

memo

To: Interagency Council and Community Members
From: Lisa Wolters and Kira Zylstra, Co-Chairs, Family Homelessness Initiative Advisory Group
Date: December 23, 2014
Re: Family Homelessness Coordinated Entry System Analysis and Refinement Project Report

We look forward to seeing you at the upcoming IAC meeting and having the opportunity to discuss the final report on the Family Homelessness Coordinated Entry System Analysis and Refinement Project prepared by Focus Strategies. In preparation for the meeting we have enclosed the final report and the public comments received. The presentation on January 12th will focus on the following proposed objectives:

Purpose of Discussion and Outcome

1. Katharine Gale presents a brief overview of the findings and recommendations outlined in the report and the IAC has an opportunity to discuss and ask clarifying questions about the report.
2. Family Homelessness Initiative Advisory Group presents our initial feedback on the report and some immediate strategies which can be implemented in the near-term while we continue to work on the larger system changes. In addition, the Advisory Group will present our recommendation to the IAC to allow programs specifically designated to serve survivors of domestic violence to be temporarily removed from FHC.
3. IAC provides the Advisory Group their initial feedback on the Report, identifies any further work or clarification on any points they wish to see addressed by the March IAC meeting.
4. The IAC votes on the recommendation to allow all homeless housing units specifically designated to serve survivors of domestic violence to be temporarily removed from FHC.

In preparation for the meeting we have enclosed the final report and the public comments received. In addition, the Advisory Group would like to share the themes and opportunities for early action that have emerged in our review of the report.

Themes

The Advisory Group met twice in December to discuss the draft report and review public comments received (see Appendix). There was general consensus from the group on the themes highlighted by the consultants. Although the Advisory Group did not do a deep dive into the recommendations (this will occur at our January meeting) there were several themes that emerged from our discussions that will continue to be explored by the group as we develop a proposal for implementation.

- Decision making and accountability
- Data and database integration
- Potential decentralized approach
- System impact on special populations and families with higher housing barriers
- Screening criteria and barriers to entry
- Prioritization and matching; how to align the two with the larger system transformation work

Items for Early Action

The Advisory Group agreed there are some recommendations from the report that could be addressed in the near-term while we continue to work on the larger system changes. Specifically, the Advisory Group is recommending that the IAC approve the temporary waiver requested by KCCADV (see Appendix) and recommended by Focus Strategies to allow all homeless housing units specifically designated to serve survivors of domestic violence to be temporarily removed from FHC until the final model for CEA is determined and approved (including any decisions to explicitly prioritize high need and highly vulnerable families).

In addition, the Advisory Group is exploring the two following strategies that can be implemented in the near-term within the current system:

- **Run the WATCH background check at FHC assessment**
 - FHC indicated they could implement this fairly quickly and they did not anticipate any additional impact on cost or staffing resources. FHC will implement this in mid-January to aid in making program referrals and will monitor for any unintended consequences.
- **Ensure diversion is explored with every family assessed and explore methods to reduce no-shows and make assessment more efficient**
 - The Advisory Group agreed on several steps FHC can take in the near-term to address this recommendation, including going back to one-hour assessment appointments, double-booking appointments, asking the families to arrive early to begin to fill out paperwork prior to meeting with the assessment specialist, and ensure that all assessment staff are fully trained in diversion and are implementing this strategy with every family who they meet with for assessment (unsheltered).
 - FHC will develop an implementation plan over the next few weeks to incorporate these strategies

We look forward to seeing you on the 12th.

Thank you-