



Safety off the Streets Workgroup Minutes

DATE: Tuesday, September 12, 2017

TIME: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

LOCATION: Bud Clark Commons
Multipurpose Room
650 NW Irving Street
Portland, OR 97209

ATTENDEES: Tony Bernal, Kurt Briggs-Ungeror, Avi Deol, Emilie Freidman, Liucia Green, Tiffany Kingery, Katie Mays, Matt Olguin, April Rohman, Neal Sand, Emily Volpert, Liz Weber

MEETING DISCUSSION

- Welcome and Acknowledgments
- Assertive Engagement and Equity Exercise
 - Tiffany Kingery, Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS), led the group through an assertive engagement exercise related to human capabilities.
- Low Barrier Shelter Discussion – Working Toward a Shared Definition
 - April Rohman, JOHS, led the group through an exercise to identify what words and phrases we associate with low barrier shelter.
 - Tony Bernal, Safety off the Streets Workgroup Steering Committee member, led the group through a presentation titled “Defining Low Barrier Shelter”.
 - Low barrier shelters are meant to serve anyone. People seeking shelter should receive services quickly and never be denied a safe place to stay, regardless of their race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, faith, employment status, sobriety, criminal history, income, marital status, lack of identification, immigration status, or participation in services (definition courtesy of the Corporation for Supportive Housing).
 - The group discussed the definition of “low barrier shelter.” Tony Bernal brought a Literature Review covering low barrier spaces. The review included information on context of low barrier shelters and the consistent attributes of low barrier shelters.
 - Low barrier spaces are designed with the knowledge of the following goals:
 - Accessibility; open 24 hours a day
 - Equity
 - Accommodating for people with a wide range of needs
 - Fast connection between the streets and the services available to meet their needs.
 - Low barrier shelters function as a “front door” opening to housing solutions (National Alliance to End Homelessness).
 - The singular goal of low barrier housing is rapid exists and entry into permanent or subsidized housing.
 - The most successful shelter models target the folks with the most immediate need (National Alliance to End Homelessness).
 - Low barrier shelters:
 - Create an accessible and accepting environment for all guests.
 - Ensure staff are trained in harm reduction policies as well as cultural competency.
 - Hire staff that reflect the populations they serve.

- Low barrier shelters do not:
 - Enforce or create any barriers to service outside of violence or theft.
- Themes that emerged from the low barrier definition exercise include:
 - Safety
 - Accessibility
 - Challenging
 - Helpful
 - Immediate, fast
 - Flexible
 - Inclusive, open to everyone
 - Understanding, compassionate
 - Community support
 - Harm reduction
 - Housing First
 - Fair
 - Agreements (for/between participants and staff) agreed upon collectively throughout systems
- The subcommittee agreed to continue their discussion outside of the workgroup, and asked all folks to come with more guidance to the next meeting.
- Workgroup Updates
 - Members provided updates on their current work and upcoming events

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, October 10, 2017

2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Bud Clark Commons

Multipurpose Room

650 NW Irving Street

Portland, OR 97209