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BREAKING NEWS

Partnership to Pilot New Homelessness Benchmarking Tool

In the coming months, the Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness in Fairfax-Falls Church community will be participating in a pilot of the **Ending Homelessness Benchmarking Tool** developed by the **National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH)**. **Fairfax County will be one of just two jurisdictions nationwide that will pilot the tool.**

Due to all of the work the partnership has accomplished in the past year, the county is poised to be a national leader in the performance measures to be collected by the new Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act to be implemented in July 2011. The use of the benchmarking tool is to help prepare the community for the significant changes related to HEARTH, recognize the great work that has already been done, and to strategically re-align and target resources as Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP) funds are fully utilized and as the HEARTH Act is implemented.

In the next month, various stakeholders will be asked to complete a survey and provide some data and input to help NAEH analyze the proficiencies and gaps in our overall system. Following that analysis, all stakeholders will be invited to participate in targeting meetings to solidify the next steps around very specific and actionable goals. **The National Alliance will guide this exciting process and help us focus our collective efforts in preventing and ending homelessness in the most effective way.**

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND RAPID RE-HOUSING ~ SEPTEMBER 2010 UPDATE

What We Have Accomplished *(10 months into Implementation)*

Where We Were

- Agency and geography—centered service availability and provision.
- Agencies collaborated on high-level thinking, but not on ground-level service provision.
- Locating affordable and appropriate housing seen as a difficult or impossible task.
- A person had to become homeless before supportive services could be provided.

Where We Are

- **Over 900 people** have received the services and supports they need to prevent and end their homelessness! 84 percent of the people who exited the program exited to permanent housing.
- For the first time ever, clients receive the same intake and services regardless of where they enter the system!
- Unprecedented levels of partnership and collaboration, as evidenced by the Housing Opportunity Support Team (HOST).

- Locating and maintaining affordable and appropriate housing is a priority, and the number one factor in preventing and ending homelessness.

Challenge

- **\$1,738,000 allocated** from HPRP (state & local) to be provided over 3 years.
- **\$1,260,000 spent** in the first 10 months, and goals for entire three years met.

At this rate, financial assistance available through HPRP will be exhausted in approximately five months. This is happening at the same time the need continues to grow.

Solution

The opportunity to keep hundreds and even thousands of people in their homes is dependent on the businesses and faith-based communities, as well as local and state government investing in homelessness prevention.

Here are some of their stories....

Youth and Family Get a Second Chance

A sixteen-year-old county resident was battling with depression to the point where she attempted to take her own life. Her mother lost her job at the very same time due to an injury that took place on the job. The employer refused to pay the mother's disability and the family was in the process of being evicted from their home. Amazingly, the youth found full-time employment at a senior care facility with the help of the employment and training specialist at Reston Interfaith, and her mother reported that she paid the rent for the family with her. The young adult recently shared that she enjoys her job and will continue to work part-time. In addition, **she is currently in the process of getting her license though the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Youth Employment program and is in good spirits.**

Youth Moves to Self-Sufficiency

An eighteen-year-old county resident participated in the summer youth employment program. However, she was forced out of her home and had no family members to take care of her, thus no where to go. She became homeless and could not find employment. During this very difficult situation, **the summer youth program helped her not only to get a driver's license and enroll in college, but also helped her obtain a vehicle for transportation.** She has now gotten her life back on track and has a bright future ahead of her. She is doing well with this newly found self-sufficiency; she's currently a full-time administrative assistant, a part-time student and lives on her own.

HOST HIGHLIGHTS

Housing Opportunities Support Teams (HOST) provides 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.

Remember ~ if you are providing services including intake & assessment, case management, disability services, housing location and access to benefits that help people obtain or maintain housing, you are a part of HOST. Working together, huge strides are being made to prevent and end homelessness.

Regional Updates

As the human services regions across the county continue to move us forward with the 10-Year Plan, here are some highlights to showcase their efforts in working with clients, partner organizations and the HOST system.

Central Region – Region 2 was re-opened for new referrals on Sept. 9. A **total of 11 cases have been successfully closed** with services complete and clients living successfully in unsubsidized housing. **Three families have remained stable with HPRP assistance** after working adults lost their jobs. The adults with case management support have found some employment and increased household incomes, moving towards sustainability.

Shelter House and Western Fairfax Christian Ministries (WFCM) have been working together for over six months to implement HOST in the western part of Fairfax County. Since this partnership has been in existence, Shelter House and Western Fairfax Christian Ministries have successfully **helped 13 households with food, clothing, financial classes, utility debt and/or rent.**

Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Update

HPRP Data Quality Day – The next data quality day is scheduled for **Nov. 10 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at the Fairfax County Government Center, Suite 364.** This time has been designated to review and correct HPRP data to ensure higher data quality and is accomplished by working in a group setting with other service providers. At least one representative from each agency is asked to be present. Please confirm your attendance via e-mail to monica.foote@fairfaxcounty.gov.

