

MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
CONTINUUM OF CARE PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

August 20, 2007

MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Annette Stein, Maricopa County, Chair
*Maryann Beerling, New Arizona Family
Robert Duvall, Community Information and Referral
Dick Geasland, Tumbleweed
*Katie Hobbs, Sojourner Center
*Theresa James, City of Tempe, Vice Chair
Jeff Jamison for Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix
*John Landrum, The Salvation Army
*Nick Margiotta, City of Phoenix
Ric Mason, Labor's Community Service Agency
*Elizabeth Morales, AZ Behavioral Health Corporation
*Darlene Newsom, United Methodist Outreach Ministries
Amy Schwabenlender, Valley of the Sun United Way
+Laura Skotnicki, Save the Family
Michelle Thomas, YWCA
John Wall, CASS
*Lisa Wilson, City of Mesa
Margot Cordova for Diana Yazzie Devine, Native American Connections

OTHERS PRESENT

Roberto Armijo, Community Information and Referral
+Bahney Dedolph, Catholic Charities
Randy Gearhart, Phoenix Shanti
Mattie Lord, Arizona Department of Economic Security
Alex Moreno, Arizona Department of Housing
Keith Press, Southwest Behavioral Health
Sarah Santana, Maricopa County Department of Public Health
Jacki Taylor, Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness
Diana Whittle, City of Glendale

*Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.

+Present by audio or videoconference.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Stein called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. and introductions ensued.

2. Approval of the May 14, 2007 Meeting Minutes

Chair Stein asked for any revisions to the May 14, 2007 meeting minutes. Robert Duvall made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Dick Geasland seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

3. Call to the Audience

Jacki Taylor passed out brochures for the Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness Conference and announced that the conference is being held on October 15 and 16 at

Black Canyon Conference Center. She encouraged members to attend and asked that people call her with any questions.

4. HMIS Community Assessment

Robert Duvall, Community Information and Referral, addressed Chair Stein and members of the committee. He explained that the community began planning for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) six years ago. At that time, there were no software packages or HUD data standards like there are today. He continued that the community decided to do a HMIS community assessment to review the original system goals; to redefine and update the project goals and objectives to reflect the current environment; and to assess the implementation and functionality of the current system. Mr. Duvall reviewed the project vision and mission for the group and discussed the community assessment approach.

Mr. Duvall stated that four HMIS Planning Committee meetings were held to review the current project goals, incorporate user and stakeholder survey results and to develop recommendations and establish future goals. He said that there was a 22 percent response rate (56 responses) on the user survey; 26 responses to the Stakeholder survey and 15 responses to the “other jurisdictions” survey. He added that the surveys were discussed at a variety of meetings and through emails.

Mr. Duvall continued his presentation with findings from the assessment. He explained that the overall the system is working well but results have shown that it is not user friendly. Currently, the system is meeting all of the HUD data standards. However, he added that on-line use of bed availability is not feasible for transitional and permanent supportive housing providers at this time. Mr. Duvall also stated that communication between stakeholders and the community needs to be enhanced. He said that the homeless provider community is very diverse and there is not one answer that will address every agency’s needs. Mr. Duvall reviewed the level of satisfaction ranging from 2.0 for bed management to 3.9 for system security out of a scale of one to five. The results show that the user base is very satisfied with support from the HMIS project team. He added that based on results from other communities, no other jurisdictions had a better way of integrating data from one system to another.

Mr. Duvall continued his presentation with six overall recommendations:

1. Do not change to a different software product; stay compliant with HUD requirements; engage agency management in the project more; and achieve efficient and effective data integration.
2. The first priority should be staying focused on making the system more functional for current users
3. Work with Bowman Systems to enhance operations of the system to increase efficiency and quality of the data
4. Leave the interagency shared case management tool within the system and obtain information from users and CEO about why the shared case management tool is

- not being used, determine what would make shared case management more useful and determine the benefits of shared case management.
5. Improve system integration functions.
 6. Utilize HMIS data better throughout the community.

Mr. Duvall completed his presentation by stating the HMIS project goals and objectives:

