



November 16, 2012

TO: FY 2013 Supportive Housing/Homeless Crisis Response/Housing Assistance  
Grant Program Advisory Committee Members

FROM: Michael A. Hiler, Deputy Chief, Office of Community Development

SUBJECT: *Michael A. Hiler*  
FY 2013 Supportive Housing/Homeless Crisis Response/Housing Assistance  
Grant Program Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

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On October 3, 2012, the FY 2013 Supportive Housing/Homeless Crisis Response/Housing Assistance Grant Programs Advisory Committee met at the Creekside Conference and Event Center in Gahanna from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The following is a summary of the major topics discussed during the meeting.

#### Introduction

- Scott Gary, Office of the Office of Community Development (OCD) Supportive Housing Section Manager, opened the meeting and welcomed the members. The advisory committee members introduced themselves. Mr. Gary reviewed the agenda and changes that were made over the past year. These changes included the addition of the Supportive Housing Program (SHP) and the Homelessness Crisis Response Program (HCRP). Mr. Gary told the committee that the Supportive Housing Section participated in a Kaizen event to develop more efficient procedures.
- Mr. Gary recognized Vicki Miller from HUD and wished her well in her upcoming retirement.

#### Region Update

- Jacqui Buschor presented the update on regions that resulted in Ohio being divided into 8 single-county urban areas and 18 multi-county rural areas. Ms. Buschor stated that OCD plans to move forward towards fully implementing the HEARTH Act and Federal Regulations. It was acknowledged that while there is not full guidance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on the new regulations, it is still important to move forward in implementing the regulations in Ohio.
- Implementing the new regulations will allow Ohio to shape policy more than waiting until guidance is formally issued. Ms. Buschor said that the advisory committee and stakeholders will be involved as changes are being made.
- Ms. Buschor stated that OCD would continue to look for ways to streamline processes, and data and performance measures will track performance.
- Mr. Gary stated there has been a lot of remarkable progress in moving towards a regional structure with key players working through a variety of issues including fund allocation.

## Planning Update

### Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program / Housing Stability Program

- Jon McKay presented the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) and Housing Stability Program (HSP) update. The breakdown on HPRP expenditures was 63 percent Homelessness Prevention activities and 29 percent Rapid Re-housing activities.
- HSP included several differences from HPRP. Mr. McKay stated that the income requirement is now below 30 percent AMI. HSP requires a rental assistance agreement (between the agency and the landlord) and a habitability inspection for prevention and rehousing. HSP allows up to 24 months of rental assistance. Income verification does not have to be completed at entry for rehousing, but must be completed by three months in the program.
  - Three-month verification of income is stricter than the federal requirement, but that decision was made to ensure better targeting.
  - The income requirement is below 30 percent AMI, and was determined by legislation.
- Debbie Conklin stated that rapid re-housing is preferred to homelessness prevention since not everyone who is evicted becomes homeless.
- Mr. McKay stated there would not be grant extensions for HSP grants, but do not spend money on ineligible clients.

### Housing Crisis Response Program

- Ms. Buschor indicated there were 62 Housing Crisis Response Program (HCRP) applications received requesting just more than \$18 million. Ms. Miller asked about the total number of projects that applied for each category of funding. Ms. Buschor explained that 26 applications were from the regions and included homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing activities and 38 applications for emergency shelters.
- The team is reviewing the applications, and rather than scoring the applications, the team is noting where more technical assistance is needed. Some grant agreements may include special conditions requiring additional information on the application and regional plan.
- Douglas Argue asked if there had been feedback on the formula allocations
  - Ms. Buschor stated there had been some feedback and in the future OCD plans to include increases from shale development.
  - Maggie Kalmar expressed concern with the decrease in funding in comparison to HPRP.
  - The formula was different than the one used for HPRP allocations. There was overall, less money available for HCRP than there was for HPRP. The HCRP formula was based on more factors than HPRP. HPRP was just based on distress factors and did not take cost of living into account, while the formula in HCRP does.

- Ms. Miller stated that funding from HUD is expected to remain flat despite level of need. She encouraged the committee to prepare for potential cuts and flat funding. She encouraged the committee to provide feedback to HUD through comments.
  - Mr. Gary encouraged the committee to focus on demonstrating performance and asking for budget reallocations if need.
- Ms. Conklin asked if shelter programs would be combined into the regional applications. She explained that shelters are directly affected by prevention and rapid rehousing activities.
  - Mr. Gary stated that being under the same program would allow for this to occur more effectively, but the dynamic varies in urban and rural areas. He said that while combining shelters into the regions may be worth exploring in the future, it may be premature to consider this at this time.