New HMIS Provider – Please join us in welcoming **Northern Virginia Family Service Homeless Assistance Program (HIP) in Vienna to HMIS.** Our new partner has recently added homeless prevention data into HMIS.

Data Monitoring – Late spring we streamlined the HMIS data elements and established standards for when data needed to be collected and updated. During the summer we introduced a series of data quality reports to help providers review and monitor their data. And this fall we are introducing the final step that will help us ensure that our data is of good quality and reliable. **Starting November, providers will run, review and submit a series of data quality reports including a “Data Quality Report Card” that provides programs with a letter grade based in the program’s data completion rate for required elements. Reports are to be submitted to the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness (OPEH) no later than the tenth of each month.**

PARTNERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Todd Rowley Joins the Governing Board

We are pleased to welcome Todd Rowley to the Governing Board of the Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness. **Mr. Rowley has 30 years in the banking industry and has recently joined Capital One Bank as the senior vice president where he engages CEOs and CFOs in strategic discussions highlighting an understanding of their needs.** In addition, he has an understanding of corporate finance, credit process, capital structure and financing options. Prior to joining Capital One, Mr. Rowley was the senior vice president for Wells Fargo and its predecessors for nearly 25 years. He has a long history of involvement in community engagement, and currently serves on several boards and councils including the advisory boards for both George Mason University and Virginia Tech, Executive Board for the Boy Scouts of America, Fairfax County Superintendent’s Business and Community Advisory Council and a

member of the Fairfax County Economic Advisory Council. We welcome Todd as he begins his work to further our mission aiming at helping those in some of the most difficult of circumstances.

Hypothermia Prevention Program 2010-2011 Planning Update

Hypothermia Prevention Planning Session 4 is scheduled for Oct. 27, at 10 a.m., Fairfax County Government Center, Suite 552, in the large conference room to the right of the receptionist desk. We will be preparing for the needs of the coming Hypothermia season, November through March. Anyone interested in joining this group to offer input as we plan and prepare for the upcoming season is welcome. Additionally, we are working out training sessions for Hypothermia season 2010-2011. A training video is being developed and will be available for volunteers later in the season or if they have missed scheduled trainings at their sites. **The final session (Session 5) is scheduled for Nov. 10, room 324, Pennino Building.** For more information, contact Debbie Scaggs at debbie.scaggs@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Housing Locator Program

The Housing Locator Network represents housing specialists from 16 different agencies whose focus is finding stable, affordable housing for homeless people. **Over the next year the Network expects to move over 150 low-income families that are homeless back into housing via a new partnership with the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).** By helping homeless clients access both Housing Choice Vouchers and Public Housing we will open up new housing options to many people that once had none. Applications are now being accepted from local shelters and transitional housing programs. Contact Tom Barnett, Housing Locator Network Coordinator, at tbarnett@goodhousing.org with any questions.

Meanwhile, our online discussion group has grown to over 100 members strong. If you would like to help find homes for persons that are homeless, please come join the conversation at <http://www.fairfaxhousinglocators.com/group>.

TRAINING & COMMUNICATIONS

Tier Training

In order to increase activity and efficiency in the Training and Change Management group, the group has been split into three tiers that each focus on training and communication at different levels. Tier 1 addresses community forums; Tier 2 addresses regional training and communication; and Tier 3 addresses direct service training and communication. A designated training and change management leader will lead the coordination of training and communication at each tier.

Tier 2 – The regional offices of the Fairfax County [Department of Neighborhood and Community Services](#) serve as localized entities focused on strengthening our neighborhoods by **connecting individuals and organizations with information and resources, fostering and creating opportunities for collaboration and facilitating communitywide efforts**, such as the 10-Year Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.

The regional meetings provide a regional framework for planning activities, active problem solving, capture of feedback and identification of emerging trends. **These meetings feature regular updates on the 10-Year Plan** to Prevent and End Homelessness, as well as updates on a multitude of related human services initiatives and projects. In order to increase communication and collaboration among all service providers involved in the 10-Year Plan, **it is important that the providers participate in these regional planning efforts.** To get linked to the appropriate meeting, project or initiative in your region, please refer to the information below.

Region 1 – Meetings are the second Monday of **every** month from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at South County Center, 8350 Richmond Hwy, Suite 505, Alexandria. **For more information**, contact Maria.Franco-Nativi@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-704-6354, TTY 711.

Region 2 – Meetings are the second Monday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon at the DSM offices, 6245 Leesburg Pike, Suite 300, Falls Church. **For more information**, contact Jackeline.FernandezReyes@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-533-5701, TTY 711.