1. Goal 1: People who are homeless will receive improved coordinated care/services.
Objective 1.1: Improve access to case management and bed availability information.
Objective 1.2: Increase the use of the shared case management feature of the system.
2. Goal 2: Participating providers will improve their data collection and workflow with use of HMIS.
Objective 2.1: Increase the number of automated funder reports.
Objective 2.2: Increase the number of user reports generated that meet the internal reporting needs of provider agencies.
Objective 2.3: Implement, in at least three provider agencies, a quality, timely, efficient integration protocol and process to transfer data from provider agencies existing client-based systems to Service Point.
Objective 2.4: Provide work flow analysis services within 30 days of receiving a request from a provider.
3. Goal 3: Participating providers will use the Homeless Management Information System to meet all current external homeless reporting requirements from HUD and non-HUD funding sources.
Objective 3.1: Enhance the availability of specific information that will assist providers in generating needed external reports.
Objective 3.2: Establish an ongoing process of producing information from the self sufficiency matrix for use internally for agencies and externally for the evaluation project.
4. Goal 4: The community will have timely, credible, quality data about services and people who are homeless.
Objective 4.1: Improve data quality through user training, technical assistance and system enhancements.
5. Goal 5: 100 percent of homeless providers will participate in the Homeless Management Information System. (Excluding domestic violence providers.)
 - 75 percent by December 2007
 - 85 percent by December 2008
 - 92 percent by December 2009
 - 95 percent by December 2010

6. Goal 6: The Homeless Management Information System will be user-friendly for providers.
Objective 6.1: Improve user satisfaction ratings in use of the system.
7. Goal 7: Community and provider agency stakeholders will have current accurate information about HMIS implementation and data regarding homelessness in Maricopa County.
Objective 7.1: Provide information at Continuum of Care meeting, conference and other venues where community and provider stakeholders are present.
Objective 7.2: Increase the level of knowledge of Maricopa County community stakeholders.

Jacki Taylor asked about the integration of reports to United Way and asked if DES reporting is a future objective for integration. Mr. Duvall responded that they do have plans to work with DES on integrating their reports into the system. Ms. Taylor commented that she feels that is a very positive feature of HMIS.

Dick Geasland asked if the HMIS project team is communicating with other agencies to insure that the data integration is still going to comply with the integrated reports. Mr. Duvall responded that he feels that the integrated reports should be accessible to all agencies.

Ric Mason asked Mr. Duvall if he feels that the community assessment results are reliable since there was such a small percentage of responses. Mr. Duvall replied that he does think the results are reliable because the agencies that did reply are the agencies that seem to have the most to say about the system and are most engaged in the project. Mr. Mason suggested adding that comment to the assessment results.

Randy Gearhart commended the HMIS staff for doing such a great job on this project. He added that the project team was able to write a specialized report that could be transferred from HMIS and saved him hours of work. John Wall also thanked the project team and mentioned that they helped him with the creation of the home free report and said that it saves him about 5 hours a month. He also said that the ART report has shown some great progress recently.

Chair Stein asked if there was a motion from the Planning Subcommittee to recommend the community assessment findings for approval to the MAG Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness. Laura Skotnicki made a motion to recommend the findings for approval, John Wall second her motion and it was approved unanimously.

5. Homeless Mortality Study

Chair Stein introduced Sarah Santana, Director of Epidemiology for Maricopa County Department of Public Health, to present the findings of the Homeless Mortality Study done in Maricopa County. Ms. Santana explained that Nick Staab began the project last year and asked for information from homeless service providers to do a broader study.

Ms. Santana explained that a smaller study was done about ten years ago. The intent of this study is to incorporate homeless data with health status data. She explained that for many people, homeless people are invisible and she wanted to use this group to measure the health of the entire community. Ms. Santana explained that this project was a thesis project for Nick Staab in his degree program. Ms. Santana said that she would like to figure out a way to continue the work in the future so that at some point the data collection will be automatic. However, the County currently does not have the staff to work on the project. She said that she hopes that in 2008 they can continue the study.

Ms. Santana began her report by providing some background information on Maricopa County. She said that the County experienced the largest number increase in population since 1990, an increase of 700,000 and is experiencing tremendous growth rates. She continued that annually, the County increases by about 100,000 people but about 600,000 people move in and 500,000 people move out. So, the County really has about half a million new people each year who aren't familiar with community and are enduring a very stressful moving process.

Ms. Santanta referred to the homeless street count done in Maricopa County and said that the number of homeless people identified in the count has almost doubled from 2003 to 2007. She said that she would love to have the homeless service providers providing data for the research project. She added that information from their research can be used to help characterize health risks for the general population and this can be applied to the homeless population as well. Studies have been used to prove this in Atlanta, Boston and in Maricopa County in 1999.

In addition to the office of the medical examiner, three agencies provided data for the study, Heath Care for the Homeless, Central Arizona Shelter Services, and St. Vincent de Paul. Ms. Santana explained that they matched data from each agency against data from Arizona Department of Health Services. They sorted the data by date of birth to ensure there were no duplicates. In total, there were 18,652 records. Ms. Santana added that of those records, there were 150 de-duplicated matches in 2004 and 247 de-duplicated matches in 2005. She said that there were a higher percentage of deaths among African Americans and Native Americans in comparison to all deaths in Maricopa County. Also, the number of death among homeless people who were Hispanic is higher among homeless compared to all deaths. The research shows that homeless deaths tend to cluster between the ages of 30 to 69. Ms. Santana explained that 30 to 69 is very young compared to all deaths and this is an unnatural distribution. She continued that in the regular population, death tends to increase as people get older.

