

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Meeting Minutes August 19th, 2010

<i>Bob Duranleau</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division
<i>Aaron Geyer</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division
<i>John Shoos</i>	United Way
<i>Doug Gardner</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department
<i>Cindy Namer</i>	MaineHousing
<i>Megan Spencer</i>	MaineHousing
<i>Ginny Dill</i>	Shalom House
<i>Melany Mondello</i>	Shalom House
<i>Amanda Wells</i>	Preble Street Florence House
<i>Linda Janson</i>	Step Up! Shelter Services
<i>Cullen Ryan</i>	Community Housing of Maine
<i>Amy Faulkingham</i>	2-1-1 Maine
<i>Leah Bruns</i>	Cumberland County HPRP / PROP
<i>Diane Geyer</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Public Health Div., Healthcare for the Homeless
<i>Robin Oxenhorn</i>	PROP
<i>Rose Strout</i>	Preble Street Homeless Voices for Justice
<i>Amy Regan</i>	Preble Street Homeless Voices for Justice
<i>Donna Yellen</i>	Preble Street
<i>Heather Rhoda</i>	Frannie Peabody Center
<i>Josh O'Brien</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Div., Oxford Street Shelter for Men
<i>Jeff Tardif</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Family Shelter
<i>Kathleen Babeu</i>	City of South Portland
<i>Christine Ellis</i>	City of South Portland
<i>Adriene Whitaker</i>	Maine Center for Disease Control
<i>Byron Marshall</i>	Maine Center for Disease Control, Public Health Nursing
<i>Tom Allan</i>	Milestone Foundation
<i>Aerial Richardson</i>	Preble Street HPRP
<i>Shana Pike</i>	Step Up! Shelter Services
<i>Amy Grommes Pulaski</i>	City of Portland, Housing & Community Development
<i>Stacy Carpenter</i>	Youth Alternatives Ingraham

I. Introductions

Bob Duranleau, ESAC Tri-Chair, welcomed everyone and brief introductions were made.

II. *July Bed Usage Statistics – Bob Duranleau*

Bob reviewed the monthly shelter statistics for July 2010:

	<u>July 2009</u>	<u>July 2010</u>
Adolescents	12 Individuals	14 Individuals
Adults	236 Individuals	225 Individuals
Families	<u>58 Individuals (23 Families)</u>	<u>85 Individuals (34 Families)</u>
Total	306 Individuals	324 Individuals

Adolescent Shelter

The total adolescent bed nights for July 2009 were 367 while the total bed nights for July 2010 were 430. These figures indicate an increase of 63 bed nights, or 17% between July 2009 and July 2010. Two (2) individuals stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

Adult Shelters

Adult Shelter bed nights usage decreased by 5% in July 2010 compared to July 2009. Total bed night usage during July 2009 was 7336 while it was 6960 during July 2010, a difference of 376 bed nights.

During the month of July, there were 120 intakes at the Oxford Street Shelter for Men. An Intake or New Arrival is defined as an individual that has not stayed at the Shelter for a period of three (3) months or longer. Based on self-reporting, 58 individuals stated they had never been homeless before in July.

Oxford Street Shelter for Men Support Services team placed 9 individuals into permanent housing, with six (6) individuals returning to the shelter within 90 days of housing placement.

Florence House Women's Shelter served a total of 89 women during the month of July, including 30 new intakes. Based on self-reporting, 11 of these 30 intakes stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

The Shelter placed 14 individuals into housing, with one (1) woman returning.

Leah asked if anyone gets turned away from the Oxford Street Shelter for Men. Bob stated that no one gets turned, however due to high volume there may be a very long wait for a bed. Depending on the night and circumstances these wait periods can be very lengthy. The ESAC Shelter Overflow Committee would be called to develop a plan should overflow be needed. Doug stated that the reduction in adults from last year to this year is solely in the women at Florence House; however women are still in overflow. He mentioned that it is important to note that this apparent decrease is due to the Florence House housing placements in the apartments and safe haven, and that overall there are more women in total.

Family Shelters

There was a total of 2627 bed nights used for all Family Shelters in July 2010 as compared to 1785 bed nights in July 2009. This represents an increase of 47% in Family Shelter bed usage between July 2009 and July 2010.

The Family Shelter placed 22 families for a total of 69 individuals into housing in July.

