



REAL PEOPLE ~ REAL RESULTS

Special Gifts Just in Time for the Holiday

After a recent decrease in hours from her job, a county resident (single mom) with a teenager with special needs was finding it difficult to maintain her rent and utility payments. She had fallen behind and was facing eviction; however, she will be getting a promotion in January 2010 and will be able to pay the full rent amount at that time. In the interim, **through the Homeless Prevention Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) funding and New Hope Housing's donations, she was able to pay her back rent and utilities and provide her family with much-needed holiday gifts** including clothing for her son.

Multiple Services to Home Sweet Home

A two-parent family with a teenager with special needs had been sleeping on the floor of a relative's home in a verbally abusive environment. The father is currently employed and the mother was diligently working with New Hope Housing's (NHH) employment specialist to assist her with finding a job. NHH was able to negotiate a lease for them in a local apartment complex and they moved in just last week! Additionally, these county residents needed assistance with their deposit and **with some case management assistance on budgeting and employment services they will be able to make their monthly payments in the future.**

Referrals Continue to Lead to Success

A county resident was recently referred to Reston Interfaith (RI) by the James Mott Center. The center was providing her with employment assistance as a result of being laid off from her job in August. Her landlord was evicting her because she was four months behind in rent. **She completed an initial assessment with RI's HPRP community case manager and was found eligible for Homeless Prevention assistance, which allowed RI to pay her landlord the rental arrears and prevent her eviction.** Also, through her involvement with the James Mott Center, she started a new job on December 1! The new job will provide her with sufficient income to meet her future housing expenses.



To date, the HOST system has prevented
51 unique households
and 140 people
from becoming homeless in 23 business days!



HOST HIGHLIGHTS

Housing Opportunities Support Teams (HOST) provide flexible and adaptive services needed to help individuals and families obtain or maintain housing. The primary function of HOST is to coordinate and manage prevention, housing placement, and supportive services for those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Members of the HOST team will serve as a liaison to their organization/system and will work closely with other HOST members to create a cohesive and seamless system of service delivery.

In just over 20 business days, more than 150 referrals have been made to the three community case managers currently working in the Northern, Central and Southern Regions. The level of need in this community is well out-pacing the capacity to provide the services. The three existing community case managers have been doing an extraordinary job, seeing an average of three households, per case manager, per day.

Over the past four weeks, effective partnering has led to an increased ability to screen and refer to community case management. In some cases, residents are better served by the crisis care provided in a shelter. Also, there is increasing energy and focus by partner agencies to target families currently on the family shelter waitlist to determine if they can be diverted into permanent housing without entering a shelter.

We are excited about the fourth community case manager who will be added in Region 2 in the coming weeks! This additional person will allow for increased capacity within the system, and the opportunity to assist even more people in maintaining their homes.

As a community, we are working to increase the capacity of the staff that is providing assistance to the residents of this area.

Regional Updates

- **Northern Region** – Members of the North County HOST group have met several times to collaborate and ensure the process for serving clients is working smoothly. Since Oct. 30, North County has provided financial assistance to **19 households**. North County HOST group is still in the process of completing plans to share site space and anticipates a move-in-date of mid-to late-January.
- **Central Region** – Regions 2 and 4 have recently reached capacity for serving households through the senior community case manager. All prevention and diversion cases will be sent to Coordinated Services Planning to determine if the case should be sent to a local shelter or linked to other resources. Community Case Management should re-open in the near future as Volunteers of America Chesapeake. Bailey's Crossroads Community Shelter is hiring a fourth senior community case manager to handle Region 2 referrals.
- **Southern Region** – South County continues to see a dramatic need in the number of referrals that are received on a weekly basis. **Of the 51 referrals received, 11 households have received financial assistance that has allowed them to remain housed!**

Point-in-Time Count Update

Planning is underway for the annual Point-in-Time (PiT) count on January 27. Programs using the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) will capture and report PiT data using HMIS. The Point-in-Time Assessment in HMIS is being revised to incorporate one new question on source of income, and to clarify some questions that were not clear. The availability of the new PiT Assessment will be announced in early January.

Training dates will also be announced in early January, and all staff that will be completing or reviewing PiT data should attend one of the sessions, which will be during the second and third

weeks of January. Meanwhile, **case managers should ensure that program entry/exit, demographic, and universal data elements are up to date on clients who are currently participating in programs.**

Housing Locator Program

The Fairfax County Housing Locator Program continues to take shape and pick up momentum with the leadership of Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services. Tom Barnett, new program coordinator, is in the final stages of hiring a program assistant, who will provide additional marketing and administrative support to the program. Efforts are also underway to bring together a network of housing locators from homeless prevention, diversion and re-housing programs across the county. This network is intended for housing locators to share resources and solve common challenges.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Update

Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) – the AHAR report for the family and single shelters was submitted on December 15. More details to follow at a later date.

