

Interagency Council Meeting Summary

February 1, 2010

<p>IAC Members Present: Karen Bergsvik (City of Renton) Doreen Cato (First Place) Deborah Doyle (DSHS) Charissa Fotinos (Public Health) Bill Hallerman (AHA) Mike Heinisch (KYFS) Bill Hobson (DESC) Kate Joncas (DSA) Paul Lambros (PHG) Barbara Langdon (EDVP) Sara Levin (City of Seattle) Emily Leslie (City of Bellevue)</p>	<p>Jackie MacLean (KC DCHS) Marilyn Mason-Plunkett (Hopelink) Blue McKeon (CAC) Stephen Norman (KCHA) Mark Okazaki (Neighborhood House) David Okimoto (UWKC) Bill Rumpf (Seattle Office Hsg) Michael Ramos (Church Council) Dave Ramsay (City of Kirkland) Faith Richie (Valley Cities) Sue Sherbrooke (YWCA)</p>	<p>IAC Members Absent: Humberto Alvarez (SKCCH/Solid Ground) Michael Brown (Seattle Foundation) Dennis Brown (WA State Dept of VA) Lynn Davison (Common Ground) Michael Hursh (City of Auburn) Lynnette Hynden (City of Federal Way) Clark Kimerer (Seattle Police Dept.) Marlena Sessions (WDC) Nancy Sherman (CAC) Kathleen Southwick (Crisis Clinic) Jim Theofelis (Mockingbird) Tom Tierney (SHA)</p>
<p>Community Members Present: Joseph Adriano (City of Bellevue) Someireh Amirfaiz (ReWA) Bill Block (CEHKC) Sinan Demirel (ROOTS) Melinda Giovengo (YouthCare) Carole Antoncich (KC DCHS) Debbi Knowles (KC DCHS) Nicole Macri (DESC) Neil Powers (UWKC) Donald Lachman (WDVA)</p>	<p>Kristine Gullin (CEHKC) Gretchen Bruce (CEHKC) Bill Kirlin-Hackett (ITFH) Vince Matulionis (UWKC) Katy Miller (KC DCHS) Sola Plumacher (Seattle/Safe Harbors) Natalie Lente (KCHN, Public Health) Alison Eisinger (SKCCH) Virginia Weins (SKCCH) Dan McDougall-Treacy (Valley Cities)</p>	<p>Mary Shaw (UWKC) Janice Tufte (ITFH) James Wlos (Volunteer @ PSKS) Cheryl Markham (KC DCHS) Chris West (Belltown CSO/DSHS) Sally Kinney (ITFH / LCTFH) Andrea Akita (City of Seattle HSD) Lisa Chin (Jubilee Women's Center) Colby Bradley (LIHI) Colleen Kelly (City of Redmond)</p>

Welcome, Introductions and Consent Agenda

Stephen Norman, Interagency Council (IAC) co-chair opened the meeting. The January 11, 2010 IAC meeting summary was approved as submitted. The IAC Retreat was originally scheduled for March 1st, and it is recommended that the date be switched to May 3rd to allow for more time to evaluate the impact of the 2010 legislative session and analysis of the Funders Group expiring funds research project.

Bill Rumpf, acting Director of Seattle Office of Housing, and Blue McKeon, CAC representative, were approved for membership to the IAC.

Feedback from Consumer Advisory Council, Governing Board and Funders Group

Bill Block reported on the recent CAC meeting on behalf of Nancy Sherman and Blue McKeon. Blue was recently selected by the CAC to serve as the CAC rep to the IAC. The CAC held an LGTBQ focus group recently; Laird and Kristine are drafting the notes from that group. Melinda Giovengo will attend the February CAC meeting to reprise the presentation that the YYA Committee provided to the IAC at their January meeting.

