

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Meeting Minutes January 20th, 2011

<i>Bob Duranleau</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division
<i>Ginny Dill</i>	Shalom House
<i>Leanna Bruce</i>	Shalom House
<i>Linda Janson</i>	Step Up! Shelter Services
<i>Cindy Namer</i>	MaineHousing
<i>Amy Faulkingham</i>	2-1-1 Maine
<i>Leah Bruns</i>	Cumberland County HPRP / PROP
<i>Josh O'Brien</i>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Div., Oxford Street Shelter for Men
<i>Ashley Kuntz</i>	Salvation Army
<i>Dee Clarke</i>	Homeless Voices for Justice
<i>Amy Regan</i>	Homeless Voices for Justice
<i>Thomas Ptacek</i>	Homeless Voices for Justice
<i>Jennie Soares</i>	Preble Street
<i>Rob Parritt</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>Tom Natalie</i>	Milestone Foundation
<i>Cullen Ryan</i>	Community Housing of Maine
<i>Maria Tripp</i>	Preble Street
<i>Kathy Pratt</i>	Maine Department of Health & Human Services; Adult Mental Health Services
<i>Mary Ellen Welch</i>	Portland Police Department – Midtown Community Policing
<i>Melissa Skahan</i>	Mercy Hospital
<i>Annmarie Rotolo</i>	Southern Maine Agency on Aging/ADRC
<i>Susannah Harnden</i>	Youth Alternatives Ingraham
<i>Jon Bradley</i>	Preble Street
<i>Donna Yellen</i>	Preble Street
<i>Christine Ellis</i>	City of South Portland, General Assistance Program
<i>Kathleen Babeu</i>	City of South Portland, General Assistance Program
<i>Robin Oxenhorn</i>	PROP
<i>Heather Rhoda</i>	Frannie Peabody Center
<i>Leslie Brancato</i>	Portland Community Health Center & Healthcare for the Homeless
<i>Shuli Bonham</i>	Portland Community Health Center & Healthcare for the Homeless

I. Introductions

Dee Clarke, ESAC Tri-Chair, welcomed everyone and brief introductions were made.

II. *December Bed Usage Statistics – Bob Duranleau*

Bob reviewed the monthly shelter statistics for October 2010:

	<u>December 2009</u>	<u>December 2010</u>
Adolescents	14 Individuals	10 Individuals
Adults	212 Individuals	223 Individuals
Families	<u>84 Individuals (27 Families)</u>	<u>81 Individuals (26 Families)</u>
Total	310 Individuals	314 Individuals

Adolescent Shelter

The total adolescent bed nights for December 2009 were 425 while the total bed nights for December 2010 were 296. These figures indicate a decrease of 129 bed nights, or 30% between December 2009 and December 2010. Three (3) individuals stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

Adult Shelters

Adult Shelter bed nights usage increased by 5% in December 2010 compared to December 2009. Total bed night usage during December 2009 was 6562 while it was 6922 during December 2010, a difference of 360 bed nights.

During the month of December, there were 97 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, 21 individuals stated they had never been homeless before in December.

Oxford Street Shelter for Men Support Services team placed 49 individuals into permanent housing, with zero (0) individuals returning to the shelter within 90 days of housing placement.

Florence House Women's Shelter served a total of 97 women during the month of December, including 19 new intakes. Based on self-reporting, 9 of these 19 intakes stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

The Shelter placed 20 individuals into housing, with no women returning.

Family Shelters

There was a total of 2517 bed nights used for all Family Shelters in December 2010 as compared to 2593 bed nights in December 2009. This represents a decrease of 3% in Family Shelter bed usage between December 2009 and December 2010.

The Family Shelter placed 13 families for a total of 41 individuals into housing in December. The Family Shelter received 21 new families (intakes) for a total of 65 individuals in December. Based on self-reporting 10 families for a total of 37 individuals stated they had never been homeless before in December, of these 5 families for a total of 22 individuals were refugees.

First Time Homelessness

For the month of December 70 individuals, or 37% of all new intakes, reported experiencing homelessness for the first time. First time homeless numbers reported by the Oxford Street Shelter for men have been adjusted to reflect an error in over-reporting due to a systems glitch. The statistics have been adjusted to reflect this decrease in first time homelessness reported by the Oxford Street Shelter for Men. On average 36% of new intakes report being homeless for the first time, as opposed to 50% as had been previously reported.

