

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance Coordinated Entry Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

8:30AM – 10:00AM

Champlain Housing Trust, 88 King Street, Burlington, VT – 2nd floor conference room

MINUTES

Attendees: Chris Brzovic (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity, committee chair), Paddy Shea (Chittenden County Homeless Alliance, meeting note taker), Jan Demers (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity), Sandrine Kibuey (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity), Pat McKittrick (UVM Medical Center), Will Towne (Spectrum Youth & Family Services), Elaine Soto (Howard Center), Nicole Kubon (Committee on Temporary Shelter), Sharon Rotax (Steps to End Domestic Violence), Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust), Jason Brill (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs), Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community).

1. Finalize roles and responsibilities of assessment partners

- a. Determine when assessments will happen in the coordinated entry process
- b. Determine who will be responsible for complete assessments
- c. Determine referral workflow from access points to assessment points

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): We have to decide who will be the assessment partners/hubs. Well, we have to at least decide what the role of the assessment hub/partner will be so that agencies can decide whether or not they want to be one.

There's at least 3 aspects of that: 1.) determine when assessments will happen in the coordinated entry process, 2.) determine who will be responsible for completing the assessments, and 3.) determine the workflow from access points to assessment points.

We will be using phased assessment. We're almost done deciding what the assessment tools will be.

We'll have an initial screening form (triage), which will be about 1 page, and there will be a screening for prevention which would separate some into the prevention category. Everyone else would go on to do the complete assessment (the right one for their subpopulation: single adult, families with children, children, DV, at risk).

The complete assessment will take about 15 minutes, and the HMIS will take about 5-15 minutes for a single adult, and longer for additional family members. (There is a separate "HMIS" system for DV, but it collects the same information.)

How we do it now is:

Screening form → Coordinated Entry staff → case managers from various agencies (do various intake forms/assessments)

We have to decide where we want to do the assessments. From a system design standpoint, doing the assessments earlier in the process makes more sense (like right after they do the screening form).

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): I think the assessment should happen right after the screening.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): The screening form helps separate people into the subpopulations. Most of the screenings get done by the state, and I am worried that they will say they don't have time to figure out where they should go after the assessment.

Sandrine Kibuey (CVOEO): I agree that the state will probably say they don't have time. We should build capacity to do the assessments and the data entry. So, then the state could just send all their screening forms to those folks.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): The client does the screening form, then...

Sandrine Kibuey (CVOEO): It would be 2 steps, the screening form, then the assessments (which would be entered into HMIS). Right now, we don't enter denials into HMIS.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): So, then the case managers could focus on housing navigation.

Sandrine Kibuey (CVOEO): Right.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): We are having a backlog getting data into HMIS. It would be much easier to do it now with our data sharing agreement.

Sandrine Kibuey (CVOEO): They are now monitoring the date and time of entering client info. into HMIS. You are supposed to do it within 3 days, which is not always realistic.

Jan Demers (CVOEO): If the case managers are stretched already, who will do the assessments? Where is the capacity?

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): Right. From a systems perspective, it's better to do it early, but the question is how to do it.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): From a client perspective, the longer term relationship you have is with your case manager/housing navigator, so now you would not be getting to that until the 3rd step of the process.

Nicole Kubon (COTS): I agree. That seems uncomfortable.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): The question is where to build capacity. You could build it up front, or with the case managers.

Sandrine Kibuey (CVOEO): IF the process is clear, I am sure they will do it. If they know there are 3 steps, it's clear. If the case managers do it, they will only be entering those who are enrolled in their programs, so we will lose the data on everyone else. I want to avoid that.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): People already have to meet with multiple people in our current system. When someone is seeking assistance, they are willing at that point to do an evaluation with someone.

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): I'm confused by the comments about the state. I hadn't heard before of demands by the state having an impact of what we are trying to accomplish.

Sandrine Kibuey (CVOEO): I'm just talking about the workload. The data we are collecting is for people looking to get into a program. What we currently enter into HMIS are people who enter into a program, not people who sought help from us and didn't end up in a program.

Paddy Shea (CCHA): And, are you talking about how people who get motel vouchers from the state currently don't find their way to CCHA agencies that could help them, and we could ask the state to send us their information to help loop them into services?

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): That could be part of it. HUD is saying we should enter everyone into the database, but they don't give us any money to do it. The state also gives us money to do certain things, but not that.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): The referrals come from Economic Services, and community referrals (from CVOEO, the hospital, Safe Harbor, BHA, etc.). For now, we could leave the Economic Services part the same, but for community referrals, we could route them through a central hub to do the assessment. People who are staying in a motel through the state need to be connected to a case manager within 7 days (and the motel stays are 5 days).

Jan Demers (CVOEO): The people providing these services in the state really want to help, but the finance office is really making it hard for them to access funds. Sarah Phillips is constantly advocating for us in the finance office.

I see a young man most Sunday nights for dinner, and he is getting thinner and thinner. He recently revealed he was so tired. That's why coordinated entry is so important. Depression can set in, the weather can be rough, etc.

We just need a system that's clear where people know what is going to happen. We can modify it if we need to.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): Are you suggesting that when a person comes in, the person doing the screening recommends that they work with Steps, Spectrum, the VA, or another agency, depending on what their screening shows?

Jan Demers (CVOEO): If there was a screening form, churches would love to use it. If you had a tool (and hopefully a training), churches, libraries, etc., would be thrilled to use it.