The Governing Board met January 25, 2010 and approved five new members: Dow Constantine (King County Executive); Mike McGinn (Seattle Mayor); Nick Licata (Seattle Councilmember); Greg Taylor (Renton Councilmember) and Mike Cero (Mercer Island Councilmember). Members reviewed and discussed Funders Group progress reports for Coordinated Entry for Single Adults and Families, Housing Production and Access to Market-Rate Housing, and Implementation of the HMIS system. The Governing Board expressed its concern that HMIS is still not fully functional and urged the IAC and all partners to prioritize implementation of the system. Finally, the Governing Board discussed its role for 2010, focusing especially on how members' influence and visibility could strengthen partnerships between mainstream systems (eg, physical health, child welfare services/ DSHS, education, corrections, mental health, workforce training) as it relates to homeless services.

Jackie MacLean reported that the Funders Group continues to research which major fund sources are due to expire (or reduce funding) in the coming years in order to plan for impending "cliffs" within major projects. A listing of the projects included in the research, as well as the data elements being studied, was included in the IAC packet. Funding expiration will be a major topic at the IAC Retreat in May. IAC member agencies offered to assist with gathering information as needed, and Jackie thanked them for this offer. Jackie also noted that Alice Shobe / Building Changes has become a member of The Funders Group.

Federal Housing Budget

Stephen Norman reported on the Federal Housing Budget released today. The overall budget is \$48.5 billion, 3% more than last year, with an additional \$180 million going towards homelessness. The budget consolidates HUD's

competitive grant programs, increases investment in evidence-based practices including homeless prevention and permanent supportive housing, supports the shift of local homeless assistance systems to performance-based orientation, and increases investment in rural homelessness, as national trends indicate that homelessness in rural and suburban areas increased by 50% over the last several years. There is a sharp reduction in funding for Housing for the Elderly (Section 202) and Housing for Persons with Disabilities (Section 811). Otherwise, vouchers will come with increased emphasis on coordination with mainstream systems, such as TANF and other Health and Human Services systems.

Coordinated Entry for Families / Family Homelessness Plan

Debbi Knowles provided an update on the Family Homelessness Planning Effort, with particular emphasis on Coordinated Entry, which is a priority of The Funders Group. A workgroup of approximately 15 members representing various regions, agencies, governmental entities has been meeting since last fall to think through a Coordinated Entry system – how it would work for Families, for Agencies and for Funders and the connection points between these systems. Having identified a potential model for a Coordinated Entry system, Debbi and members have been vetting the model with additional community groups, including the CEH Families Committee, SKCCH, and others. This feedback has been used to refine the model. Essential elements of the model include:

- Coordination with 2-1-1 to build on the Community Information Line's known presence and expertise in identifying agencies/services are available within the community;
- Trained intake specialists to conduct assessments using a proven assessment tool. The focus on assessment will more accurately identify whether families need light touch/high touch housing and services, and can triage households towards the most appropriate program/model.
- Regional assessment hubs. Sites could be co-located with local partners and would likely include a minimum of three locations, with access points in Seattle, South County and East County. There is the potential for roving intake workers to increase access to additional sites, and for tailored access points for immigrants and refugees and victims of domestic violence in recognition of their specialized needs;
- Agencies & Programs providing homeless housing and services would be required to use the Coordinated Entry system as the portal to services & housing instead of maintaining individual waitlists. This is similar to the Snohomish County model (see previous IAC presentation on this model, Nov 2008) The value to agencies and clients is that agencies would no longer have to conduct redundant intakes and clients would no longer have to make multiple calls/visits to get on numerous waitlists;
- There is the potential for coordination / referral to mainstream services, such as TANF, utility assistance and linkages to the Washington State Benefits Portal.