The Family Shelter received 20 new families (intakes) for a total of 68 individuals in July. Based on self-reporting 11 families for a total of 40 individuals stated they had never been homeless before in July, of these 4 families for a total of 14 individuals were refugees.

Doug asked about the Westbrook intakes and whether or not they were referred by Westbrook. Jeff stated that they weren't. Leah asked if the Oxford Street Shelter for Men has the same relationship with South Portland and Westbrook as the Family Shelter has in terms of referrals and reimbursement. Josh stated that they have this relationship with South Portland in progress but not with Westbrook. Bob mentioned that the Social Services Division has a great relationship with South Portland and Westbrook.

First Time Homelessness

For the month of July 111 individuals, or 49% of all new intakes, reported experiencing homelessness for the first time.

Cindy noted that the first time homeless numbers have decreased from roughly half to roughly one quarter across the board. She added that this decrease could be due to HPRP's diligent work. Donna stated that the numbers for first time homelessness leads to more chronic homeless than most literature tends to illustrate. Bob and Cindy both stated that this is true and it has gone up over the past few years. Cindy stated that statewide the chronic homeless number is lower than the national average, according to the Point in Time Survey, but the Portland numbers are higher the same. Amanda stated that with Florence House moving women into the apartments and the safe haven beds with high bed night women, the overall bed nights have gone down.

Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP)

Bob presented the Portland HPRP stats for the month of July. In the month of July 2010 the Portland HPRP Program housed 44 households, for a total of 72 individuals. These housing placements represent 4,608 bed nights at the Oxford Street Shelter for Men and 487 bed nights at the Florence House Women's Shelter.

Leah presented the new Cumberland County HPRP stats for the month of July. In the month of July 2010 the Cumberland County HPRP Program had 34 new intakes (individuals), composing 16 households, including 10 children. In the month of July 7 individuals attained permanent housing without a subsidy.

Doug asked about the Cumberland County HPRP "town of origin" statistics and whether or not people are moving within their current town to moving to other towns. Leah stated that people are moving to new towns, but rarely to Portland because it's so expensive. She stated that many people are moving from more rural areas to more urban areas, again but few move to Portland due to the high cost.

Cindy presented the statewide HPRP numbers. She stated that 52% of clients served were homeless, and 48% of clients served were preventative cases. The average household financial assistance is \$1,262 statewide. Statewide HPRP programs have served 2,014 households for 3,575 people. A total of 903 households for 1,500 people received financial assistance, and 1,693 households for 2,800 individuals received case management. In total \$2,190,000 has been spent statewide, thus putting us on target for spending within the allotted grant period.

Amy presented the 211 housing and shelter call statistics. There have been 7,843 total calls statewide thus through June 2010, of these there were 4,487 calls for housing and shelter. There was

a discussion regarding 211 Maine, the referral process to GA, and contacting the GA hotline when there is a disconnect with a city/town's GA.

III. *Family Shelter Year End Report* –

Jeff Tardif gave an overview of the Family Shelter FY 2010 Year End Report. The Family Shelter Year End report was distributed and reviewed by Jeff. All Social Services Division Year End Reports are available on the City's website:

<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/hhs/hhsreports.asp#Miscellaneous>

This year, the Family Shelter provided housing for 268 families consisting of 886 individuals for a total of 18,907 bed nights. Of the 268 families served, 21 families were homeless two or more occasions during this fiscal year for an 8% homeless recidivism rate. The Shelter experienced an increase of 7% in the number of individuals served (heads of household and children) and an increase of 4% in the number of bed nights used. The average length of stay decreased from 22.2 days to 21.3 days. Shelter staff continues to excel at locating both subsidized and permanent housing. Of the 268 families served, 97 families had relocated from other states, 20 families were from other countries, 69 families were from Maine (but not Portland), and 82 families were from Portland. Of the 97 families coming from outside Maine, 65 families were secondary migrant refugee families from several different countries who had originally resettled outside the State of Maine.

Cindy asked about the influx of people with B1/B2 Visas. Jeff explained that most people are here with B2 visas (visiting visa). Bob stated that B1/B2 visas are not eligible for resources (such as TANF, Federal Food Stamps, etc) so they're reliant on GA. Cindy stated that the whole process has changed since the influx in 1999 where most refugees coming into the area were secondary migrants.

