



Funders Group Meeting Summary

August 9, 2010

Funders Group Members Present:		Funders Group members absent:
Jackie MacLean	Stephen Norman	David Wertheimer
David Okimoto	Jason Johnson	Alice Shobe
Arthur Sullivan	Tom Tierney	
Deborah Doyle	Emily Leslie	
Sara Levin	Rick Hooper	
Funders Group Representatives/Staff Present:		
Bill Block	Cheryl Markham	Joseph Adriano
Gretchen Bruce	Katy Miller	Alan Painter
Debbie Thiele	Andrea Akita	Kolin Min

Welcome and Updates

Jackie MacLean, Funders Group Chair, welcomed members, reviewed the agenda and asked for updates.

Terms of Awards for Operating Support, Rental Assistance & Supportive Services Funding in Homeless Housing

Cheryl Markham reviewed a White Paper on Award Terms for HHSF and other funds that have been part of the Coordinated NOFA. She noted that most awards under the NOFA have been for five-years, with funding for all five years set aside from the annual revenues collected in that year rather than from forward-committing future years' revenues. This has proven to be an effective strategy for ensuring that programs can staff up for several years and reduces administrative costs at both the program and administrative level. We also have the added assurance that funds will be available for the duration of the award and haven't been caught short due to downturns in revenue collection (something the State has had to deal with in administration of the HGAP funds.)

The downside to five year awards is that it necessarily limits the number of projects that can be funded, since the entire amount of funding must be allocated at the outset. Five year awards tie up a lump sum of funding, provided that performance continues to meet contract standards, and can be less flexible where clients stabilize and need less/no services. The FG has a work plan this year with a committee that is addressing the issue of client stabilization in the contracting process, but there may be projects where fewer than five years are warranted where a lower service need population is served.

To date, the decision to make five year awards has been made on a case-by-case basis, with the majority of projects receiving five year awards, and some projects receiving awards of less than five years. Staff recommends establishing a set of guidelines to provide clarity and transparency regarding when and why awards are made for different terms.

Recommendations for guidelines include:

1. Continue five-year awards for investments that create new permanent housing units and access to existing housing for homeless households that need supportive services to maintain permanent housing.
2. Provide less than 5 year awards for projects where less than five years is warranted, such as testing new project models, for example, the Homeless Housing Outreach Team; this would allow funders to pool funds and test innovative projects.
3. Allow for annual allocations from each year's revenues for systems projects that are competitively awarded, such as the Landlord Liaison Project and Coordinated Entry for Families, which funders agree are critical. Annual allocations would ensure a consistent funding mechanism to regional system projects but would not lock up multiple years' worth of funds from one year's revenues. It also allows funders to balance other high priority needs with the type and number of projects that receive annual allocations of forward-committed funds. The annual allocations could be for contracts for one year or for multiple years.

Funders Group members discussed the pros and cons of such a policy. Points of discussion included:

- Five year awards for capital projects are reasonable for projects that need five-year commitments to leverage tax credit equity through investors, and that demonstrate clients will continue to need supportive services for the length of the contract;
- Five year awards for services to non-chronically homeless populations may be reasonable if awards can allow for more flexible spending patterns or client loads, and may include variable staffing levels as clients stabilize; less than five years may be appropriate for many of these projects as well.
- Annual allocations for an agreed number of years may make sense for a limited number of projects, as determined by the Funders. Such projects should have a clear regional systems benefit, such as regional system-building projects developed out of a CEH work plan, where effectiveness has been demonstrated through a test period and evaluation, where awards

are (or were initially) contracted through a competitive bid process, and where the number and amount of such awards is regularly assessed to ensure these awards don't unduly encroach on available funding. Members also discussed that we may choose to re-release an RFP at regular intervals for the contract to ensure the award remains competitive.

Cheryl will incorporate points from today's conversation into the white paper and bring it back for additional discussion and adoption of guidelines.

Landlord Liaison Project – First Year Evaluation

KC DCHS recently completed an interim evaluation of the first 10 months of the Landlord Liaison Project, conducted by Janet Salm, a PM III Evaluator with DCHS. Janet shared highlights from the report. Overall, the evaluation team has found the Landlord Liaison Project (managed by the YWCA) to be immensely successful in its first 10 months (March-December 2009), though at this juncture it is too early to evaluate the LLP for scalability or staffing and funding requirements to support ongoing operations.