The timeline for implementation of such a system would be:

- 1st half of 2010: Continue to explore constraints and barriers to a coordinated entry system and identify potential solutions
- 2nd half of 2010: Establish MOA's for services (eg, 2-1-1, co-location of regional hubs)
- 2011: Rollout of Coordinated Entry

Comments included

- As noted, it's important to respond to the specialized needs of DV and immigrants/refugees. Explore a connection to Day One, which serves as the centralized intake system for the DV system.
- Single Adult providers asked what assessment tool will be used, and whether it could be shared with Single Adults. Debbie noted the tool will be modeled after assessment tool currently being piloted by the Rapid Rehousing projects, not the 45-page tool developed by Deborah Rog. It will be available for review/sharing in the next couple months.
- Some members shared that it's their experience that the community's knowledge of 2-1-1 can be spotty across cultures/regions. It will be important to increase the capacity of 2-1-1 and ensure outreach/access points to those communities who don't know about / don't know how / don't want to access 2-1-1.
- Members asked about the funding commitment for this new centralized intake system. Debbi affirmed that the Gates Foundation will help support the initial implementation, but long-range funding will need to be identified. It was suggested that this project be added to the funding expirations matrix.
- Sue Sherbrooke spoke of the YWCA's experience with the centralized wait list in Snohomish County. Initially they experienced some bottlenecks, but the kinks in the system are being worked out and the centralized waitlist is becoming more beneficial to providers and clients.
- Members discussed that the system will need to be successful early on, or providers and clients won't trust the system and it will struggle to gain a toehold. At the same time, we need to be realistic about what we can

promise through such a system – especially given the lack of housing. It will be important to fund it at capacity early on, not use a piecemeal approach.

- Members asked whether coordinated entry will overshadow MOA's or informal agreements that agencies have with each other for placement and services. These partnerships can be good for clients and agencies and members were concerned about losing some of the positive attributes of the current system.
- Members asked about the role of the IAC in framing/developing a Coordinated Entry system. Debbi stated that the IAC as a good place for instructive feedback. Once the model is finalized by the 15-member Coordinated Entry team, she will bring it to the IAC for their final review and vetting. This would likely be ready by April.

Shelter Discussion / Interim Housing Solutions

Michael Ramos reported that the shelter discussion had been on hold, and the group would be meeting again soon. He stated it will be important to assess Mayor McGinn's support for shelters, as the City of Seattle is currently a major funder of emergency shelter. David Okimoto reported that United Way of King County recently conducted a turn-away study among shelter providers to gain a better sense of the current need for shelter. He asked Mary Shaw (UWKC) to report on the findings.

Mary reported that in December, UWKC asked shelter, transitional housing and rental assistance services providers to complete an online survey about people turned away from their programs and changes in demand they have observed over the last two years. Findings include:

- A duplicated total of 4,612 people were reported as turned away from emergency shelter during the month of November.
- The youth/young adult and family shelter programs reporting these numbers represent approximately 64% of shelter beds countywide, while single adult shelters do not generally collect turnaway data.
- All programs reported increases in demand, with the possible exception of single men (there are still large numbers of single men turned away, but the numbers have not necessarily increased.) Youth and young adult shelters report increases in turnaways of 60% or more in the past two years. Family shelters report an increase of between 4% and 22% in the last two years, and increases in women affected by domestic violence. The most dramatic increases were reported by rent assistance programs followed by youth and young adult programs.
- Lack of space/resources is the single most frequent reason that people are turned away. Failure to meet program eligibility requirements was the second most often listed reason.
- Suggestions for improving the shelter system include: 1) Fund more shelter beds and 24 hour services for all populations; 2) Increase use of churches and make it easier for churches to house people; 3) Allow people to shelter under viaducts; 4) Increase use of underutilized buildings for emergency shelter; 5) Increase range of services to address homelessness and reduce demand for shelter; 6) Make permanent housing more available for rapid rehousing and provide long term subsidies for people who will not realistically be able to afford market rate housing; and 7) Recognize the problem of chronically homeless families.

One Night Count

Alison Eisinger, SKCCH, provided an update on the results of the January 29th One Night Count of Unsheltered Persons. She reported that on Friday morning, January 29th, between 2 am and 5 am, over 900 volunteers counted 2,759 people surviving on the streets. This number includes counts from emergency rooms, the sobering center and detox center. Overall, it reflects a 5% decrease when comparing similar count areas from 2009 to 2010.