IV. *Florence House*

Amanda stated that last week the numbers were steady, some nights showing an increase, in overflow usage. She stated that they are continuing to keep people connected with resources. Additionally, Amanda mentioned that it has been very helpful having Ali onsite so that women can connect with HPRP.

Bob presented Amanda and Melanie with flowers and thanked them for their work for the CoC and ESAC, as they are both leaving Preble Street and Shalom House respectively.

V. *Maine CDC – TB Outbreak Investigation – Update*

Adriene gave an update on the TB contact investigation. Since her last visit in March, outreach has been done statewide, a health alert to increase surveillance of TB with people dealing with homelessness has been enacted, the Emergency Rooms at Mercy Hospital and Maine Medical Center, Mercy Primary Care and hospital outpatient programs have all outpatient have received education and awareness for working closely and getting people evaluated quickly for TB. Also, they worked with the Cumberland County Jail on better screening of people who are reporting homelessness. At the patient level they have collaborated closely with Milestone, Public Health Nursing, Public Health, and at the street level with the shelters, Preble Street, and Health Care for the Homeless to encourage testing. Adriene stated there are \$5 Hannaford gift cards which are used as incentives for completing screenings. She stated that 65% of the people on the contact list have completed evaluations, of these 6% have newly diagnosed with TB markers, and 42% of these have agreed to treatment. Adriene mentioned that it is very hard to get people to accept treatment. Thus, they are offering people \$10 Hannaford gift cards each week they receive treatment through the nine (9) month duration of treatment. Adriene added that Byron has been doing most of the street

outreach. Byron stated that they're administering TB screening clinics twice a month for the next few months (through November). Doug asked if they had the capacity to hold the clinic in a shelter or at Preble Street in order to ensure available access to individuals who cannot get to regular clinics. Byron stated that this is something that could be looked into further, however with the high risk involved it may be hard to arrange. Tom thanked Adriene and stated that she has been imperative in this effort at Milestone. Tom stated that the HOME Team has been called for transport to the clinic with the folks they haven't been able to track in order to get their tests read and have them seen more quickly.

VI. *Milestone – HOME Team Van Project Update*

Tom stated that the HOME Team project is continuing to go very well. He stated that they have been working diligently with Cindy, Doug and Cliff from MaineHousing to get all pertinent data into the HMIS/Service Point system. Tom added that this process is going well and that Doug and Cliff have been amazing. He is hoping to have some real data to report at the end of the first quarter. Currently staff are seeing approximately 35-40 routine encounters, and giving around ten (10) referrals to services per day. Tom stated that they are meeting all targets thus far. He added that staff are transporting somewhere between 8 to 12 individuals per day who are very intoxicated. The team has stated that the folks they're connecting with have been very receptive. Overall everything seems to be going very well. Tom asked if Vickey would email the HOME Team brochure to the group. Vickey agreed.

VII. *MaineHousing Shelter Funding – New Vision*

Cindy presented MaineHousing's "Use of Shelter Funds ... A Systems Change Opportunity." She stressed that right now this is only a thought and a vision of what could be done that is being put out there for people to react to, and that this will not affect funding for next year.

MaineHousing administers \$3.47 million in state and federal funding that supports the operating/staffing costs of 44 emergency shelters operated by 32 agencies across the state. A variety of significant opportunities and challenges have emerged to guide us in re-thinking the use of these resources.

