list of needs that the YYA’s can select from (including name brand socks, blankets, gel pens etc.)
- In the chat a YAB member noted that DCF social workers are not very responsive (even to youth they are working with) and thinks it would be good to open up care packages to anyone who has any experience in foster care if they disclose that to whatever agency they may be working with

#### **YAB Suggestions for Unspent YHDP Funds-Rhea**

- The Providers asked the YAB for their suggestions re way’s unspent YHDP funds can be used before the grant period ends; The YAB shared the following:
  - Mental health services
  - Funds to help people who are at risk of losing housing due to falling behind on rent (for people who are renting, but receiving services from YHDP)
  - Peer support training for homeless YYA (& paying YYA to give peer support);
  - Home good supplies for new tenants at the housing projects
  - Furnish some apartments for local youth who are just being placed into housing
- Olivia M also encouraged Community Action and the Providers to partner with Project Home Again (PHA)
  - Levi mentioned PHA to Olivia M and she further investigated by directly contacting PHA
  - PHA provides free household goods, furniture and small appliances
  - PHA is willing to partner with any agency in MA or NH; must be able to pick up furniture in Andover (they leave it outside at a scheduled time due to COVID); have a case worker who conducts a home visit with the client; and confirm pickup 24 hrs prior
  - There is a link to request information about becoming a partner and they will share the needs list
- Phil informed that DS is considering partnering-they need to find housing to put the furniture in but transportation costs (e.g. truck rental) could be charged to the supported services line item as a move in cost

#### **Resource Flyer-Reg Advisory Pregnant & Parenting YYA-To be Rescheduled**

- This is one of the CCP action steps identified last meeting (under information sharing)
- Resource flyer (with QRC’s ) is in the process of being developed & Andrea will email the flyer to Lydia for YAB review/input
- Andrea regrets having to postpone her presentation

#### **PIT Count-Michele**

- HUD requires that we count how many people are experiencing homelessness the last 10 days January every year

- Due to COVID we were allowed to move the count to the last 10 days in Feb (our count will occur on February 23, 2022); Outreach and shelter staff will go to places they know and then ask if they can conduct survey; Providers will also share the survey for one week afterwards
- We are required to count sheltered and unsheltered in prescribe way; HUD does not include couch surfing and if someone found shelter that night (due to e.g. weather) they can't be considered unsheltered
- The info gathered is used in grant/funding processes & impacts many of our organizations
- The planning committee was very excited to see so many YAB members participating; Your ideas provided an incentive for us to push on boundaries
- This year we are going to include people HUD doesn't consider; Survey used to say "Stop" if someone was ineligible but we took that out as we want everyone experiencing homelessness to be surveyed; Michele will then sort through the surveys and only report to HUD those that meet their prescribed definition
- PIT Count Guide and Script were revised & shared via email and on Discord
- There was also interest in conducting a count in warmer months but this still needs to be further planned/discussed
- PIT Count is different than Youth Count

#### **Youth Count- Teri**

- Will briefly discuss, as it was mentioned last meeting and brought up during YAB Collab, but we don't want it to go into too much detail yet due to PIT Count
- This is a state count which directs funding and services
- YYAs are invited to complete a survey over a period of time (this year its April 4-May 5, 2022)
- In the past there have been incentives for YYAs who complete the survey
- We can create our own outreach material and events to encourage YYAs to participate
- At YAB Collab they discussed hiring 4 statewide Youth Ambassadors as paid as consultants; Because taxes are not withheld and earnings may impact benefits and FAFSA, some YYA expressed that they were not interested; Ayala is exploring whether the positions can be short term hires through another agency

#### **YHDP Demonstration Period Project Evaluation -Teri**

##### Status of Evaluation Groups

- Youth Surveys (YAB to Review):
  - The number of completed surveys has increased from 9 to 19; These are pre-service surveys (Survey 1) which are system focused
  - Michele just completed tabulating de-identified responses by question and sub population; Responses and scoring tool were shared with Youth Programs
  - Michele has offered to make any changes requested and to meet with the YAB to review the results if desired
- Data (CoC Staff to Review):
  - Now that new HMIS system is in place, Michele will be able to generate a report to extract the data to be reviewed by CoC Staff (likely during on-site monitoring this Spring)
- Provider Policies (YAB to Review):

- A revised scoring tool and policies which all three Providers submitted for Summer Self-Evaluation, were shared with Youth Programs and is in process
- CoC staff were also permitted to share the Provider's self-evaluations with the YAB for review

### **CCP Short-Term Action Steps to Address (Cont.) - Teri**

- Joint Training w/Springfield YAB on Legislative Process (conducted by Pamela Schwarz/WMNEH)
  - When invited Pamela to present at the last two YYA Committee Meetings, Teri didn't realize that there had been prior discussions with my predecessor re holding a joint training with the Springfield YAB
  - Reached out to Pamela and the Springfield CoC Staff (Kat Wong) who is supporting the YAB to inquire and gauge interest; The three of us met today
  - Kat is going to approach the YAB execs (who meet weekly) re their interest in a joint training; If interested, Pamela would like to hold a meeting with both YABs to discuss options; If they are not interested, then Pamela would like to hold a meeting with our YAB -she has a lot of ideas about how this training, and perhaps follow-up practice, could unfold and would like to engage in a conversation
  - Could even ask her about advocating on a federal level for PIT Count changes if interested
- CCP & July 2021 Update Worksheet Highlights-shared on screen
  - Started scrolling through some of the unmet short-term action tasks steps that were listed (in red) and the "Next Steps" identified to address these (in purple); Starting to denote the Next Steps that are in progress with purple arrow/tabs
  - To address Information Dissemination, Teri inquired about the Resource List that is being created for the PIT Count
  - Shaundell clarified that the list addresses very immediate needs (e.g. where to get a warm meal) and is not youth specific (though she received lots of resource suggestions from Thea at DS)
  - Is there a resource list distributed during Youth Count? Phil noted that they share resource info at their drop in centers and with outreach van; Shelby is not sure whether there was a resource lists for Youth Count in the Berkshire area.
  - Phil recalls that there used to be a list that CCT updated but has stopped updating it
  - Attendees supported creating a resource list targeting youth for the Youth Count; Add as Next Step under Information Sharing on the Update Worksheet

### **Announcements**

- Re Youth Aging out of DCF, Olivia suggested contacting the TAY's assigned attorney; they may be helpful with the referrals and are sometimes more responsive; Lydia appreciated this suggestion

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, February 17, 2022 4:00 – 5:30 pm