#### Supportive Housing Program

- Bob Johnson presented the update on the Supportive Housing Program and the Housing Assistance Grant Program. He stated that 49 applications were received for Transitional Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing programs. The request totaled about \$10 million. Mr. Johnson stated that OCD expects to fund 46 of these applications. This includes 23 Transitional Housing programs and 24 Permanent Supportive Housing Programs. There were some new and expansion programs funded as well as on agency that received funding for Transitional Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing.
- SHP recommendations will go to the controlling board on December 3, 2012.

#### Housing Assistance Grant Program

- Mr. Johnson stated that the income levels for the Housing Assistance Grant Program are 50 percent AMI for emergency repair and 65 percent for down payment assistance. In FY 2011 no down payment assistance programs were funded. Mr. Johnson explained that in light of the foreclosure crisis, there were increasing questions and concerns from the controlling board in regards to this activity. The FY 2012 Notice of Funding Available for the Housing Assistance Grant Program will be available in mid-December.

#### **Policy Updates**

##### Homeless Management Information Systems

- Samantha Webb told the committee that HUD released regulations on Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) December of 2011 and that OCD would be moving forward implementing those regulations in the Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC). Data quality will be increasingly scrutinized as performance measures are gaining importance.
- Mr. Gary stated that the Ohio CoCs are working on developing a statewide data warehouse.

- Linda Kramer expressed concerns with how certain exits and moving through various homeless programs can appear as a negative outcome, but should not be considered a negative outcome.
  - This may affect project outcomes, but looking at statewide or CoC-wide outcome would be beneficial.

#### Performance Measures

- Ms. Buschor explained that HMIS representatives from the CoCs are working on developing a Human Services Data Warehouse. The initial phase of this will be the homelessness data. As the project moves forward the hope is to include data from corrections and rehab, mental health data and other human services data.
- An important first step in developing the data warehouse is agreeing on uniform data standards across the continua of care. It is important that data elements are all measured in the same way to ensure consistency. OCD is requesting guidance on how to measure diversion.
  - Ms. Conklin asked if this group was working on a statewide definition of diversion. Ms. Buschor stated this was a very complicated question and diversion will be difficult to track through HMIS, and the first step will be defining it. Ms. Buschor stated that guidance will be sought, and initially the first step will be communicating what diversion is. Ms. Conklin recommended that appropriate CoC representatives join HMIS persons in this discussion
- Mr. Gary stated that there will be further discussion on diversion and how to measure it.
  - Diversion is not a required data element in HMIS right now. We will need to decide how this will be captured. The advisory committee communicated that this is an opportunity to provide guidance to HUD on how this should be done.
- Anthony Forte told the committee that the HEARTH Act was a major shift and change for all the programs. Congress seeks concrete data on performance to make funding decisions. Having performance data to provide Congress helps justify funding for homelessness programs. HMIS is now mandated, and is an eligible cost.
- Ms. Buschor stated that OCD would like to develop informed performance measures that capture true performance and show the cost per positive outcome and length of stay. She asked for feedback on what else should be included. Applications were not scored based on outcome this year as anticipated because HMIS is not yet able to provide those measures.
  - Christine Matusik-Plas stated that her programs would be interested in measuring outreach to unsheltered homeless individuals. For some individuals just getting into shelter is a major accomplishment. She requested that PATH providers be included in these performance measures.
  - Ms. Kramer stated that many of these performance measures would vary greatly between subpopulation and community options available.

### Other Policy or Program Issues

- Ms. Buschor led the discussion on planning the application process for FY 2013. She explained that any changes made would be thoughtful, based on the needs of the community and data driven.
- The group discussed moving toward making the allocation for shelter awards to the regional applicant for them to make awards to the shelter.
  - Currently, awards are made from OCD to the shelters. By allocating the shelter awards to the region, the shelter would be more subject to the regional plan.
  - Ruth Gillett stated that currently Cleveland does have control of some shelter awards through the Emergency Solutions Grant Program funds. They share common values with the state. She stated further that the region does not need to control every dollar to have a cohesive region.
  - Ms. Conklin stated that by awarding the regions the shelter allocation this would maximize the effect of the plan and provide continuity of message.
  - Concerns were raised with the increasing control of regions. With one funder there is more risk and community politics can have a detrimental effect.
    - Checks and balances would need to be in place for this type of system to be functional.
  - Mr. Forte stated there is a natural conflict when there is a unified funder. However, the new regulations ensure that there is transparency throughout the funding process.

### HCRP Design and Application

- There was discussion about FY 2012 HCRP application. Some meeting participants stated the application was confusing since some aspects were exclusive to the shelter or homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing program and some aspects were shared.
- The suggestion of combining the SHP and HCRP into one application was also made. This would allow organizations to submit one application if they have multiple projects. It was noted that this would create additional difficulties since there were differences in income eligibility and that few agencies would benefit from such a move.
- Participants asked if FY2011 grantees were held to the regional plan. OCD advised that this could not be changed retroactively, but all FY 2012 and future grantees will need to submit projects in line with the regional plan.

