

Spokane Regional Continuum of Care 2008/09 Action Steps Accomplishments

Objective #1 - Create new permanent housing (PH) beds for chronically homeless persons (data source: Housing Inventory Chart completed during One Day Count in January)

2008 PH bed baseline: 111
 12-month PH bed increase goal: 135 (+24)
 Outcome: 109

Action Step	Action Statement	Lead Person	Outcome
1	Apply to Spokane County for acquisition funding to support the development of 9 permanent supportive housing units for chronically homeless individuals	Board Chair, Salem Arms	See Note 1 below
2	Create a set-aside of 8 permanent supportive housing units for chronically homeless individuals	Executive Director, Spokane Housing Ventures	See Note 2 below
3	Spokane Homeless Assistance Response and Prevention Partnership (SHARPP) will create 7 permanent supportive housing units for chronically homeless persons that have a history of incarceration. All housed SHARPP participants will have completed the Responsible Renter Program, taken a vocational skills assessment and completed some job training.	Offsite Housing Director, Volunteers of America	See Note 3 below

Note 1 – Salem Arms was awarded Spokane County HOME funds to acquire a 9-unit apartment building and took ownership on January 15, 2009. This acquisition replaces the 9-unit apartment building demolished as part of the Walnut Corners project. It will utilize a long standing Salem Arms held SHP grant and provide permanent supportive housing for 8 chronically mentally ill individuals who are homeless or chronically homeless at the time of referral to Salem Arms. A Housing Trust Fund Rehab Grant of \$611,000.00 has also been awarded to Salem Arms for necessary upgrades to this new acquisition.

Salem Arms applied through the City of Spokane for 14 S+C permanent supportive housing units. HUD has approved the S+C grant and the contract is being finalized. These actions result in a net gain of 14 permanent supportive housing units and the recovery of 8 permanent supportive housing units that could have been lost to the Continuum.

Note 2 – Eight chronic homeless preference units at the Bel Franklin were completed and ready for lease in May 2009. Through the end of June, 6 of the 8 set aside units were leased to chronic homeless; all are receiving HHAA-2163 rent subsidy and all six are connected to service providers with life plans in place.

Note 3 – As of this date, 17 beds for chronically homeless have been established by the SHARPP program, 9 of which are permanent supportive housing beds. We have 6 beds at Maud's South, 6 beds at Maud's North, 1 bed at Flaherty, 1 apartment at TLC, 2 beds at Miryam's and 1 apartment through Transitions/Miryam's. 100% of the SHARPP participants staying in permanent supportive housing have completed the RRP, and have completed a vocational skills assessment, and have completed a paid work assessment/job training session.

Objective #2 - Increase percentage of homeless persons staying in permanent housing (PH) over 6 months to at least 71.5% (data source: combined Annual Progress Reports from partner agencies)

2008 percentage baseline: 79%
 12-month percentage increase goal: 80% (+1%)
 Outcome: 77% (-2%)

Action Step	Action Statement	Lead Person	Outcome
1	Increase long-term affordability for McKinney PH participants through the use of 6 County HOME TBRA vouchers specifically assigned to McKinney PH projects	Director, Spokane County Community Services, Housing and Community Development	12 vouchers issued – See Note 4 below
2	Provide customized support services after move-in (averaging 3 to 6 months) through tenant enrollment in the Supportive Living Project(SLP); after tenant graduates, the SLP will continue monthly monitoring visits	Director, Spokane County Community Services, Housing and Community Development	Completed, See Note 5 below
3	Improve long-term housing stability by transitioning tenants to the Supportive Living Project recreation activity program for social integration into community	Director, Spokane County Community Services, Housing and Community Development	Completed, See Note 6 below

Note 4: 6 HOME TBRA vouchers were issued to Spokane Housing Ventures, and one new voucher went to CJ Court in June, 2009; the other 5 vouchers were issued to tenants at SNAP Valley and CJ Court

