

Chittenden County Homeless Alliance Coordinated Entry Committee Meeting

Wednesday, September 6, 2017

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

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), Sharon Rotax (Steps to End Domestic Violence), Steve Lunna (Supportive Services for Veteran Families at UVM), Will Towne (Spectrum Youth & Family Services), Jan Demers (Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity), Vickie Fewell (Committee on Temporary Shelter), Adam Wager (Committee on Temporary Shelter), Nicole Kubon (Committee on Temporary Shelter), Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust), Adnan Duracak (VT AHS DCF Economic Services Division), Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont), Brian Smith (VT AHS Department of Mental Health), Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community), Jason Brill (U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs).

1. Brief review of ServicePoint data sharing agreement and client consent form (before official signing of agreement).

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): Regarding the DRAFT Chittenden Sharing Agreement, ICA had some questions about how we are going to enter data for the question that had to do with substance abuse with minors, given that if we leave it blank, it could be a data entry issue with HUD.

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): Can we just not “share” that piece of data?

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): Adam, is COTS going to participate in the data sharing agreement?

Adam Wager (Committee on Temporary Shelter): That’s still being discussed.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): It’s a requirement of Coordinated Entry as voted on by the Steering Committee earlier this year, so it’s not really open to discussion.

The deadline for CE is coming up quickly. Some requirements will be easier than others. We need to get into the writing and drafting of policies and procedures. I will start sending documents to Paddy to post on the website CCHA website (which is a section of the VCEH website). I’ll be gathering a bunch of the best policies and procedures from other communities for us to look at.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): Do we have technical assistance set up?

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): We’re in the initial processes of setting up some technical assistance from HUD. Something like cloudburst.

2. Discussion about second stage of phased assessment

- a. The goal will be to agree on basic elements of the second stage in-depth assessment and give concrete guidelines to a workgroup that will then select, modify, or develop an assessment tool

See Appendix A: Draft Process Map by Chris Brzovic and Stephen Marshall.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): At the end of this month, September 27th, we need to get all our assessment forms finalized. The only way we can do that is if we have people working on it outside of our normal meeting times. Let me know if you want to be part of those meetings (some folks already did). We decided to use a screening form, which may be a mix of our current screening form and the Balance of State screening form.

The Comprehensive Assessment form will be trickier. We need to decide when the universal data elements, HMIS, housing barriers, etc. are asked about.

We still need to clarify what the assessment hubs will be doing. What will their roles and responsibilities be?

One thing that wasn't clear to me coming out of the retreat is how are people going to get to the Permanent Supportive Housing review team, and the other review teams? The review teams are who will decide who gets into housing options.

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont) & Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): Wouldn't that be determined by the scores they get on the assessments?

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): At the initial screening, people would go into one of 3 categories (DV, youth, adult/family by name list), and ...

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): Have we agreed that VI-SPDAT scores 10 and up automatically go to permanent supportive housing [*PSH*], and 5-9 go to rapid rehousing [*RRH*], and that below that....?

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): I think many of those with scores 5-9 will not automatically qualify for RRH. We need BHA at the table.

Brian Smith (VT AHS Department of Mental Health): Is the Housing Resource Center still around? If not, would something like that be a solution here?

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): I don't think that's a broad enough resource to cover this. We really need BHA at the table.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): It sounds like we should combine the HOP and BHA ____ into a "Community Case Review" meeting that happens every 2 weeks.

BHA has some stipulations on the process in that whoever is given a preference has to already have a case manager. So, everyone would have to be connected to a service provider in the community.

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): How does this relate to, or conflict with, the PSH review? If you're saying those with 5-9 scores need a case manager, that's similar to how PSH folks have case managers.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): It could just be episodic case management.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): If we have a master list, couldn't it be used to see who doesn't have a case manager, and get them connected to one?

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): I don't like the idea of transitional housing being its own hub, since transitional housing isn't best practices except in certain limited circumstances.

Brian Smith (VT AHS Department of Mental Health): "Transitional housing" as nomenclatures is passé, but "bridge housing" is a term HUD likes (or liked?).

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): We could put the transitional housing box into the PSH box as a sub-category.

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): But Transitional housing is by definition different from PSH.

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): In that case, transitional housing is more like a long-term emergency shelter.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): If we did have 3 basic groups (with the Retention/Prevention Team being a 4th), then instead of calling it "Transitional Housing Team," that would be the Community Case Review team (Burlington Housing Authority and HOP).

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): For HUD purposes, there's only certain things we HAVE to do right now. And, I think that is one of those things we could set aside and finish the details of it later to make sure we have the must-do's done by January/the HUD deadline.

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): We would want to make sure people get funneled to/from SSVF [***Supportive Services for Veteran Families at UVM***] as appropriate, as well as for domestic violence.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): The bottom line is that the Housing Review Team doesn't have anything to give out right now.

Nicole Kubon (Committee on Temporary Shelter): RRH does have some funds, and Steps to End Domestic Violence is at the table right now. Right now, we are using that money for security deposits, back rent, and sometimes first month's rent.

Adnan Duracak (VT AHS DCF Economic Services Division): Did anyone ask Winooski Housing Authority if they wanted to be involved?

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): I think not yet.

Paddy Shea (Chittenden County Homeless Alliance): I think Jane Helmstetter is going to be meeting with someone from Winooski Housing Authority soon.

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): Shouldn't they be part of it because they are part of Chittenden County?

Brian Smith (VT AHS Department of Mental Health): That would be good because HUD does ask about percentages.