2-1-1 Maine – Housing/Shelter Calls

There were 1,914 total calls in Cumberland County in December of 2010; 145 of these were housing/shelter calls. There were 6,342 total calls statewide, in December of 2010; 399 of these were for housing/shelter.

III. Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) - Updates –

Bob presented the Portland HPRP stats for the month of December. In the month of December 2010 the Portland HPRP Program housed 27 households, for a total of 38 individuals. These housing placements represent 1,174 bed nights at the Oxford Street Shelter for Men, and 550 bed nights at Florence House.

Leah presented the Cumberland County HPRP stats for December 2010. In the month of December 2010 the Cumberland County HPRP Program had served 47 individuals, composing 17 households (including 26 children). In the month of December 13 households attained permanent housing without a subsidy, 2 attained permanent housing with a subsidy, and 2 had housing pending. Leah presented the PROP Cumberland County HPRP statistics from July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010. Leah stated that assistance has been capped at approximately \$500 per household. After reviewing the first program year's data they haven't found any migration trends with households relocating to different towns. On average Cumberland County HPRP served 16.42 families per month last year; this year they are serving approximately 17.40 families per month. On average Cumberland County HPRP provided financial assistance at \$903.26 on average per family last year; this year they are providing \$499 on average per family.

IV. Federal & State Legislation

Cullen stated that the Governor just appointed the DHHS commissioner, Mary Mayhew. Currently there has been no word on cuts or changes at the State level, though he is anticipating a lot of changes it is not clear what these will be at this point in time. At the Federal level the Senate not in session and the House is concentrating on health care.

V. Prop Update – New Resources

Leah handed out information on the CASH program, a program in Maine that allows for those who made less than \$50,000 in 2010 to have their federal and state income taxes prepared for free by IRS-certified volunteer tax preparers. The program lasts from January 22nd – March 26th, 2011. Those interested can also call 2-1-1 for a tax site nearest them. Leah also distributed information on Safe Link wireless, a government supported program that provides a free cell phone and 68 airtime minutes each month for income-eligible customers. Leah stated that if interested individuals are homeless they must have a mailing address, which doesn't have to be their actual address, and it cannot be a PO Box.

VI. Community Overflow Update –

Jon stated that they have had an overflow issue in the community. They have been using the 190 Lancaster Street space, which is not a particularly good plan and hasn't been easy for consumers or staff at 190 Lancaster Street. The City with Preble Street has looked at numerous alternatives. Everyone agreed from the beginning that the ideal plan would maintain separate gender overflows. They have ultimately decided on using Preble Street's day shelter for the overflow. Oxford Street will house the overflow of women in a very specific way that keeps them separate, and overflow will be used at Preble Street's day shelter for men at Oxford Street if they exceed capacity. The City is going to be running the overflow. Though it has been a joint venture operated by both the City and Preble Street thus far, it became evident that this was not the most productive staffing method and conducive to everyone's goals. Josh stated that they have a great plan in place. They are currently looking at internal process and how this will change staffing. Josh stated that last night was the last night of overflow at 190 Lancaster Street. The new process will help staff to better engage with women in overflow in terms of housing services. They hope is to continue the current housing