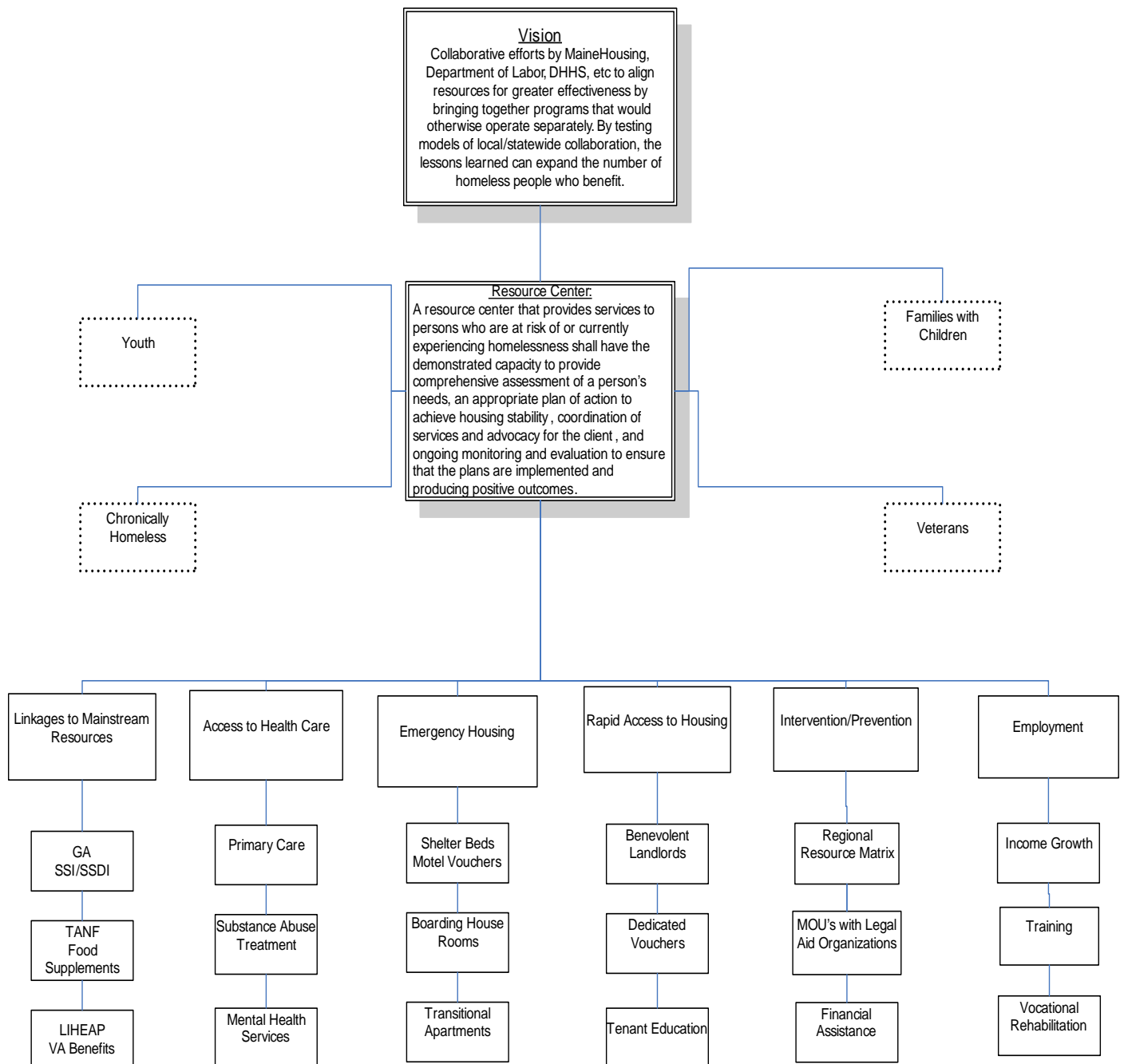
Primary drivers for change are:

- Amount of funds available has remained the same since 2000 while the number of shelter bednights increased by 46% from 2000 to 2009 and current estimates indicate more increases in 2010. Available dollars are being divided into smaller and smaller pieces of pie and thus less effective.
- Passage of The Homeless Emergency and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act last year. The HEARTH Act provides for substantial changes in the use of federal McKinney-Vento homeless funds that are administered by HUD and which are used for emergency shelters, supportive housing projects through the Continuums of Care, and Shelter PlusCare rental vouchers. There will be much more emphasis on rapidly transitioning people to housing and preventing homelessness, and on providing a full array of supports that will help people find and maintain permanent housing rather than so much focus on emergency shelter.
- Health care reform.
- Release of the Obama administration plan to end and prevent homelessness (the first ever plan at the federal level).
- Using the very limited resource (\$3.47 million) in the most effective and best way possible, i.e. effective public policy that will assist in reducing/ending homelessness.

With the help and guidance of some key stakeholders, we have developed a vision for the use of

these funds that will provide the blueprint for significant systems change work during the next few years. Key to this vision is fostering/requiring partnerships between homeless service providers and health care providers, particularly Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and other community health centers. Access to health care services is one of the key needs of homeless populations and those at imminent risk of homelessness. Primary care, mental health services, and substance abuse treatment are all needed.

This bold new vision will dramatically change the way the \$3.47 million is used. Rather than funding homeless shelters, we will propose funding Resource Centers that will ensure those who experience homelessness are effectively linked with health service providers in the state's 8 public health districts and with other federal, state and local resources that can help them become permanently housed with the services needed to maintain stability.