Note 5: We started with 4 units at Medical Lake, then added 2 units at Valley 206; then we added CJ Court (5 units) and SNAP Valley (1 unit) for a grand total of 12 units. Customized support services are specific to the client/consumer. Goals are developed for each according to need and may include cooking, budgeting, shopping, housekeeping, visits to food banks, clothing banks, medical or dental treatment, help obtaining entitlements such as food stamps, etc. Length of time is determined by the client/consumers progress and individual need. The monthly monitoring visits are done jointly with Spokane Housing Ventures and consist of a general well-check visit. Notices are sent to the residents; specialists check on how they are doing with a short visit and scan of the unit. As the end of the program approaches SLP helps the client get housing vouchers and locate appropriate housing. If they are unable to get a section 8 voucher, then SLP helps them apply for an extension of HOME TBRA.

Note 6: Most tenants are currently in their two-year placement interim period, and thus, they are on other permanent subsidized waitlist housing projects. Recreation activities are organized by the SLP program specialist who identifies weekly and monthly activities. Activities may include community events like Pig Out in the Park, or going to garage sales, food bank, football games, soccer games, etc. Thursday and Saturday are the scheduled days for recreational activities.

Objective #3 - Increase percentage of homeless persons moving from transitional housing (TH) to permanent housing (PH) to at least 63.5% (data source: combined Annual Progress Reports from partner agencies)

2008 percentage baseline: 62%
 12-month percentage increase goal: 64% (+2%)
 Outcome: 66% (+4%)

Action Step	Action Statement	Lead Person	Outcome
1	Provide staff and curriculum for Responsible Renters Program to 30 McKinney-Vento TH clients to improve budgeting skills, assist with housing search, and the removal of barriers	Executive Director, Transitions	62 McKinney-Vento TH clients have received the RRP See Note 7 below
2	Offer Budget Skills classes to 100% of TH , S+C, and SHP clients and provide permanent supportive housing to 12 graduates upon completion of program	Director of Community Services, SNAP	See Note 8 below
3	Analyze performance of all McKinney-Vento TH projects in regards to moving clients into permanent housing and provide technical assistance to the 3 lowest performing agencies to improve upon their performance by 10%	Chair, CoC Interim Steering Committee	See Note 9 below

Note 7 - these are unduplicated numbers from Action Step number 3 under Objective #1

Note 8 - 100% of 42 families in TH completed budget classes along with other Life Skill Classes – these numbers are from SNAP programs only

Note 9 - 21 of 42 moved to permanent housing upon completion of the program – these numbers are from SNAP programs only

A Transitional Housing program manager meeting was held on August 26th at Catholic Charities. Multiple agencies were represented at this peer-to-peer discussion to address issues, concerns and successes of current transitional housing programs.

Objective #4 - Increase percentage of homeless persons employed at exit to at least 19% (data source: combined Annual Progress Reports from partner agencies)

2008 percentage baseline: 17%
 12-month percentage increase goal: 19% (+2%)
 Outcome: 14% (-3%)

Action Step	Action Statement	Lead Person	Outcome
1	Provide one-on-one technical assistance and consultation to staff of 2 McKinney-Vento projects to improve their employment performance by 10% within 12 months after technical assistance	Chair of Employment Committee, Spokane Homeless Coalition	In progress with VOA & CCS See Note 10 below
2	Seek local funding to hire an additional employment specialist to serve an additional 35 McKinney-Vento homeless participants in the CoC shelter plus care or SHP programs	Program Manager, Goodwill Industries Workforce Development and Social Services	In progress; received \$5K grant See Note 11 below
3	Design and offer technical assistance workshops to McKinney-Vento sponsors on how to streamline resources in order to expand job training, job readiness skills, and the securing of employment of homeless individuals	Chair of Employment Committee, Spokane Homeless Coalition	Will set up by August See Note 12 below

Note 10 - Goodwill has received referrals from both VOA and CCS for one-on-one services to residents from each agency. MOUs were signed and are in place. Still working on finding time to meet with agency staff members.

Note 11 - Goodwill obtained a grant for \$5,000.00 and is currently submitting a grant for funding for homeless individuals.

Note 12 - Technical assistance has been provided. Scheduling is still in progress for workshops.

