



THE HUDSON COUNTY ALLIANCE
TO END HOMELESSNESS

HCAEH Meeting Minutes

April 21st, 2021

2:00 p.m.

***Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, this meeting was held over Zoom.**

Welcome and Introductions

Katelyn Ravensbergen of the Hudson County Division of Housing and Community Development called the meeting to order. Introductions were made of anyone who had called in to the meeting.

CoC Business

- *FY2020 Update and FY2021 CoC Program Monitoring* – Katelyn stated that HUD has received approval to automatically renew the FY2019 CoC funded projects for FY2020. She asked if any agencies had heard from HUD yet regarding grant agreements. No agencies responded that they had. HUD had stated that they were planning to start with agencies with the earliest operating dates. All agencies should still submit their APRs per usual, operating years will still run the same as previously. Naomi Lesnewski of the Hudson County Division of Housing and Community Development stated that they are still anticipating HUD releasing a NOFA for CoC funding, likely around summertime, so she and Katelyn will be conducting program monitoring for FY2021. Agencies will hear from her next week to schedule monitoring, which will ideally take place in person depending on comfort levels. The process will be similar to years past with monitoring, performance review, and application making up the final score for renewal.
- *HCAEH Executive Committee Membership* – Katelyn attached a final list of the Executive Committee members to the meeting agenda. Their first meeting was held at the end of March, which focused on introductions and gaps/major concerns in the system, as well as what is coming up moving forward. The first focus of the Committee will be on prevention with the upcoming end to the eviction moratorium.
- *CoC Data Work* – Kevin Llangari from the Hudson County Division of Housing & Community Development updated the group on outcomes from the LSA and data submitted to HUD. He showed a comparison of the 2019 data to the 2020 LSA report. The trending saw a dramatic drop in clients, most likely due to COVID and social distancing requirements, with more people avoiding shelters. Despite this drop, we saw length of homelessness increase from an average of 69 cumulative days to 75 cumulative days. Returns dropped from 19% in 2019 to 13% in 2020. Overall, we are seeing fewer people in the system, but they are staying longer. Kevin also showed breakdowns in the data by household type. Anne Christensen from WomenRising asked for the data to be emailed in order to further digest it, Kevin responded that he would send out PDF versions. Anne asked how “discharge to permanent housing” is defined, Katelyn explained that this data looks at moving from

emergency shelter, transitional housing, or other homeless locations into permanent housing. Candy Brewster from NJ HMFA added that HUD views RRH as permanent housing. Kevin asked Candy if Hudson County's trends are in line with the rest of New Jersey, she responded that these impacts of COVID show similar trends state-wide. She mentioned that anecdotally the decrease in clients in shelters has run parallel to an increase in street homelessness, although there is a good chance that the PIT will not reflect this. Katelyn added that accounting for the Social Services hotel/motel placements in addition to the shelter numbers put these numbers way over the usual number. Candy asked how Code Blue has impacted hotel/motel numbers, Monica Yeng from Hudson County Housing and Community Reintegration answered that numbers have gone down, presumably because NJ 2-1-1 was initially directly people to the Warming Center. Dana Shilling from Elder Law/Care Communications Inc. asked in the chat, "I know these figures reflect specific definitions--and difficulties in collecting information. How many homeless people do you think there are by ordinary definitions, in NJ/Hudson County/Jersey City?" Katelyn responded that these numbers are hard to pinpoint, but we usually refer to our Point In Time count, which puts that number in 2020 around 900 between sheltered, unsheltered, and transitional housing in Hudson County on any given night. Kevin announced that his data quality emails will be out by tomorrow morning, and by the end of the month he plans to work on the HMIS bed inventory report for the upcoming 2021 LSA.

CEAS Business

- *NJ 211 County Mapping* – Jaclyn Nunziato from NJ 2-1-1 gave an overview on how the hotline operates, as well as data points for the first quarter of the year in Hudson County. Overall, fewer clients are calling in, but they are calling in more often. All notes were shared with the agenda.
- *SSH Updates* – Katelyn reported that we are working to reconcile our 2019-2020 contract. Agencies have been contacted to match up HMIS to drawdowns.

New Initiatives/Programs

- *NJ DCA Housing First Expansion RFP* – Katelyn announced that the County has applied for a grant to plan the creation of a system to combine data from different systems (hospital, jail, HMIS, etc.) so that when different housing opportunities arise, all entities are aware of a client's housing possibilities in real-time. When we know if we have received the funding from the State, Katelyn will reach out to partners for collaboration and input.
- *Hudson County Racial Equity Work* – Katelyn explained that she and Kevin had begun to look at demographic data throughout the County's system of shelters and coordinated entry. While racial disparities clearly lead to clients entering the system, this work seeks to look at whether race is a factor once clients are in the system. They are looking for insight from both consumers and providers as far as some of the gaps within the system to frame the work moving forward. The County is working in conjunction with both Monarch and SHA on this project. Nadine Azari from Monarch Housing explained that Monarch has been tasked with engaging consumers with lived expertise to guide this racial equity work. Monarch is looking to put together a group of 25-30 consumers with lived expertise for paid focus groups and/or individual interviews. Through Katelyn, Nadine will be reaching out to all CoC members for referrals of people who may be interested in participating. Monarch is seeking to have at least two consumers per project component: i.e. emergency shelter, transitional housing, etc. Diane Riley from SHA spoke to the provider side of this process, which will happen after the consumer focus groups and interviews.

Providers will be able to review the gaps identified and have a chance to give input and help shape how providers fit in to the overall work. She will be reaching out to gauge interest shortly.