Cindy reiterated that at this point in time this is just a thought and a vision of what could be done. She stated that there needs to be a lot of conversation between a lot of different stakeholders. She added that at the end of the day there will be a change and that this is not about tearing apart what has already been accomplished, it's about building upon it. Cindy mentioned that she has gone to all the CoC's, the Region councils, the Statewide Homeless Council, and presented at a meeting with shelter providers regarding this vision. Cindy asked that if any one wishes to comment on what she has unveiled they can email Nancy Fritz at nfritz@mainehousing.org with comments. Doug asked is there a defined comment period. Cindy stated that there is not. Next month Cindy will be going back to the Statewide Homeless Council (Tuesday, September 14th), and she added there will be follow-up meetings with shelter providers as well. Leah mentioned that the population that has been historically left out of the picture is disabled adults. Cindy stated that other populations will be added to the vision in addition to the four federal populations. Rose stated that this population is most apt to be chronically homeless due to their conditions.

Cullen stated that he's had a chance to reflect over the plan as he has attended various meetings where it has been presented. He stated that he believes there are merits to this; however it bothers him that we have four goals to end homelessness and this plan rejects the first, safety and emergency shelters. This is a vision of collaboration but it initiates it by pulling funding from one key platform, homeless shelters, and putting it into a new place, thus it is destined to produce entrenched positions. Cullen stated that the worry is that shelters will circle the wagons except for the few that may become resource centers. Small mission driven shelters/programs will not survive. He added that safety and a place to stay are root needs and they can't be accomplished by pulling funding away, and they will still exist regardless of funding. Amy asked what the plan is for consumer input regarding MaineHousing new vision. Cindy stated there would be more formal forums, right now this is just putting out an idea and let people react to it. John asked how many shelters there are in the State, and how many are considered to be rural. Cindy stated that this is what they're beginning to hear, that it will work in some places, that it would work in urban areas but not rural. There are 44 shelters in the state; half of the State's shelters are in urban areas, while the other half are in rural areas. Donna stated that Preble Street feels very strongly that the funding formula and set up stay the same and to stop discussion. She added that they encourage looking at best practices, but these discussions should not be in the context of this change. Bob asked if Cindy is willing to come back to present at ESAC in September after people have had time to process this and others can attend who aren't here today. Cindy stated that she would be happy to come back in September, but she added there will be forum opportunities to discuss this.

VIII. Federal & State Legislation

Cullen stated that the vote to extend FMAP finally occurred and passed. He stated that our two senators were the only two republicans who voted in favor of extending the funding. He added that this is very brave and admirable and suggested that ESAC send a letter of thanks. Cullen stated that funding for McKinney-Vento Hearth Act also went through. However, we were looking for \$2.4 billion and instead funding will be \$2.055 billion. The original proposal for funding would've permitted funding for roughly 60% of HPRP programs nationally, but with the reduction it looks as if only about 6% will have the resources to be renewed.

IX. Other Business

Bob distributed information regarding the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research "Strategies for Improving Homeless People's Access to Mainstream Benefits and Services." Bob stated that this study included information on Portland and is available online at:

<http://www.huduser.org/portal/publications/pdf/StrategiesAccessBenefitsServices.pdf>

Bob distributed copies of the Portland CoC scores. He stated that Portland scored at 86.5%, and the line for funding is 71.25%. He stated that according to Lynn Morrow, HUD Manchester Field Office, Portland did great.

Melanie stated that there is a BRAP and Legal Rights training next Wednesday at 12:30 at Youth Alternatives Ingraham in the South Portland training building. Please contact Allison Parker at 874-1080 to register. Melanie added that she is leaving Shalom House to take a position with TAC in Boston. Ginny Dill will be assuming her statewide responsibilities.

NEXT MEETING:

***PLEASE NOTE THAT THE SEPTEMBER MEETING WILL BE MOVED TO
THE 4TH WEEK IN SEPTEMBER DUE TO SCHEDULE CONFLICTS***

Thursday, September 23, 2010

8:30 – 10am

Refugee Services Area

190 Lancaster Street

Please contact Robert Duranleau, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division at 775-6315, extension 224; John Shoos, United Way at 874-1000, or Dee Clark, Preble Street at 775-0026; if you should have any agenda items for the next meeting.