### HCRP Allocation Formula

- OCD solicited comments on the allocation formula.
  - The committee stated that sometimes unemployment rates vary greatly within counties. OCD asked if poverty level would be a better measure. The committee advised that this varies as well. OCD advised that the entire population of the area needed to be taken into account for the formula. The committee advised OCD to take shale development in Eastern Ohio into account next year.
  - OCD stated that the formula would be reevaluated annually as needed.

#### HCRP Rating Criteria

- OCD solicited comments on rating criteria. Ms. Buschor explained that in the past “need” had been considered. The committee asked how need was measured to which Mr. Johnson stated that OCD typically takes waiting lists, loss of funding, closing of other providers among other elements that show an increased need.
- OCD asked for input on how to measure cost effectiveness. OCD acknowledged that varying populations and areas of the state will have different costs. The committee suggested looking at the cost of good outcomes.

#### Definition of Homelessness

- As a part of the HEARTH Act, HUD released a new definition of homelessness. Category three allows states to recognize people as homeless if they fall under another federal agency’s definition of homeless. OCD asked the advisory committee if they felt that this category of homelessness should be accepted in Ohio. The committee stated this would broaden eligibility. The group agreed that this varies by community and population. The CoC must identify if they will serve people falling under category three of the homelessness definition, and with nine CoCs in Ohio, this could get complicated.

#### Guidance on Homelessness Prevention vs. Rapid Re-housing

- OCD asked for guidance on funding of homelessness prevention versus rapid re-housing. The committee advised that in rural areas lacking shelters, homelessness prevention is important. The committees suggested leaving the decision up to local discretion and continue to develop best practices. OCD advised participants to continue using deep targeting for homelessness prevention assistance, so they serve people who would actually become homeless but for assistance.

#### Supportive Housing Program Application

- OCD asked for guidance on the SHP application. The committee suggested looking at how the budget line items are categorized and align it in a way that allows funds to be more segregated by activity.
- The committee suggested timing the application in a way aligning it with OHFA’s tax credit application in language and timing. OCD stated that the Funders’ Collaborative is meeting the week of October 8, 2012.
- The committee suggested using local collaboration on the regional plan as rating criteria. OCD stated that moving SHP grantees on to the same grant cycle as their region will take multiple years.

#### Housing Assistance Grant Program

- OCD asked for feedback on the Housing Assistance Grant Program. The committee did not have any additional comments, but stated raising the income limit was helpful.

#### Additional discussion

- OCD led a discussion on project aggregation. There are requirements for using Federal Emergency Solutions Grant Program funds. OCD is currently seeking formal guidance from HUD on project aggregation with direct financial assistance. Until a response is received from HUD, OCD will continue to enforce rules of project aggregation.
- OCD announced that an implementation training will be held on December 7, 2012 in Columbus.

The FY 2013 Supportive Housing/Homeless Crisis Response/Housing Assistance Grant Programs Advisory Committee adjourned at 3 p.m.

**Ohio Development Services Agency  
Office of Community Development**

**FY 2013  
Supportive Housing/Homeless Crisis Response/Housing Assistance Grant  
Program Advisory Committee Meeting  
Creekside Conference and Event Center  
October 3, 2012**

**Attendance List**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Organization</u></b>
Jacque Adkins	Warren Metropolitan Housing Authority
Kim Alexander	ODSA/OCD
Leslie Alley	ACIL
Douglas Argue	COHHIO
Joyce Hill	ODSA/OCD
Doug Baily	Ohio Department of Mental Health
Colleen Bain	National Church Residences
Christina Blair	CAC of Fayette County
Elaina Bradley	Interfaith Hospitality Network of Springfield
Jacqui Buschor	ODSA/OCD
Jonda Clemings	COHHIO
Debbie Conklin	Toledo Lucas County Homelessness Board
Jennie Dennison-Budak	Interfaith Home Maintenance Service, Inc.
Genelle Denzin	COHHIO
Beth Fetzer-Rice	Salvation Army
Anthony Forte	HUD
Scott Gary	ODSA/OCD
Ruth Gillett	Cleveland/Cuyahoga County OHS
Martina Grimm	Columbiana County CAC
Pat Hart	ODSA/OCD
Jen Henson	Foundation for the Challenged
Bob Johnson	ODSA/OCD
Maggie Kalmar	Findlay Hope House for the Homeless
Greg Kramer	ACIL
Linda Kramer	Daybreak
Bob Laux	Wild River Consulting
Christine Matusik-Plas	HM Housing Development Corporation
Jon McKay	ODSA/OCD
Vicki Miller	HUD
Tiffany Nobles	Community Shelter Board
Samantha Webb	ODSA/OCD