SIDEBAR

Hypothermia Prevention Program

In addition to the Central County program operated by FACETS that opened on Nov. 22, the remaining three areas of the county and Falls Church City opened their programs on December 1. Temporary overnight sheltering is now available in several locations to homeless adults. **The program in Central County has been benefiting from a tremendous amount of volunteer support, and this year for the first time, it is offering case management services to those seeking shelter.**

Most of the sites across the county are already reaching their optimal capacity in terms of numbers of persons served. For homeless women who may benefit from a "women's only" sheltering site, the East County coordinator, Thornell Hancock, may be contacted at the Bailey's shelter at (703) 820-7621. Homeless adults seeking hypothermia shelters should be referred to any of the shelters that serve adults in addition to the Bailey's shelter. They include Eleanor Kennedy in South County at (703) 799-0200 and Embry Rucker in North County at (703) 437-1975.

Nonprofit providers operating hypothermia services across the county planned ahead to prepare for the tremendous amount of snow that fell upon the entire region. Staff worked around the clock and they remained with the clients throughout the weekend. FACETS consolidated their two sites to one location to help minimize transportation complications and to better utilize staff and available volunteers. The East County program saw a much larger number of clients, and **Volunteers of America was interviewed over the weekend at the Bailey's shelter in the midst of the heaviest snowfall and overflow of clients.** It was reported that many of the clients at various locations helped to clear walkways and parking areas and assisted staff and volunteers in digging out their cars.

Housing Counseling Training for Direct Services Providers

An integral part of implementing the Housing First strategy is having direct service staff familiar with emergency and permanent housing issues. This community has an excellent training resource for staff that covers these topics and many more offered in partnership between Christian Relief Services, Inc. and Fairfax County. Topics that are covered include: homeless and prevention services available in the area, interventions from crisis intervention to cultural

sensitivity to financial planning and laws that apply to fair housing, eviction prevention and many more.

The next interactive 12-week course entitled Emergency and Permanent Housing Training begins on January 20 and runs through April 7, meeting every Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. To register for the full course or individual sessions, visit <http://www.housingtraining.org>. The cost to participate per person is \$150 for registrations received by January 4 and \$165 to register between January 5 through January 18.

SAVE THE DATES

Invitation to Regional Meetings Related to Homelessness

To share information broadly and provide multiple opportunities to learn about current Office to Prevent and End Homelessness (OPEH) initiatives, Department of Systems Management for Human Services regional directors have begun using existing regional meetings to disseminate information to local partners. Please refer to the information below to attend a meeting in your region.

- **Region 1**, Feb. 8, 10 a.m. to noon, South County Center, 8350 Richmond Hwy, Suite 505, Alexandria.
- **Region 2**, Jan 11, 10 a.m. to noon, 6245 Leesburg Pike, Suite 300, Falls Church.
- **Region 3**, Jan 21, 10 a.m. to noon, 11484 Washington Plaza West, Reston.
- **Region 4**, Jan. 8, 9 to 11 a.m., Katherine K. Hanley Shelter, 13000 Lee Hwy, Fairfax.

Point-in-Time Planning Meeting – Jan. 5

The next Point-in-Time meeting will be held on Jan. 5, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Pathway Homes Main Office, 10201 Fairfax Boulevard, Suite 200, Fairfax.

Housing Locator Training – Jan. 15

On Jan. 15, the Housing Locator Program and the Center for Housing Counseling Training (CHCT) will be hosting an Introduction to Housing Location Services from 10 to 1 p.m. The event will be an opportunity for any human service staff to learn more from the housing locators that are already doing the work in shelters across the county. There is also an opportunity for group discussion, leveraging the combined experience of staff and agencies throughout the county, and sharing essential tools and resources to get the job done. The event will be held in the CHCT headquarters, 2550 Huntington Avenue, Suite 200, Alexandria. For more information, contact Tom Barnett at tbarnett@goodhousing.org.

Mark Your Calendars!

Community Event on Homelessness – Jan. 21

The next Community Forum on Homelessness will take place on Thursday, Jan. 21, from 1 to 4:30 p.m. at the Providence Presbyterian Church, 9019 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Persons interested in ending homelessness are encouraged to attend.

The Community Forum on Homelessness is a vehicle to share information related to the implementation of the 10-Year-Plan and engage in dialogue about homeless priorities and initiatives that aim to prevent and end homelessness in Fairfax County. The next forum will include some general updates related to HOST, an overview of system-wide goals and objectives, and a transitional housing best practices discussion to review policies and practices for continuous improvement in service coordination.

The event is sponsored by the [Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness](#). For more information or to request reasonable ADA accommodations, call 703-324-9492, TTY 711.

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