effort, and help collaborate and work with the housing team at Florence House. Overall they hopes to eliminate needing overflow on most nights all together. Having the men be the ones to go off site at overflow will greatly aid the overflow issues, as if overflow is needed it will be known later at night (when high numbers of men check in), thus the number of hours needing overflow will decrease. Maria stated that check-in time will be moved to 5-5:30 so that women will be able to access public transportation to get to overflow if necessary from Florence House. They will assist women with bus passes and getting MaineCare bus passes as necessary. As for the selection process, Florence House staff will give women as much choice as possible, as there as many women who have significant others at Oxford Street or for other reasons would prefer to go to overflow. Florence House staff will also be looking at some selection factors, such as significant physical disabilities that would prevent women from going into overflow. Most importantly they will considering the needs of the women. Other plans are in place as well such as communication each evening if the shelter is full and transporting women back to Florence House if there is no need for overflow. Oxford Street is available for men around 6:00 PM. There will be a staggered check in at Oxford Street with women checking in first. There will be a second tier check-ins for folks who stay on the lower level, then a third tier of check ins for the upper level dorms. Josh stated that the staggered check in process should make it easier for everyone. There will also be a separate entrance for women. Rob stated have been working with facilities staff to make adjustments to make it as comfortable as women as possible. The top of handicap ramp will be an exit and entrance area where women can come and go, with a staff member assigned to that area to make sure things go smoothly. Maria stated women will be on cots, depending on the number in overflow. Josh stated that if the numbers of women exceed nine (9) or ten (10) mats will be used in order to accommodate larger numbers in overflow. If there are more than twelve (12) women another private dormitory will be opened. There has been a lot of momentum with housing efforts, and they are hopeful that effort will continue, which has already made significant impact to eliminate overflow on most nights. Jon stated they will be reviewing this plan regularly to ensure that it's working and working well. Jon stated that one of the concerns of overflow in general is that the needs are constantly changing, numbers could dramatically increase in the summer for example, and it's important that the community look at how we can address growing needs and numbers particularly with women. He stated that it would be ideal if a group was created to look at this. Jon stated that there are no domestic violence (DV) beds in the community and the need is great. They are seeing more women at Florence House with a history of domestic violence, and having DV beds in the community could alleviate this. Jon stated that another group that is increasing at Florence House is secondary migrants. Jon stated numbers are increasing and a group should discuss this in a creative and progressive way as it contributes to the need for overflow. Bob stated another option is looking at ways to bring other resources in. He stated that other agencies might be able to provide resources that could alleviate the situation. Josh stated that if there are any glitches in the new overflow plan to contact him. Dee stated that the City and Preble Street has done great work to remedy the issues with overflow. Jon stated that it is worth noting that the City really stepped up, especially Josh, Bob and Doug, to keep their commitment in not having people sleeping outside, which is getting harder facing changes and funding. Jon stated that the City deserves a lot of credit for maintaining this.

VII. Point in Time (PIT) Survey – January 26, 2011

Cindy stated that Scott has been very busy working hard trying to get more service providers to engage and be a part of the PIT. They have been working with the Department of Education to get numbers from them regarding homeless youth in schools. She stated that they have been working with the VA as well. The VA is going to get as many providers that they work with to participate in the PIT as possible to better reporting of homeless veterans. Cindy stated that it will be very interesting to see what the veteran data is. Overall they are working hard to get more communities in Maine involved in the PIT. Bob stated the PIT will take place all day Wednesday, January 26th. Scott presented all of the information at the CoC meeting yesterday, Wednesday, January 19th. There are new questions this year regarding education and veterans pursuant to HUD's new goals.

Bob stated that the question regarding reporting HIV/AIDS was put back into the PIT per HUD's instructions. Though no one in the past has reported being HIV/AIDS positive on the PIT, HUD is requiring the question still be asked. Additionally, the PIT will be gathering more information on people on the verge of homelessness. This information won't be reported to HUD, rather the State is trying to gather this information as it may be necessary in the future due to the Hearth Act. There is a final PIT planning meeting on Monday, January 24th at 3:00 PM in the Oxford Street Shelter for Men Day Room for those involved in the PIT outreach efforts. Outreach on the night of the PIT will be at 6:00 PM at the Oxford Street Shelter for Men and will be branching out from there.

VIII. Continuum of Care – Recommendations for Restructuring

Bob stated that HUD announced the CoC awards, with \$3.1 million awarded to the City of Portland, and \$9.3 million total for the State of Maine. Bob thanked everyone who participated in the application process. He stated there will be many changes coming up in the next CoC application due to the Hearth Act. Bob distributed "Improving Services for Maine's People who are Homeless: Rationale for Changing the Way we do Planning," a handout created by Anne Gass. He stated that HUD is encouraging Continuums to consider consolidating this year. He added that HUD is creating incentive for this as well, as continuums that consolidate this year won't lose their renewal burden HHN. Currently this incentive is only for one year. The three Continuum chairs have met with MaineHousing and an Ad Hoc group was created for researching the possibilities of consolidation. The three continuums have gotten together and are going to different groups to submit their proposal, to form a group with representatives from the Statewide Homeless Council, the Three Continuum of Care Chairs, and MaineHousing to discuss consolidating. Bob and Cindy stated that they are here today requesting the group's permission to look into consolidation. They stated that all findings will be presented to the group and the final decision regarding consolidation would be up to the CoC. Bob and Cindy will report back in 90 days with their findings. Cindy stated this is also about planning. Small groups are doing what ESAC does in the community but not connecting to the whole planning effort. They will be looking into how this can be done better and more efficiently, thus using resources more effectively. Bob stated that Anne Gass is the facilitator working with the group. Heather stated the guiding principal is not only using our time efficiently but also doing the best we can to serve consumers efficiently and to their best interest. The group approved the request to look into consolidation.