Paddy Shea (CCHA): There's also the possibility of using 2-1-1 to do screenings over the phone.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): So, if there was a tool, they would sit with someone and fill it out, and there might be about 4 possible outcomes.

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): It would be good if a person fills out a form and it gets photocopied. One copy goes to coordinated entry and one stays with the client, and they can bring it with them to the place they are referred to.

Nicole Kubon (COTS): I am concerned that this would be too hard for community partners to decide who to refer people to.

Sandrine Kibuey (CVOEO): Community partners are happy to fax referral forms to Chris. They want to help and refer. Often, we get a second screening form because they fill one out at various places and economic services. My concern is that they know where to send it to. Right now, people know that the forms go to Chris at CVOEO, and that's good.

Nicole Kubon (COTS): I just feel like there's a lot of room for someone to fall through the cracks here.

Paddy Shea (CCHA): What if, on the screening form itself, under each category of questions, it says, "If you answered yes to this question, you may want to contact Steps to End Domestic Violence by calling XXX-XXX-XXXX" (or Spectrum, COTS, the VA, etc.). That way, even if a person saw the form on a library bulletin board (or whatnot) and filled it out themselves, they would know who to contact next.

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): Yes, I like that idea.

Jason Brill (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs): There will always be people in overlapping categories, and they can choose who to work with and the case manager will help them get connected to other services if needed.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): So effectively, Jason, are you going to be the "hub" for the VA in this area?

Jason Brill (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs): Well yeah, I already am.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): So, we've acknowledged that capacity is a problem, but let's think about how it should be, and then figure out how we'll do it.

Sandrine Kibuey (CVOEO): I think the assessments should be filled out by case managers because you build a relationship, but the question is where to get the capacity.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): But, the question is how to get the assessments done for the very vulnerable and who may be the least likely to follow up with case managers on an ongoing basis.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): The system we have in place right now for people who are living in camps, or whatnot, we do have quite a lot of outreach from Street Outreach and Safe Harbor, who bring them to the table. They do a VI-SPDAT with them.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): Well, they do a VI-SPDAT with some of them, but maybe not all.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): Well, as they do outreach in encampments, they need to be doing VI-SPDATs. I don't know about Howard's Street Outreach.

Elaine Soto (Howard Center): They are hoping to get back up to a team of 6 next year. They do VI-SPDATs with them.

Jan Demers (CVOEO): We just have to make a system that we all understand how it works, even if it's not perfect to start off.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): Who would the non-specialized hubs be? I think it makes sense for COTS, CVOEO, and Safe Harbor to be the ones.

Elaine Soto (Howard Center): Those are the logical choices.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): I think we should have after-hours access through 2-1-1, and during business hours, we could have each of them do certain days of the week.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): That's an interesting idea.

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): But it would be good if people could choose where they go.

Paddy Shea (CCHA): If someone showed up at a hub on the "wrong day," they could probably still help them.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): If someone is already working with someone, they should get to keep doing that.

Sandrine Kibuey (CVOEO): We need more capacity

Will Towne (Spectrum Youth & Family Services): We have to just figure out what will work, and then figure out how to get the capacity.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): Yes, we will design the system we think will work best, and then approach funders to try to make it happen.

Jan Demers (CVOEO): And to get the funding for year after year after year.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): At least for community referrals, we want to front load the assessment so that people do the screening form, then immediately can go to a HUB to do the complete screening form and HMIS.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): And that we would do some modification of our screening form and do some partner training so that where appropriate, people could be diverted to one of the specialized hubs up front.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): Yeah, we could convene those partners and come up with a plan for how to provide coverage across the week. They can come up with the schedule amongst themselves.

Paddy Shea (CCHA): We just need to make sure that the schedule is very clear and well-publicized.

Jason Brill (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs): I agree that the groups should decide that, but it would be good to have client choice built in.

Nicole Kubon (COTS): Does the full assessment do the prevention piece too?

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): That would be during the screening form.

Jason Brill (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs): Can you remind me what the full assessment entails.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): The modified VI-SPDAT 2, the barriers to housing stability questions, and the HMIS.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): We have to talk to ICA about getting the data sharing up and running, and the logistics of how we can access client files when needed (if the client has given permission).

2. Update from assessment tool workgroup.

a. Review prioritization criteria

b. Approve updated single adult assessment tool

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): The assessment workgroup is going to meet every week, and by December we should have everything worked out, and we will just have to plug it into our policies. We did incorporate the feedback from this group to modify some questions. We will be using the barriers to housing stability questions, but they won't be part of the scoring.

3. Next steps for drafting policy and procedures

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): We're meeting again October 25, 2017, from 8:30-10 AM at Champlain Housing Trust. I'll write out a rough outline of everything we've agreed to so far in this process, and circulate it by email. Then, on the 25th, we need to make sure we are meeting all the HUD requirements.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): The policies and procedures that we don't think will be controversial, we should ask the technical assistance provider for ones from other agencies that we could use.

Jason Brill (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs): After the assessment, how does the client get connected to the case manager?

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): It will be like how we already do it, but we will just also be pulling data from ServicePoint now. Some households really may not be interested in working with case managers, and that's up to them. We'll leave our process intact and keep doing our weekly reviews.

Jason Brill (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs): I think we just have to clearly state that in our policies and procedures.

***Next CCHA Coordinated Entry Committee Meeting: Wednesday, October 25, 2017, 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM, at Champlain Housing Trust, 88 King Street, Burlington, VT – 2nd floor conference room.