

**Greater Bridgeport Area Continuum of Care
Safety Net Committee
Minutes 11-15-05**

Present: Lisa Mazzeo, Betty Skaggs, Dotlyn McKenzie, Judy Sklarz, Lisa Fournier, Abel Padro, Carol Walter, Bill Hoey, Eileen Lopez-Cardone, Betty Gee, Yolanda Hopkins, Nilda R. Havrilla, Ellen Rosenthal

Lisa reported on her communication with BCAC's discussion of the 10-Year Plan at their Substance Abusing Women and Their Children Task Force. They advised the committee of the following recommendations which came from that discussion:

- Safe, affordable rental housing should be the priority
- Women in the process of reunification with their children should have priority access to housing
- Treatment and discharge policies should be coordinated with housing availability
- Transitional housing should be available while women are waiting for permanent, supportive housing.

Lisa asked participants to briefly summarize the work which their agencies do around homelessness:

Nilda Havrilla-CT Legal Services-Represent clients around eviction, subsidy preservation, and housing related grievances

Ellen Rosenthal-CT Legal Services-Represent clients around disability claims (SSA). CT Legal Services also provides representation in domestic cases, entitlements, special education claims, elder law, employment issues, undocumented citizens and some child custody cases.

Abel Padro-United Way of Eastern Fairfield County-Success by 6 program, early childhood education, and behavioral health services to preschool children, parent education

Bill Hoey-Catholic Family Services-Multi-service agency providing housing, mental health clinic, pregnancy and adoption, soup kitchen, welfare to work/safety net services, abstinence only program, immigration services.

Eileen Lopez-Cardone-United Way/2-1-1 Infoline-Access to services, Care 4 Kids. There are specialized 'infolines' regarding childcare, HUSKY, child development

Lisa Mazzeo-Operation Hope- Homeless services agency provides soup kitchen, emergency shelter, community outreach and prevention, permanent supportive housing

Betty Skaggs-St. Vincent's Outreach-Provide community based clinics as well as some home visits

Dotlyn McKenzie-Center for Women and Families-Domestic violence and sexual assault counseling and advocacy, Beyond Shelter program providing housing placement assistance and follow up case management for women leaving shelter. Agency also provides three units of permanent supportive housing, youth programs and support groups

Lisa Fornier-Southwest Community Health Center-Represents the behavioral health department for this agency which provides comprehensive medical care. They are the #1 provider of behavioral health services in the area for DCF. The Bird Street center provides a child therapist, and MSW and psychiatrist. Fairfield Avenue site provides substance abuse assessment services

Betty Gee-Southwest Community Health Center-Outreach. SWCHC provides health services in shelters.

Yolanda Hopkins-Park City Initiative-are provider for DMHAS' Access to Recovery, providing treatment and vouchers for other services (including housing) to people referred through identified 'portals'.

The group identified a number of agencies who were not present that we hope will become involved in the committee. They are: ABCD (Abel will contact) , FSW (Carol w/c), Regional Network of Programs (Carol w/c), Bridgeport Department of Social Services (Carol w/c), CT Department of Social Services (Eileen w/c), Southwest Community Mental Health System (?)

The group reviewed a "red book" for prevention services which has been assembled by the Chicago Continuum of Care as a means to consolidating prevention services. After some discussion, the group decided that creation of a similar (and better) resource was an excellent starting point for the work of the committee.

Their was agreement on the following:

- The group will review the Infoline "Taxonomy" which identifies all services in the Infoline database and request detailed listings for all appropriate services
- We will begin with homelessness prevention services only, but identify and request information on services for people who are homeless as well for later expansion
- We will begin with the Infoline materials but identify additional information for inclusion which would be important relative to homeless individuals and families (e.g. eligibility restrictions, substance abuse policies, capacity of program)
- We hope to be able to eventually make this a living document where case managers and practitioners can annotate and update resources as program offerings change
- We will identify areas for further examination at the next meeting and discuss additional information we want to include in the Red Book. It is our hope that we

can get college interns to assist in gathering information once the agencies and information needs are identified

- We agreed that this will be an excellent starting place for a number of goals as we begin to work on the 'wrap-around services' model.

Eileen Lopez-Cordone will provide an updated listing before the next meeting for our review.

The next meeting will be held at United Way on Tuesday, December 6th from 9:30-11:00 AM at United Way.

-CW 11/21/05