IX. Public Health Division – Community Health Center/Homeless Health

Leslie stated she joined the Portland Community health Center in October. She stated that Healthcare for the Homeless is now part of the Portland Community Health Center. Leslie stated that the new Medical Director at Healthcare for the Homeless is Dr. Shuli Bonham. She mentioned that there has been a lot of energy around an emerging issue at Healthcare for the Homeless, an increase in head and body lice, and ways to connect with the shelters and look at this as a community issue. She stated that they are interested in what can be done at the clinic to better outreach efforts specifically in regards to head and body lice. Even in the last few weeks there has been a dramatic increase in cases. They have been discussing offering head and body lice clinics similar to flu clinics to better catch the issues in the community, but they are interested to hear other ideas as well. Kathy stated that she thinks this is a great idea. She stated that it would be ideal if they were willing to go in and do treatments and clinics for people with disabilities in the shelter. Josh stated that they would absolutely welcome this as there are many men who won't go to the clinic. He stated that any increase in visits and relationship building would be most welcome, and that they can be very flexible. Josh stated don't have screenings at the shelter unless complaints are issued, supplies are on order, and they would be open to any recommendations they had. Jeff stated that the Family Shelter is often running into children with head lice, however the Healthcare for the Homeless can't serve the children. He asked if the same head and body lice clinic could be offered through the Portland Community Health Center. Leslie stated that this was a great idea and could absolutely be done. Leslie stated they are a non-profit so they would be able to take donations. She stated that this

Portland Community Health Center is so recent they haven't had the opportunity to look into development and fundraising plans. Jon suggested that a good place to do screenings would be at the Resource Center. Donna stated in the past it had been very helpful for Healthcare for the Homeless to come and meet with the staff on an annual basis, to help direct line staff in how to assist people and it would be great to see type of education and outreach in the plan. Dee suggested re-vamping HVJ's participating in advisory board meetings to have open discussion and education. Leslie stated that revitalizing the advisory board meetings would be great. Leslie added that they are recruiting for the governing board of directors and are hoping to have at least 51% of the board be individuals that utilize the clinics. The advisory board meets during the lunch hour, and Beth Eilers is the main coordinator. She can be contacted should there be any questions. Dee stated that there is concern for people who do not wish to shower often and how they can be assisted in these circumstances. Dr. Bonham stated that they have been running into this issue, and also that the medical treatments are not in line with certain cultural practices as well. Maria mentioned that adding blood pressure checks for consumers at the shelters would be great as well. Leslie stated that they could possibly coordinate on site clinics for a general purpose which would take away some of the stigma associated with lice and bed bugs. Amy recommended providing education to children and families on the issues as well. Leslie stated that they will work to coordinate with each of the shelters. Leslie commented that Shuli is an internist with a background in infectious diseases and works at both practice sites. She stated they have several people now practicing at both clinics which lends to continuity. Leslie distributed materials for the Portland Community Health Center. She stated that the Portland Community Health Center (PCHC) at 180 Park Ave can be accessed by anyone and everyone, including homeless individuals. She mentioned that PCHC has more competency regarding refugees, as they have interpreting and language services, has pediatric care, and many other resources. She stated that the elderly have a hard time finding practices that take Medicare, and PCHC takes Medicare/Medicaid as well.

X. *Maine Hunger Initiative Advocacy*

Donna stated that Maine has been lacking a statewide stable effort to look at policy and advocacy around hunger issues. She added that Maine is 2nd in the nation for rate of hunger. They are involved in a state partnership including the Maine AARP, Maine Center for Public Policy, Maine Equal Justice, Muskie School, and Preble Street. They will be presenting legislation to the State regarding hunger initiatives, and as it gets closer Donna will provide more information on this. Maine Hunger Initiative will be looking at any type of legislation that affects homelessness and hunger, including GA legislation. There is also a regional effort, working with all the food pantries in southern Maine. They will orchestrate regional meetings for these food pantry coordinators to get together as well.

XI. *Other Business*

Kathleen thanked everyone who signed up for the SSI/DI training and stated that the training is filled to capacity. It will be Monday, January 24th in South Portland.

***NEXT MEETING:
Thursday, February 17th, 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.