Objective #5 - Decrease the number of homeless households with children (data source: One Day Count)

2008 homeless household baseline: 129
 12-month homeless household decrease goal: 115 (-14)
 Outcome: 174 - includes 149 (city) and 25 (county) data

Action Step	Action Statement	Lead Person	Outcome
1	Apply for Transitional Housing Operating, and Rent assistance (THOR) expansion funds (\$250,000) through WA State's Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) to provide rent subsidies for 38 homeless households with children	Human Services Director, City of Spokane	See Note 13 below
2	Apply to local community foundation for a \$30K grant to support a one-year planning effort to transform the Region's scattered services for homeless populations into a centralized service center and promote rapid re-housing for homeless households with children	Executive Director, Spokane Low-income Housing Consortium	See Note 14 below
3	Distribute 60 long-term rental assistance vouchers (Homeless Preference Vouchers) to households with children through a partnership between Northeast Washington Housing Solutions (NEWHS) and the Spokane Homeless Coalition membership	Chair, CoC Interim Steering Committee	See Note 15 below

Note 13: The THOR Expansion Funds Application was submitted and funded by CTED. However, due to the significant budget deficit of Washington State, CTED significantly reduced the award from \$250,000 to \$23,500.

Note 14: SLIHC successfully secured a \$30,000.00 grant from the Campion Foundation to explore and implement "new" strategies to reduce/end homelessness, including centralized intake/assessment and rapid re-housing. An implementation plan will be completed by December 2009.

Accomplishments to date:

--Surveyed partner agencies, finding that they provide a broad range of homeless services, that they gather a wide range of data in different ways, and that they have distinct internal decision-making protocols related to data gathering.

--Gathered and analyzed information on community-wide centralized intake and rapid re-housing strategies provided outside of our area. We are especially intrigued with the Snohomish County centralized case management program, and we plan to schedule a field trip to Snohomish to directly view the program.

--Have concluded that the Spokane Regional Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) program, ClientTrack, which is operated by the City of Spokane, has the potential to become our community-wide centralized intake/assessment tool. We are clarifying what we need from it and are

attaining a better understanding of its capacities. Partner surveys revealed that agencies use HMIS at a very basic level. The City of Spokane reports that it is currently using less than 10% of ClientTrack's capacity, and that Continuum of Care agencies are using less than 5% of its capacity.

--Have also concluded that an efficient, centralized database/intake/assessment tool can help us effectively provide tailored services and rapid re-housing where appropriate.

Other activities:

1) August 4, present centralized intake/assessment models to the administrative and program staff of our partner agencies and other agencies. We will take a critical look at centralized intake, examine how this approach will affect our individual organizations and the community as a whole from both the administrative and program viewpoints, and identify barriers and strengths as we build on this initial draft strategy.

2) August 6, Spokane Homeless Coalition meeting, ask agencies to describe their 'rapid re-housing' activities. We have a sense that many agencies already quickly move people into appropriate housing; they simply don't call it 'rapid re-housing'.

3) August 11, co-sponsor with the City of Spokane, a day-long, on-site ClientTrack training at which we will evaluate ClientTrack's capacity as an assessment tool; its ability to interface with other databases; its capacity to address confidentiality; its capacity to develop a true assessment of client-family needs for housing and services; and its ability to provide real-time information.

4) August/September, take road trip to Snohomish.

5) October 1, Spokane Homeless Coalition Retreat, present findings and a plan for implementation.

The progress we are making is exceeding our expectations, and two concurrent events are adding to its success: 1) The City of Spokane is putting time, talent and treasure into ensuring the maximum use of ClientTrack's capabilities. 2) The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) funding is providing the opportunity to implement a centralized intake/assessment pilot program, increasing our collective ability to prevent homelessness and to move homeless individuals and families quickly into appropriate homes. The alignment of all of these efforts is exciting!

Cindy Algeo, Executive Director, Spokane Low Income Housing Consortium

Note 15: NEWHS had to put a freeze on housing vouchers and was unable to provide 5 vouchers a month to the Homeless Coalition. The 2009 HOME funds will not be available until after August, and those funds are only for one year.