Three County CoC Equity & Inclusion Committee

Notes, 9.18.20

Present: Keleigh Pereira-CoC, Michele LaFleur-CoC, Kelsey Wessels – Dialself Youth and Community Services, Stacy Parsons – Mckinny Vento, Heather Marshall – Elizabeth Freeman Center, Jena Duncan – CAPV Youth and Workforce Development, Sharon Hall Smith – Gandara Center.

2. CoC Brief Updates

* Annual Meeting - Annual Meeting – September 29th from 2-4pm, discussed agenda and how to register- <https://conta.cc/3lf0UaF>.
* -CE Specialist position is nearly hired, a diverse group of candidates applied including multiple applicants with lived experience of homelessness

3. Workgroup Updates & Discussion

- Brief update on CE Workgroup:

* CE Workgroup is meeting biweekly on Wednesdays 3:00-4:30 (contact Brooke if interested in joining)
  + So far have met 3 times
  + Focuses are: system mapping; community crisis triage tool or resource (working out details); and updated assessment tool and prioritization- all with a racial equity lens
  + So far have done system mapping and are in conversation around a community crisis tool that hopes to help agencies less familiar with homeless and housing resources connect folks to the right resources.
  + Soon will be transitioning to assessment tool and prioritization
  + Have had technical support from TAC (Doug and LaMont), as well as our racial equity consultants Donald and Jeff. Will be dedicating meeting on 10/7 to talking about racial equity and emerging practices/strategies on addressing racial disparities in CE systems. Will look to other communities for examples.
* Racial Equity Workgroup-

This workgroup has been meeting regularly since February. The goal is to create and follow an Action Plan. We are also internally concentrating on board level equity work, engaging folks with lived experience, YHDP specific and youth leadership development and then following the plan that will be developed.

* + Coordinated Entry (Brooke and Juan Miguel)
  + Data (Michele and Juan Miguel?)
  + Organizational Training and Development (Betsy and Rafael)
  + Affordable Housing (Dottie and Emily?)
  + Lived Experience (Shaundell and YAB member/Recovery community member)
  + Legislative Policy (Lisa and Pamela)
* Jena shared that they are participating in a new group – Service Integration committee – facilitated by Janna. for internal referrals at CAPV and discussed how to tie in this as a resource to the CE system. Contracted through the Accountable Care Orgs support. The FRCOG has a new data person – Sage – who Michele should connect with.
* HMIS workgroup
* Goal – to choose a new HMIS system due to the need to leave the DHC system
* Looking at a list of requirements that would be ideal from vendors
* Looking into a multi- system implementation with other CoCs leaving the system with DHCD
* Also looking in to joining another CoCs system already in place.
* YYA committee
* First meeting held in September, level setting, a lot of new faces in the work
* Will support the work of responding to the Franklin County Coordinated Community Plan to End Homelessness developed through the YHDP planning team.
* Next Youth and Young Adult Committee meeting is 10/22 from 4-5:30

4. Dial/Self Racial Equity Work

-Presentation by Kelsey Wessells – Dialself

In June, Dial/Self formed a racial justice and equity group in response to the nationwide response. And, the agency has been vocal and putting the time into doing this work. They’ve always believed in it, but now outwardly supporting BLM more formally. 2/3 of agency staff are participating. It’s helped to allow staff and outlet at work to process the world around us. They are working on building trust in being vulnerable and in accepting constructive criticism. have started to think about things in the agency (policies and org charts) that respond to white supremacy culture and have characteristics that perpetuate it. They are using the white supremacy document. Beginning of the meetings are “open reflection time”. Prior to this group, D/S had a lot of separation in programs, this has really brought the two branches together along with the admin staff.

Will begin working on policy and procedure changes soon and then will also be opening this up to current and former young people, former agency staff, board of directors, community partners.

Questions/Comments:

* Impressive that such a large number of folks are dedicating this much time
* What policies and procedures are you seeing that need to change?:
  + For YYA that seek housing, there are legal charges issues in the policies – additional barrier to housing for youth of color?
  + Savior complex - “I am the only one who can support this person”.
  + Also discussion about the “individualism” characteristics that prioritize this in position responsibilities, considering designing mission driven team efforts.
  + Jena mentioned an interest in YP to be participating with Dial/self in this. Kelsey said yes, that we don’t have the same internal collaboration that we do with other agencies.
* What kinds of supports do staff identify needing at this point?
  + News is so difficult to process
  + COVID experience
  + We set up a google account where staff can share resources/books/etc.
  + Offering safety in managing instead of reactive.
  + Ability to talk about what is difficult/communal support network/cheerleaders
  + Sphere’s of influence.
    - Ability for staff that are not in leadership to identify ways of influencing change
    - Questions about where to even begin.

5. Data Discussion?

-what would they like to see in future equity reports – on hold

-shelter housing equity in sex comments

* Hud is identifying that it may be unfair to require faith-based orgs to follow expectations around shelter access to people who identify outside the binary.
  + Jena - We want to advocate about this, as a CoC, but can the CoC take a stance on this and how our own non-discrimination policy and expect that our funded agencies and in addition, the Shelters, in how to handle what we are doing. Can we have a rubric for identifying how the Shelters are doing/policy and support for how the shelters are navigating this.
  + Keleigh said that this is true, we have gotten to a place of providing trainings with the WMNEH, but haven’t gotten to any level of support or accountability.
  + Michele said we could start at least with education.
  + Kelsey said yes, policy is good, but without the education or support interpretation can be a struggle.
  + Sharon discussed staff concerns around this in accommodations, it's often the issue of the staff and not of those being served.
  + Jena - It would be great for this group to work on a model policy and an accountability process for this. Working on some of this right now for YAP funded projects so can help to share this.

6. Committee Goals and Planning for 2020

-Continuing conversation on goal planning (looking at current description and identifying action plan for this year)

The Equity and Inclusion Committee Description as Written in the CoC’s Charter-

The Equity and Inclusion Committee will:

a. Review the Annual Racial Disparities Report and other CoC data reports on equity-related disparities and make recommendations to the Board and Collaborative Applicant based on findings.

b. Support the CoC in conducting questionnaires and evaluations re: racial equity in our practices annually.

c. Evaluate CoC policies and procedures on equity, accessibility, and trauma-informed measurements and make recommendations of policy change based on findings

d. Review language of the policies, procedures, and COC forms to consider content in relation to barriers that may exist for marginalized communities.

e. Set expectations for and evaluate how the CoC is supporting and including people of varying race, ethnicity, gender, class, disability, economic level, sexuality and other underrepresented groups in their work.

f. Evaluate and make recommendations for how to effectively implement equal access to housing in HUD programs regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity and implement an anti-discrimination policy.

g. Support the COC in evaluating accessibility of our entry systems, cultural competency of our programs and practices for various populations, including accessibility for the hearing impaired.

h. Collaborate with other CoC committees around CE-related goals and action steps, including the Youth and Young Adult Committee, CE Committee, and Data Evaluation Committee

* Shared the committee outline of responsibilities. encouraged group to keep thinking about goals for the committee (see notes below).
  + See above about the discussion for the HUD policy – Housing Equity in sex – was addressed here.
  + Michele identified that we do racial equity analysis, but are there other evaluations for other disparities.
  + Committing to supporting the racial equity action plan
  + Specifically working on the engagement of people with lived experience in our work
  + Review the new vulnerability assessment and possible crisis assessment for equity

7. Next meeting date: October 16th from 9-10:30am.