Ms. Santana added that the majority of homeless deaths are not from natural causes and that the distribution of death by month is very different as well. The data shows that homeless deaths peak in the months of July and August. However, she said that the way deaths were classified in 2005 was different than how they have been classified in the past and how they are classified now. For example, if someone died of heart attack and the heat may have played a part in that then it would be up to the medical examiner to determine whether or not to list heat as direct or indirect cause of death. Because of this,

it seems that the number of deaths caused by the heat in 2005 was more exaggerated. She explained that now the medical examiner is looking at whether the death is heat caused or heat related.

Ms. Santana said that rate of cardiovascular disease and cancer is down in the homeless population as compared to all deaths in the County. However, the rate of accidental deaths for homeless is higher (35 percent for the homeless population and 6 percent for the general population). There is also an increase of deaths among the homeless caused by firearms, homicide, suicide, drug and alcohol induced. Mattie McVey Lord asked what was considered an accidental death. Ms. Santana said that an accidental death could be any type of accident like motor vehicle accidents, accidental poisoning, falling down and could include firearm related deaths. In 2004, the percent of accidental deaths was six times higher among the homeless population as compared to the regular population. She said that is somewhere around five times greater, which is a big difference.

Jacki Taylor asked if accidental poisoning included alcohol poisoning. Chair Stein responded that accidental poisoning could also result from homeless people eating unhealthy food or contaminated food from garbage cans. Chair Stein added that when she was with Healthcare for the Homeless many people came into the clinic ill because of unhealthy things they had eaten.

Ms. Santana said that the heat contributed to nine percent of homeless deaths in 2004 and 21 percent of homeless deaths in 2005. However, she said the increase in 2005 could have been because of how the medical examiner recorded the cause of death in 2005. She added that she thinks the number of homeless deaths due to the heat have remained about the same throughout the years. Ms. Santana continued that it isn't necessarily the high temperatures that kill people but rather a prolonged period of high temperatures with no break from the heat.

Ms. Santana continued that the infectious diseases that were the main causes of death among the homeless population were not much different from the general population. The infectious diseases observed were: acinetobacter, hepatitis, HIV, klebsiella, MRSA, pneumoniae, sepsis, staphylococcal sepsis/meningitis, and tuberculosis.

She said that there is reluctance among homeless service providers in sharing data for the report. She reminded the group that only three agencies participated in the study. She said that she would like to have a focus group with interested agencies to get a feel for what is happening with the homeless population throughout the year. She thinks that the information would be useful in future research studies.

Ms. Santana said that the recommendations from the report include data sharing agreements, routine reports and to share reports with stakeholders. She said that she would like to design a prospective cohort study, by following a national model, but that would take a lot of money.

Dick Geasland commented that it appears that young people were underreported in the study. Chair Stein responded that she is not surprised that youth is underrepresented in the study because the homeless service providers that provided information for the study do not typically have clients that are youth. Ms. Santana added that many times when a young person dies, the parents or family of the young person are called and the parent's address is used on the death certificate. Therefore, the young person will never be identified as being homeless or formerly homeless.

There were no other comments or questions from the Planning Subcommittee on the Homeless Mortality Study. Chair Stein thanked Ms. Santana for her report.

6. White Paper Discussion

Ms. Mead updated the Planning Subcommittee on the planning process for a regional homeless white paper. She said that the main purpose of the paper is to determine how much it would cost to place homeless people into housing with support services. Ms. Mead said that the paper will offer best practice models from communities around the County and will make options available for municipalities to place people in housing and provide them with the services that they need. She added that the paper will offer the overall cost for housing and services but will also break that down into smaller pieces, 50 or 100 units for example, so that cities can easily implement a model. Ms. Mead said that staff is trying determine what target population to focus. She said that they are considering focusing the paper on either homeless families or chronically homeless single adults. Ms. Mead said that she would like feedback from the Planning Subcommittee on the target population.

Jacki Taylor said that homeless families are not the focus of HUD and that we should consider looking at homeless families to fill that gap. Laura Skotnicki agreed that homeless families, including youth, should be the focus of the paper.

Roberto Armijo said that chronically homeless persons tend to cost the system the most amount of money and feels that the paper should focus on chronically homeless people for that reason.

Dick Geasland suggested that the paper include homeless youth. He mentioned that according to the Department of Education, there are over 12,000 homeless youth and they should be a focus in the paper.