Members discussed the implications of the count and number trends. While a reduction in numbers is generally seen as positive, it follows on the heels of a 3% increase last year, and is a better reflection of point in time snapshot. It was also noted that this is only a count of people observed – it is conventional wisdom there are still thousands more who are not visible/counted on the night of the One Night Count. Members discussed that while most cities across the nation observed an overall increase in their street count, a decrease in our local count is a positive result compared to the rest of the nation – especially in this economy.

IAC Annual Retreat

It was agreed to reschedule the Retreat to May 3rd, still to be held at Bellevue City Hall. Members brainstormed topics for the retreat agenda. Ideas included:

- Funding Expirations;
- Recap of 2009 Interagency Council Workplan – Accomplishments and work still needed;
- Review of the Capital Pipeline – how many units have we gained/lost under the 10YP;

- Follow Up on the Shelter Transition. What are continued trends, needs, plans for interim housing solutions, building on the work of UWKC shelter survey, the Shelter Task Force convened in year one by the IAC, and the more recent workgroup pulled together by Michael Ramos;
- Mainstream Connections – Coordination with mainstream systems: DSHS/Child Welfare, Education; Employment; Corrections, etc.
- Role of the IAC/Governing Board / Funders Group in connection to encouraging connections to mainstream systems
- Anticipated Priorities for the upcoming Fall Coordinated NOFA
- Maintaining the Political Will – Year Six of the Ten Year Plan
- YYA housing and services needs – follow up to recent presentation and consultant’s report.

Safe Harbors Homeless Management Information System

Sara Levin (City of Seattle HSD) reported that Safe Harbors Staff and Executive Leadership Team met recently to discuss concerns and enhancements to Safe Harbors, and use of the system by homeless housing programs and services. Sara reported that her takeaways from the meeting were:

- The system is working better than it was six months ago, including data integration. That said, more is still needed in the way of improving the overall system and data quality.
- There are numerous (and sometimes conflicting) demands placed on Safe Harbors and Agency staff. As a system, we need to do a better job prioritizing the most critical issues and triage those that are less-critical.
- Agencies need feedback on the quality of their data. This is needed on a consistent basis, with appropriate context as to why certain data elements / enhancements are needed and how the data will be used so they can educate staff on where and how they can improve data quality.
- Data collected within Safe Harbors needs to be aligned with contract reporting requirements. In the same vein, contract reporting requirements need to align with what is collected in Safe Harbors.

2010 State Legislative Session

Bill Block reported on recent developments in the Washington State 2010 legislative session, and areas where education/advocacy is critical:

- The legislature has proposed consolidating housing and human services funding through the newly named Department of Commerce and block granting to counties their “share” of funding
- Funding for GA-U (renamed Security Lifeline) is threatened
- CEH has prioritized a proposal that state institutions such as Corrections/Western State be required to develop a plan for what it would take for them to carry out discharge planning so that they don’t discharge their clients into homelessness. There is considerable pressure from Corrections and other state institutions to kill this bill, and so education from IAC members on the importance of this measure is critical
- HB 1956 would allow churches to host Tent Cities
- 2484/5449 would increase the number of days notice for non-cause related Termination of Tenancy from 20 to 30 days
- 2662 would allow for Portable Credit Reports
- 2752/6446 would extend parental notification under the Becca Bill up to 72 hours

Bill noted that given the multitude of issues before the legislature, a good message in general is that investments in homeless housing and services are working -- witness the recent decline in the One Night Count -- but there are still thousands of people who are homeless, and we need more investments.

Public Comment

- Melinda Giovengo reported that the Hope Act is under review and urged IAC members to voice their support as this funding is critical for funding of shelters to youth under age 18
- James Wlos suggested that the CEH/IAC conduct a study of investments needed to help people permanently exit shelter
- Sara Levin noted that Seattle HSD would be sending out a funding announcement soon, and asked members to spread the word on this opportunity.

The meeting was adjourned at 4pm. Respectfully submitted, Gretchen Bruce, CEH Staff.