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): Transitional housing should be part of coordinated entry, because when it's controlled by certain groups, it's hard for some people to get into certain programs.

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): I just don't think we're going to solve that problem right now.

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): We should circle back to it and re-examine the role transitional housing plays in our community.

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): It's valuable to some people so I advocate that we should keep it in our community.

Jan Demers (CVOEO): On the bottom, could you put transitional housing as a separate box?

Adam Wager (Committee on Temporary Shelter): Not really because it's still very much part of services for those who are homeless (unlike retention/prevention).

Paddy Shea (Chittenden County Homeless Alliance): Regarding the master list, could the DV clients be put on the master list in a way that does not include their name or identifying information?

Margaret Bozik (Champlain Housing Trust): Sharon, do you feel like you can help your clients access those resources without them being on a master list?

Sharon Rotax (Steps to End Domestic Violence): Yes, we have staff who go to all those meetings to help them access those resources. However, if our clients could be on the list with unique identifiers (in a way that doesn't reveal their identity), that could be good.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): We need to settle on the assessment forms, who is going to do the full assessments, etc.

For the assessment form, I think we should look at the VI-SPDAT version 2, and use that for adults in the community. We can add to it if we want.

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): Did Spectrum recommend we use the Youth VI-SPDAT for youth?

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): Yes.

Sharon Rotax (Steps to End Domestic Violence): Could we use the VI-SPDAT and then add, say, 2 points on for DV clients?

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): I think that would invalidate the tool.

Sharon Rotax (Steps to End Domestic Violence): I thought we could prioritize in that way, like how we do for the chronically homeless.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): That's because HUD allows that because they are prioritizing ending chronic homelessness.

Adam Wager (Committee on Temporary Shelter): The VI-SPDAT already gives preference points for certain health conditions, etc., so it seems like we should be able to give points to DV clients.

Sharon Rotax (Steps to End Domestic Violence): Folks experiencing DV may not meet some of the other criteria, because they may have been staying in a warm nice house, but are now fleeing for their lives. So, they may end up with a low score even though they are in dire need of help.

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): True, but do we need to change the VI-SPDAT score, or could we have another way of prioritizing DV clients in urgent need?

Vickie Fewell (Committee on Temporary Shelter): Someone who just fled DV might not show up at Steps, they could show up at any of the hubs.

Nicole Kubon (Committee on Temporary Shelter): Since most of the VI-SPDAT works for you, could you flag the questions that would be problematic for scoring a DV survivor, and we could fix those for DV clients.

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): I'd lean against the VI-SPDAT, and instead recognize the needs of DV clients a different way.

Adam Wager (Committee on Temporary Shelter): There isn't a lot of evidence for using the VI-SPDAT.

Sharon Rotax (Steps to End Domestic Violence): I feel fine with moving forward with the VI-SPDAT for now, but so many of the questions are inadequate for assessing DV victims.

Paddy Shea (Chittenden County Homeless Alliance): I was shocked when I read it how DV was only asked about in one question.

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): It's not getting at the level of risk/safety.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): Let's work outside of this meeting to tackle the nuances of the DV assessment. Are we agreed that we can base this on the VI-SPDAT, perhaps modifying it along the way?

Adam Wager (Committee on Temporary Shelter): Could we look at some alternatives (like the Houston one, which would be a very good fit for this community), and vote on them at the next meeting?

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): Well, at a workgroup meeting, not everyone would be there to vote on it.

Lindsay Casale (Pathways Vermont): Let's not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. Let's continue to use the VI-SPDAT, since many of us already have been.

Adam Wager (Committee on Temporary Shelter): But, we don't want to keep using it just because many have always done it that way. We want to take this point to decide what will be the best to use going forward.

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): Due to time constraints, maybe we could start with the VI-SPDAT, but write into our policies that we are going to revisit this question in a year (or whatnot).

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): We've already agreed that we can use different assessments for the sub-populations.

Brian Smith (VT AHS Department of Mental Health): Connecticut and Minnesota are good places to look for policies, including how they handle DV clients.

Nicole Kubon (Committee on Temporary Shelter): The National Alliance on Homelessness—their assessment set looks very similar to the VI-SPDAT, but without some of the wording/language concerns that Adam had brought up.

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): Many other continuums are using the VI-SPDAT, and they are trauma-informed.

Paddy Shea (Chittenden County Homeless Alliance): Could we say that we are going to use the VI-SPDAT, and that there will be a sub-committee to look at changing some wording to make it more trauma-informed?

Stephen Marshall (Homeless Community): Let's say that we are using the VI-SPDAT for now, and that there will be a sub-committee to re-evaluate what we are using in a year.

Adam Wager (Committee on Temporary Shelter): I thought we were going to have a committee to modify it now.

Paddy Shea (Chittenden County Homeless Alliance): Why not let Adam (and whoever else wants to) modify it in the next couple of weeks, and then we can vote on whether to use the VI-SPDAT version 2, or the VI-SPDAT version 2-as-modified-by-that-group?

The group agrees to that idea.

3. Outline next steps

Jan Demers (CVOEO): What are the things we have to have done before the next meeting?

Chris Brzovic (CVOEO): Could we decide that every other week, we meet during this timeframe? So, meeting twice as often as usual?

The group agrees.

*** Next CCHA Coordinated Entry Committee meeting: Wednesday, September 27, 2017, 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM, at Champlain Housing Trust, 88 King Street, Burlington, VT – 2nd floor conference room.