- *American Rescue Plan* – George Serio from the Hudson County Division of Housing & Community Development updated the group on the funding coming in from the federal government. Hudson County will receive \$9.7 million, and Jersey City will receive \$7.7 million in HOME funds. As guidance is released from HUD, the group will be updated. LaTrenda Ross from Hudson County Welfare expressed her hope that there would be some type of focus group with community members to allow them to give input on how this funding will be spent. George explained that this is a requirement under the HUD program and so that this component will be included in the planning process.

Ongoing Updates

- *COVID-19 Updates*
 - *Prevention Programs* – Monica updated the group that over \$6.7 million has been requested under the CARES II Eviction Prevention Program, with over 1,500 people applying, 900 of which are complete and submitted, and currently being reviewed. They continue to place people in motels, with SSH funding for those who do not qualify under other funding sources. Katelyn added that the deadline for the CARES II program has been extended from April 15th to June 15th, as there are still funds available. The DCA rental assistance program is also still open and accepting applications. Samantha Carpio from Jersey City Community Development updated that the city is still finalizing the phase two of funding which will be administered through the Jersey City Housing Authority. They are hoping to have it up and running for the end of May/beginning of June.
- *Family Stability Committee* – Gloria Acosta from the York Street Project reported that at their last meeting, the group talked about different challenges and needs, specifically around a workshop series for families, and ways to collaborate across programs. Other issues discussed were literacy/language barriers, computer literacy, and closed food pantries in north Hudson. The next meeting is on May 10th at 10 AM on Zoom.
- *Food and Shelter Coalition* – LaTrenda updated that the Coalition with the help of Claire Sweeney will be sending a membership survey to gather feedback on topics of interest and to see how frequently meetings should be held. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 11th at 1:30 PM
- *Veterans Committee* – Kelly McGuinness from Soldier On announced that the subcommittee just met prior to this meeting. They began with an update from Carol Sainthilaire on the Ocean Ave. housing project. Kevin gave a snapshot on the County veteran data trends and veteran goal-tracker and benchmarks, comparing December 2019 to April 2021. They also had a by-name list case conferencing session with SSVF providers, coordinated entry, and VA. There was a brief discussion about adding a data point to HMIS to classify veterans as VA-eligible. Hudson County Veterans Services announced that the Memorial Day program will be held outside on May 27th at 11 AM at Holy Name Cemetery. Next meeting will be June 16th at 1 PM.

Announcements

- Jonathan Tolentino from Community Health Law Project announced that their annual Law in Disability conference which covers supportive housing, Medicaid eligibility, and more is upcoming and open to the public. The flyer will be shared with the group.

The meeting was adjourned with the next meeting scheduled to take place on Wednesday, June 16th at 2pm.

Voting Member Attendance

Name	Agency
Donna Cullen	Bayonne Economic Opportunity Foundation
Angelo Hunt	Catholic Charities
Pilar Rodriguez	Community Hope
Hillary Powell	Covenant House
Pam Baker	CSPNJ
Susan Milan	Garden State Episcopal CDC
Donald Weinbaum	Helping Arms
Ana Prado	Hoboken Shelter
Katelyn Ravensbergen	Hudson County Housing and Community Development
Kevin Llangari	Hudson County Housing and Community Development
George Serio	Hudson County Housing and Community Development
Kiyada Pittman	Hudson County Specialized Health & Housing Services
Carmen Gandulla	Jersey City Community Development
Samantha Carpio	Jersey City Community Development
Angelique Williams	Let's Celebrate
Michele Musumici	North Hudson Community Action Corp
Vivian Patino	Palisades Family Success Center
Kelly McGuinness	Soldier On
Danielle Mineo	Soldier On
Jennifer Rejfir	The House of Faith
Kayla Zimmer	The Waterfront Project
Rebecca Symes	The Waterfront Project
Carmel Galasso	United Way Hudson County
Anne Christensen	Women Rising
Gloria Acosta	York Street Project

Non-Voting Member Attendance

Name	Agency
Susana Armas	Catholic Charities
Yanil Mendoza	Catholic Charities
Sherina Caban	Catholic Charities SSVF
Jonathan Tolentino	Community Health Law Project
Georgina DeRosa	DCP&P
Dana Shilling	Elder Law/Care Communications Inc.
Ricardo Pasos	Horizon New Jersey Health
Margareth Alwart	Hudson County Drug Court
Naomi Lesnewski	Hudson County Housing and Community Development
Monica Yeng	Hudson County Office of Social Services
Jacqueline Gomez	Hudson County Office of Social Services

Carmen Esquilin	Hudson County Housing Resource Center
LaTrenda Ross	Hudson County Welfare & Food and Shelter Coalition
Alma Santana	Jersey City Human Services
Jacqueline Suarez	Jersey City Housing Authority
Kimberly Blackwell	Jersey City Medical Center
Nadine Azari	Monarch Housing Associates
Jaclyn Nunziato	NJ 2-1-1
Michelle Lowe	NJ DFD
Candy Brewster	NJ HMFA
Joni Owen	NJ Veteran's Affairs
Stanley Enweiler	St. Matthew Trinity Lunchtime Ministry/Hoboken Shelter
Diane Riley	Supportive Housing Association (SHA)
Audrey Nonemaker	The Community Builders, Inc.
Janet Aponte	The Waterfront Project
William Paige	The Waterfront Project
Charmaine McLawrence	US Veterans Affairs
Brenda Myrick	YMCA Newark & Vicinity