Amy Schwabendlender commented that the target population and goal of the paper should depend on the target audience of the paper. Annette Stein responded that if the target audience for the paper is the legislature then the paper's focus should be on homeless families.

Ms. Mead thanked the members for their feedback and stated that an Ad Hoc group will be formed to work on the details of the paper and she will keep the Planning Subcommittee informed and involved in the process.

7. Humanitarian Day

Chair Stein announced that this agenda item has been postponed to be heard at the September 17 Planning Subcommittee meeting.

8. Heat Relief Planning Update

Ms. Mead began by stating in the summer of 2005 several people died in the Phoenix metropolitan area due to a prolonged heat wave. Many of the people who died were homeless. She stated that planning efforts were put into place to prevent this from happening again. Many people are committed to this issue and are working diligently to put important resources in place.

Ms. Mead stated that MAG has partnered with municipalities and the service providers to develop maps that show resources that are available to homeless people and people in need this summer. This coordinated effort resulted in the development of two resource maps, one showing 62 hydration and refuge locations and the second map with 45 collection and donation sites. She said the maps are available on the MAG website and the Community Information & Referral (CI&R) website, as well as through the CONTACTS Shelter Hotline. MAG reported 123 hits on refuge/hydration map and 87 hits for the donation/collection map. CI&R reported 660 hits on both maps, 18 calls on refuge locations and 215 calls on donating water. Maricopa County Public Health Department is distributing the maps to all of the emergency rooms in the County.

Ms. Mead addressed other efforts underway such as the City of Phoenix developing a *Response Plan for Summer Heat* that encompasses many community partners including faith-based volunteers. The plan details how the City will provide outreach to homeless persons in need. Maricopa County has also developed an *Excessive Heat Emergencies Plan*, which is initiated by National Weather Service. The plan informs the community how to respond through a local media campaign. The plan's focus is on public education and protection of vulnerable segments of the population. She added that response steps are in place and will be activated by the three types of National Weather Service messages (Heat Advisory, Excessive Heat Watch, and Excessive Heat Warning).

Ms. Mead commented that many partners are involved including the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Citizen Corps Councils, the City of Phoenix and the Human Services Campus. The Valley of the Sun United Way has formed a group of faith based providers, homeless outreach teams, service providers, and city staff to focus on this issue. The group has met this summer and is really working to get the word out into the community on collaboration on this issue. She added they also organized a very successful water drive with more than 27,000 bottles of water and \$1,000 cash collected to benefit St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance and United Food Bank.

Ms. Mead further stated that there has been significant media coverage and collaboration among agencies. The City of Mesa has also done a hydration donation campaign and has collected 16,000 bottles of water and 12,000 bottles of Gatorade that have been distributed since June 18 and will be collecting water until August 30. Ms. Mead commented they are still in need of volunteers to distribute water.

Ms. Mead concluded her report by thanking Maricopa County, Councilman Stanton and the City of Phoenix, the City of Mesa, the Department of Health Services, Valley of the Sun United Way and other cities who have put heat response plans in place. She acknowledged all the service providers, volunteers and faith-based community and community stakeholders for being involved in planning and for extending their services to people in need. She requested that the committee contact her for more information about planning efforts, prevention tips, or how to be involved at (602) 452-5060. Ms. St. Peter added that MAG will do the resource maps next year and to contact MAG to include your agency or if help is needed with resources.

9. 2007 Continuum of Care Appreciation Luncheon

Brandee Mead announced that the MAG Continuum of Care Annual Appreciation Luncheon is being planned and will take place at the Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa again this year. She said that she hoped to announce the date but that it has not yet been confirmed but she said that it is likely that it will take place in the beginning of January. Ms. Mead said that the keynote speaker will be Amanda Trosten-Bloom from the Corporation for Positive Change. Ms. Mead added that Ms. Bloom has over 25 years of experience in organizational change and development with a focus on incorporating positive change with strategic planning and leadership development. Ms. Mead continued that Ms. Bloom is co-author of the Power of Appreciative Inquiry and has developed award-winning plans using appreciative inquiry and focusing on community assets. For more information on the keynote speaker or on appreciative inquiry, Ms. Mead suggested that people go to www.positivechange.org. Finally, Ms. Mead added that there will be an additional morning and afternoon workshop offered with the luncheon and the details will be made available soon.

10. Comments from the Planning Subcommittee

Margot Cordova asked that the Planning Subcommittee meeting minutes from May be revised to show that she attended the meeting in person and did not audio conference in to the meeting as indicated.

Dick Geasland commented that Tumbleweed is looking for property to relocate. He said that they need about 3,000 square feet and need to have access to outlets for washer/dryer and similar amenities. He said that they are experiencing a difficult time trying to find a location and encouraged suggestions.

11. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.