



Safety off the Streets Workgroup Minutes

DATE: Wednesday, February 14, 2017
TIME: 9:00 AM – 10:30 AM
LOCATION: Bud Clark Commons
Multipurpose Room
650 NW Irving Street
Portland OR 97209

MEETING DISCUSSION

- Dawn Martin asked that the group review the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Program Guidelines
 - This funding applies to two shelters in our system:
 - The Willamette Center
 - Human Solutions Family Shelter
 - Question raised: Is there a criterion in place for how folks are exited from the shelter?
 - Group highlighted that shelters have their own intake procedures. Some group members had additional questions about the restrictions for forced exit from shelter.
 - This may be best answered in reviewing the AHFE Community Program Guidelines for Emergency Shelter.
 - The proposed ESG Guidelines will state that an individual's case must be evaluated and all extenuating circumstances must be considered.
 - See #4 on the ESG handout
 - Dawn shared that contractors are required to meet minimum equity requirements before being contracted with the City and County.
 - General feedback from the group:
 - Group suggests that the guidelines avoid language that implies a referral or guaranteed services.
- Women Seeking Shelter List: Overview
 - Wendy shared that the list functions similarly to the Veteran by name list.
 - A woman can approach any organization and be referred to the "Women Seeking Shelter" list.
 - This is a collaboration between providers so that anyone can place a woman on this list
 - The list is specific to women seeking shelter and does not capture all the women facing housing instability.
 - Group identified that there are limitations to the list's effectiveness; shelter is not an effective or desired intervention for many.
 - The need for a centralized list has been made clear by several complications.
 - When shelters keep separate lists of women this results in duplicates on several lists.
 - ◆ This makes it difficult to gauge how many women are seeking shelter overall.
 - A group member asked "how are we protecting the confidential information of the clients we serve?"
 - We require client consent to share any information.

- The client reserves the right to decline to answer, but as providers we ask questions to obtain the information that HUD expects of us
 - ◆ If your project requires answers to coordinated entry, clients who decline to answer can't take advantage of the opportunities available.
 - If the client needs service, how much choice do they have in declining to answer questions?
 - ◆ Suggestion was made to provide a fact sheet to clients in order to better understand the process.
- Low Barrier Shelter Discussion:
 - Shared information about forced exit from shelter and the procedure that is involved
 - A suggestion was made to implement enhanced training to better enforce community guidelines.
 - The group discussed the benefits of low-barrier shelters:
 - Low barrier shelter can create a more welcoming more inclusive environment for folks that wouldn't otherwise utilize shelter.
 - ◆ This was especially evident during the severe weather period.
 - There was a discussion about the importance of putting staff supports in place for those working in shelters.
 - ◆ These supports should include adequate training and backup to handle escalated incidents.
 - Severe weather shelters report staff feeling like they've had to become more tolerant of intolerance.
 - ◆ How do we address racism, sexism, and homophobia, in a shelter setting?
 - Group discussed potential drawbacks to low barrier shelters.
 - Low barrier shelters provide barriers for folks that are committed to sobriety.
 - ◆ The environment can be undesirable and challenging for those who are in recovery.
 - Staff members need more in-depth training and increased safety supports in these environments.
 - ◆ Suggestion to require mental health and first aid training and motivational interviewing for shelter staff.
 - Ben shared that 14 sleeping pods have been designed for the Kenton neighborhood.
 - The units will be placed on a property owned by the Portland Development Commission (PDC).

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM	ASSIGNED
1. Send AHFE Community Program Guidelines for Emergency Shelter	Rhea Graves
2. Send out ESG Guidelines for further group feedback	Dawn Martin
3. Link to Point-in-Time Count volunteer duties from website	Rhea Graves

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, March 14, 2017
2017, 2:00 – 4:00 PM
Bud Clark Commons Multipurpose Room