

PARTNER Update

Ending Homelessness in the Fairfax-Falls Church Community

Sept. 17, 2009

EVENTS

What's Happening in the Homelessness Community – Sept. 24

The next Community Forum on Homelessness will take place on Thursday, Sept. 24, from 1:15 to 4:30 pm, at the Jubilee Christian Center, 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. **Persons interested in ending homelessness are encouraged to attend. Network - Discuss - Get Your Questions Answered!**

- Meet members of the Governing Board for the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness.
- Discuss the Federal Stimulus Funding.
- Learn what shelters can do to limit the spread of seasonal and H1N1 influenza.

Event sponsored by the [Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness](#) (OPEH). **For more information or to request reasonable ADA accommodations, call 703-324-9492, TTY 711.** Allow 7 working days in advance of the event.

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 his or her organization/system and will work closely with other HOST members to create a cohesive and seamless system of service delivery.

Seven Partner Organizations Receive State Grant

The Fairfax-Falls Church Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness will benefit from new funds awarded through the [Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development](#) for services related to homeless prevention and rapid re-housing. **Thanks to the much appreciated leadership efforts of Kerrie Wilson and Greg White of Reston Interfaith, seven partner agencies will receive an estimated \$424,000 over two years to support HOST implementation**, in addition to other funds already dedicated by Fairfax County and HOST agencies (including the \$2.4 million award to Fairfax County for HPRP). More additional information and procedures will be announced once the funds become available.

This collaborative effort by Reston Interfaith, FACETS, Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services, Helping Children Worldwide, Northern Virginia Family Service, New Hope Housing and Shelter House **is an example of a successful systems approach to addressing homelessness**. Special thanks to Bill MacMillan, [Fairfax County Department of Systems Management for Human Services](#), and Mike Finkle, [Fairfax County Department of Family Services](#), who provided support for this application. **For more information contact Greg White, Reston Interfaith, at 571-323-9592.**

Intake and Assessment Update

[Fairfax County Coordinated Services Planning](#) (CSP) is working with [Fairfax County Department of Information technology](#) (DIT) to incorporate an electronic version of the screening tool in ASSIST. The screening tool will replace the shelter referral form currently used by CSP. **CSP is**

prioritizing this work to support the implementation of HOST; the form will be in ASSIST and ready for use by Oct. 1.

Several partner agencies have already completed and returned the "HOST Housing Targeting Tool" for use in the field test - Thank you to everyone who participated! Upon preliminary review, it appears that the single homeless population experiences a higher number of barriers to obtaining housing as indicated by higher average total scores on the tool. Analysis of the results will continue throughout next week, with recommendations regarding scoring interpretation complete in October. **The "HOST Homeless Family Assessment" and the "HOST Homeless Individual Assessment"** also are in the final draft stages and should be ready for implementation in October.

Community Case Management and Housing Locator Update

With the use of HPRP funds, Fairfax County will partner with existing nonprofit organizations to hire 3.5 FTE's to provide community case management (targeted to use HPRP initially) within a regionally based HOST service location. Those organizations are **Shelter House, Reston Interfaith and New Hope Housing and one additional organization will be identified in the near future.** Contracts will be amended and nonprofit organizations will start hiring for these positions in early to early October.

[Department of Administration for Human Services \(DAHS\)](#) worked with the **Housing Brokerage Group (T7)** and others to develop an abbreviated RFP that has already been published to support the hiring by a non-profit organization of two new housing locator positions funded by HPRP funds. The deadline for RFP submissions is September 16.

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Update

Efforts are under way to provide training to users in partner organizations and bring programs into compliance for Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reporting. **During the last month, five additional organizations and 10 users have attended training. Training for HPRP providers is scheduled for Sept. 28.** HMIS training calendar for the next calendar year is under development.

A process mapping session for HMIS was held to identify the HMIS structure that best supports the HOST model implementation and the HPRP requirements. Many thanks to Chip Gertzog and Javier Jaramillo, [Fairfax County Department of Systems Management for Human Services](#), for facilitating the session. HMIS is being modified to accommodate the HPRP requirements. Discussions about specific data requirements to support the HOST process and outcome measures will continue after HPRP implementation is complete.

Standard operating procedures have now been developed **for programs serving victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking** in collaboration with the [Countywide Domestic Violence Coordinator](#) and the [Office for Women and Domestic and Sexual Violence Services](#). Work continues on **development of a standard operating procedure** for the HMIS disclosure and universal consent form.

PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Homeless Youth Initiative Program

A new program funded by Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Federal stimulus funds for one year will serve unaccompanied homeless youth who are without a parent or guardian, by providing them with housing so they can continue attending high school. **The goal of the program is for youth to stay in school to achieve graduation and also to prevent long-term homelessness.** [Fairfax County Department of Family Services](#), the [Homeless Liaison's Office of Fairfax County Public Schools](#), [Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness](#),

Alternative House, and the Partnership for Children, are working together to operate this countywide program.

A program coordinator is now reaching out to faith communities and a variety of civic organization to develop “**host homes**” where individual homeless students benefit from a home environment while attending a local high school. For students who may already be living somewhat independently, **rental vouchers** will be used to subsidize rent, helping to maintain the stability a student needs while he or she attends high school. Supervised **group living arrangements** in the community for a small number of female students are also an option. **To refer a student to the Homeless Youth Initiative Program, or if interested in participating as a host home, contact Patty Holley at 703-403-8565.**

HUD VASH Vouchers Now Available

The 35 Housing and Urban Development (HUD) VASH vouchers allocated to Northern Virginia are now available. The vouchers are being managed by the [Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development](#) (RHA). The application process begins with the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) as they are responsible for determining eligibility. The DVA will in turn send approved applicants to the RHA. **If the veteran wishes to use a HUD VASH voucher in an area covered by one of the other Public Housing Authorities (PHA) in Northern Virginia, arrangements will be made to transfer the voucher to the other PHA.** Applicants should be directed to the DVA CBOC in the Alexandria portion of Fairfax County; **make an appointment by calling Wayne Ellis at 703-313-0694.**

SIDEBAR

Continuum of Care Update

The full Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness Governing Board was briefed on the Continuum of Care (CoC) at their September meeting and the **CoC Committee is meeting on Friday, Sept.18, to review the applications for this year's HUD grant submission.** The Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) has not yet been released by HUD.

Check out www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless

Work continues on improving the partnership's Web presence. **Check our Web page www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless frequently for updates; highlights from the recent funders' tour with pictures will be posted soon!** If you have any questions or comments regarding the Web site or communications, contact the [Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs](#).

Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 561, Fairfax, VA 22035. For more information or to request this information in an alternate format, call 703-324-9492, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless. This is a Fairfax County, Va., publication.