

# The Funders Group Meeting Summary

December 15, 2008

<b>TFG Members present:</b>		<b>TFG members absent:</b>
Jackie MacLean Alan Painter Jason Johnson Tom Tierney Adrienne Quinn	Emily Leslie Arthur Sullivan Stephen Norman David Wertheimer	
<b>Funders Group Reps/Staffers Present:</b>		
Bill Rumpf Debbie Thiele Amnon Shoenfeld	Cheryl Markham Carole Antoncich Janna Wilson	Bill Block Gretchen Bruce Debbi Knowles

## Family Homelessness

David Wertheimer shared that the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is seeking to build upon lessons learned from Sound Families and other national research, and the Foundation has identified five promising approaches to reducing family homelessness that they wish to invest in:

- **Prevention** to keep families on the edge of homelessness housed and quickly connect them to the services they need.
- **Coordinated access to services** to give families a convenient and standard way to get the most helpful resources through local service providers.
- **Rapid re-housing** to move families into permanent housing as quickly as possible.
- **Tailored programs** to provide individual families with the right services at the right time.
- **Economic opportunity** to connect the recently homeless to long-term, family-wage jobs they need to maintain housing stability and self-sufficiency.

The Foundation has issued invitations to the three local counties (King, Pierce and Snohomish) to apply for planning grants to align their local systems with these strategies in order to better prevent and end family homelessness. They have also retained Building Changes to assist with planning, integration and technical assistance on these approaches across other systems such as the Washington Families Fund. King County submitted their application in October and received funding in November, and Debbi Knowles, with King County DCHS, will staff this process. She provided a brief overview of the three components of the planning grant and estimated time frame:

- 1) Jan – Mar: an **environmental scan** of existing resources and systems already in place to address the needs of homeless families (often called a needs assessment);
- 2) Apr – June: a **strategic plan** of what needs to be done to fill gaps/enhance systems identified in the environmental scan (with particular emphasis on the five approaches listed above.) and
- 3) July-Sep: an **implementation plan** with specific timelines, responsibilities and outcomes for how the strategic plan will be implemented.

Once the plan has been submitted and approved by the Gates Foundation, the County will be eligible to apply for additional resources to help pay for the costs associated with bringing about the improved system changes identified in the Plans. These additional resources will be provided to support:

- **Infrastructure development**, including key staff to help implement the plans, funding for coordinated entry tools, capacity grants, etc., and
- **Incentive funds** to leverage existing and new funds dedicated to system improvements. Funds will be matched up to \$.40 on the dollar in the first year of each realigned or new funding source.

Next Steps: Debbi will oversee the planning steps/process as outlined above, and will present this information to the IAC at their upcoming meeting on January 5<sup>th</sup>.

## Coordinated Entry for High Utilizers

Janna Wilson and Amnon Shoenfeld provided an overview of a coordinated entry system for high utilizers/chronically homeless individuals. This work is happening under the 10 Year Plan in conjunction with the United Way initiative to end chronic homelessness. The plan is to combine data from multiple sources, including jails, emergency rooms, shelters and other services frequently used by people who are homeless to identify those that make repeated use of these systems in order to offer them housing and services (and hence reduce their need for and use of the more expensive systems.)

MHCADSD has hired a database manager who is working through the processes, technology, HIPAA requirements, etc. to coordinate this information. Public Health will soon hire a program manager to convene a care coordination team of service and housing providers, working with them to improve the systems for care coordination and housing placement. These positions will serve as the central point to identify individuals in need of housing and services, and convene staff across the various systems to coordinate outreach and care to the identified individuals. The project also seeks to identify set-aside units that are (or can be made) available for this population. The care coordination team will meet to recommend placements when units become available and may be the conduit to fill certain building vacancies. The care coordination team will monitor successes, challenges, and progress against measures so that it can make adjustments over time.

The project is keeping the definition of "high utilizer" somewhat loose at this point. It could be someone who has accessed one of the system partners three, four, or five times in the past two years. Or someone who has incurred \$X amount of emergency service charges in the past year, or some other definition. They want to see how the project rolls out in order to have opportunity to make adjustments in their outreach and catchment. Finally, the project will also make use of an assessment tool (similar to the tool used by DESC that rates people's functions in various domains such as basic needs, mental health, substance abuse, medical issues, life skills, etc.) to identify vulnerable individuals who may be fragile but who manage to avoid the various systems and thus wouldn't be flagged.

Next Steps: Over the next month, the funders and providers will be developing the proposed procedures for selecting high utilizers for selected units that are scheduled to open in 2009. This will provide the opportunity to design and apply the specific mechanisms for client identification and care coordination. MHCADS and Public Health will be working with United Way initiative staff to develop and agree upon a 2009 work plan. Janna and Amnon will present this information to the IAC at their upcoming meeting January 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **Financial Plan**

A discussion of the full financial plan was postponed to the January meeting and pending a follow-up meeting to be convened by Marty Lindley. The group did discuss, however, that several projects that have previously received capital commitments will be coming online in 2009, and will need service dollars to make their projects whole.

### **Production & Rental Subsidy Tracking**

Debbie Thiele confirmed that the Production Tracking Report that she compiles on behalf of OH to track units under the Ten-Year Plan includes both capital production (either new construction or rehab) and leased housing using rental subsidies (a.k.a. existing housing). The report does include previous subsidies such as the housing vouchers provided by SHA/KCHA and HHSF subsidies. It will include newly available subsidies such as VASH, FISH, etc. as that information becomes available. Stephen Norman stated that the housing authorities are exploring how to account for turnover vouchers that they are making available to homeless households so those can be included as well. They should have an answer on how to include those figures in the next few weeks.

### **Dashboard and Workplan**

A discussion of the draft dashboard and workplan format was postponed to the January meeting.

### **Upcoming Funders Group meetings**

January: Safe Harbors – Update on Safe Harbors; Funders Group Dashboard; Funders Group Workplans; Local response to growing economic concerns.