Region 3 – Meeting on Monday, **Oct. 25** from 10 a.m. to noon at Washington Plaza West, Suite 140, Reston. **For more information**, contact Denise Taramasco Isabel.Taramasco@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-787-4962, TTY 711.

Region 4 – Meetings are the last Friday of each month from 9 to 11a.m. The meeting locations vary. **For more information**, contact Paulette.Whiteside@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-324-5285, TTY 711

Tier 3 – See ‘breaking news’ section at the top of this edition to learn more about this exciting initiative where the Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness in Fairfax-Falls Church will be participating in a pilot of the Ending Homelessness Benchmarking Tool developed by the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

HMIS Training

All trainings are held at the Fairfax County Government Center, Suite 364, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. **Training registration is on a first-come, first-served basis, with 12 seats available at each session.** Register via e-mail with monica.foote@fairfaxcounty.gov. Refresher training topics are being solicited; e-mail your suggestions to the same address.

- **Oct. 15** – 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ✧ New HMIS User Training (5 seats left).
- **Nov. 10** – 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. ✧ Hypothermia Refresher.
- **Dec. 7** – 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ✧ New HMIS User Training.

SIDEBAR

Housing Blueprint Progress

On Sept. 24, the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee met to review and discuss the Housing Blueprint, a comprehensive housing strategy with four components: ending homelessness in 10 years, increasing affordable options to special needs populations, reducing housing program waiting lists by half in 10 years, and increasing workforce housing through creative partnerships and public policy. Staff from the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) presented updates of the Blueprint progress to date. OPEH has been coordinating closely with HCD in regards to the ending homelessness goals and making sure that efforts, programs and planning strategies are aligned.

At this meeting, progress on specific FY 2011 goals was reviewed and there is significant activity in all of the FY 2011 targets at present. **Of particular importance to partners interested in providing housing to homeless families and singles is the progress made by HCD in releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) to agencies and landlords to apply for Project-Based Housing Vouchers**, and a forthcoming RFP for the new Bridging Affordability program. Both of these programs present real opportunities for the combined affordable housing and supportive services approach that is the focal point of our effort.

Other progress noted was as our conversion of the Reaching Independence through Support and Education (RISE) program as permanent supportive housing for families, and

establishment of a Memorandum of Agreement between HCD and the Community Services Board to provide housing units for homeless singles at Wedgwood apartments.

Continuum of Care

On Sept. 20 the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) released the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for the 2010 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance grant process. All Continuum of Care (CoC) grantees will be working over the next month to complete the renewal project reviews and grant renewal applications. There are new requirements this year for demonstrating collaboration with local education agencies and consideration of the educational needs of homeless children.

A maximum of \$306,441 is also available to the Fairfax-Falls Church CoC to apply for a new “Bonus Project” for a minimum term of two years. A notice was sent on Sept. 23 to current and potential applicants and other interested parties to solicit proposals for a new project that would be eligible. Up to 20 percent of the funding can be used for case management; the remaining 80 percent must be used for eligible housing costs. The project must provide permanent supportive housing. HUD has expanded the eligible populations to include not only chronically homeless single adults and families with a disabled adult, but also priority for homeless veterans who have a disabling condition. **Concept proposals are due on Oct. 8, 2010, and will be reviewed by the CoC Committee of the Governing Board of the Community Partnership.** For additional information, contact william.macmillan@fairfaxcounty.gov.

HEARTH Act

The HEARTH Act was signed into law by President Obama on May 20, 2009. **During the past year, HUD developed regulations for an expanded definition of homelessness under the Act and is currently developing regulations to implement the legislation.** HEARTH is a re-authorization and major restructuring of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Program.

The new regulations contains many significant changes. The existing Supportive Housing Program (SHP), Shelter Plus Care Program (S+C), and Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Moderate Rehabilitation Program are merged into one funding stream, and there will likely be changes in some requirements for existing grants under these programs. **The current Emergency Shelter Grants (ESG) program is recast as the new Emergency Solutions Grant program,** with an increase in funding and expansion of the populations to be served. **Some of the components of the current HPRP program under the federal stimulus funding will be included in the new ESG program,** which will require a percentage of funds to be used for prevention services.

There are also changes in requirements for coordination and involvement with the local public school system in planning to meet the needs of homeless children and protecting their rights under other Titles of the Act. Details of many of these changes will be spelled out in the draft regulations, which are anticipated to be released this fall for public comment. **Full implementation of the HEARTH Act is expected to occur during 2011.** As more information becomes known, updates will be provided through the *PARTNER Update* and training sessions will be scheduled as needed and as materials become available.

Oct. 1, 2010 — Prepared by the [Fairfax County Office to Prevent and End Homelessness](#) and the [Fairfax County Office of Public Affairs](#). To request this information in an alternate format, call 703-324-9492, TTY 711. A Fairfax County, Va., publication.