- *Increased access to existing rental units.* Seventy-three landlords/property management companies signed on as partners with LLP by the end of 2009. This allows access to 159 rental properties in the community, ranging from large, multi-unit apartment complexes to single family homes. Landlords are very happy with the program, with 71 percent of the responding landlords reporting that they are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the LLP. 85 percent (62 landlords) report that they would not have rented to this population without the LLP.
- *Individuals and families successfully placed in private market housing.* Between March and December 2009, the Landlord Liaison Project placed 147 households in permanent housing. Clients housed by LLP have serious barriers to obtaining private market rental housing. About half of the households (48%) have a criminal background. Another 25 percent have very poor rental histories and the remaining households report other barriers to renting such as poor credit or drug or alcohol problems.
- *Successful retention of housing.* 96 percent of LLP households retained housing six months after moving in.
- *Budget.* To date, the LLP budget has come in under budget. In 2009 was under spent on client and rental assistance, spending \$56,460 of a \$500,000 allocation, though these reduced costs could be due to start up timing. DCHS staff are working with YWCA/LLP staff to identify a realistic budget for future years.
- *Voucher Use.* Sixty-eight percent of clients have a rental subsidy and 32% have no subsidy. Of those with subsidies, Section 8 is the most common source.
- *Client Population.* The project is serving significantly more chronically homeless individuals than originally anticipated. Fully 71% of individuals placed are long-term or chronically homeless.
- *Program Changes.* In its first year, the program reduced the case management required from two to one year. This change allowed more agencies to participate as many programs couldn't commit to two years' after care.
- *Provider Response.* Providers are enthusiastic supporters of the program. Shelter + Care reports they are able to house significantly more clients with the assistance of LLP than through the housing search supports they traditionally employed.

Funders Group members discussed the findings, with the following comments, questions and recommendations:

- How does LLP placement rate compare to the shopping rate for Section 8 holders unconnected to LLP.
- There appears to be proportionately fewer landlords connected to the project on the eastside. Eastside agencies would like to work with the project and provide help in bringing on more eastside landlords.
- How do the demographics of those accessing housing through the LLP compare to Safe Harbors data on those using the emergency shelter/transitional housing system?
- Katy shared information about a recent meeting of the current funders of LLP for the first two years (DCHS, United Way, and City of Seattle). The LLP Funders have indicated they see value in the program and would like to see it continue. The LLP Funders are proposing a new three year Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), with an annual review and determination of the project budget, and contingent on funds continuing to be available from all sources in the MOA. It was agreed that Katy will hold a follow-up meeting with the LLP Funders to: 1) discuss and determine the 2011 project budget, and 2) discuss the details of renewal of the MOA for three more years. Other funders who were not involved in the first MOA and may be interested in supporting the project should contact Katy Miller at katy.miller@kingcounty.gov or 206-263-9090 to join in the meeting.

Mid-Plan Review

Bill reported that Dan Brettler has suggested convening a workgroup chaired by Dan Brettler and Robert Taylor, and including two Governing Board members (suggesting David Bley and Jon Fine), representatives of McGinn and Constantine, the two IAC Co-Chairs plus two additional IAC members (non-funders) plus two CAC members. An email will go out to IAC seeking nominations.

Northwest Solutions / Pacific Northwest Summit on Homelessness

Bill would like to hold a “Northwest Solutions to Homelessness” summit directed at high level elected officials and policy makers in the Pacific Northwest. The idea came out of a conversation he had with the Mayor of Victoria, who was in Seattle looking at local programs. He suggested a summit to share lessons on homelessness that may be specific / significant to Northwest areas. Since then, Bill has checked with Portland (Nick Fish), and Seattle (McGinn, Burgess, Licata) and they are likewise interested. Tim Burgess has offered to lead the effort.

The proposal would be to invite elected officials from Vancouver, Victoria, Seattle/King County, Tacoma, Portland and possibly Spokane together with their key directors, for a half-day summit where each jurisdiction would have the opportunity to present a “best practice program” that they have implemented (housing first, safe injection sites, etc.) and each jurisdiction would also have a chance to ask for input about a hard problem they are facing (such as panhandling or the question of emergency shelter vs. housing). We may also try to get a significant keynote speaker for a lunch. Bill asked for feedback on members’ interest in such a summit and whether it would be a good investment of time and funds. (CEHKC has some unspent funds from the Campion grant to increase political will/visibility of the Ten-Year Plan.)

- Kollin noted that Building Changes has proposed convening something similar, and suggested coordinating with them so as to not duplicate efforts.
- Jason noted that South King County electeds would appear to be very interested. He’s recently sponsored several tours of projects in south King County, and electeds repeatedly ask about next steps in the Ten-Year Plan or new trends on the horizon for which they need to be prepared.

Kollin, Alice, Jason, Cheryl and Debbie agreed to work with Bill in thinking through/planning such an event.

September Agenda

The next Funders Group meeting is TUESDAY, September 14th, one day after the IAC meeting. David Okimoto suggested the agenda include a discussion of the budget and policy realities at the state level.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 pm. Meeting summary drafted by Gretchen Bruce, CEHKC Staff.