Making Homelessness in Connecticut Rare, Brief, and One Time

Reaching Home Quarterly Workgroup Report- January 2022

Prevention Workgroup

The Prevention Workgroup's main priorities include identification or indicators of homelessness, early identification, and interventions, reducing system inflow and cross-systems training. The Prevention workgroup split its membership into three subgroups to drive their work forward. The data and impact subgroup *has completed a draft literature review regarding homelessness* causes and protective factors to target and inform prevention efforts statewide. The identification and prioritization subgroup has been working to ensure prevention programming is prioritized for at risk populations. The intervention subgroup has started to conduct an inventory of prevention programs and is working to explore partnership with legal. The identification and prioritization subgroup continues to discuss system agencies readiness to implement a housing screener in other systems and will be reviewing Court Support Services Division's housing/homelessness screener data over the coming months. The Prevention Workgroup put forward a legislative priority around eviction prevention and will work to support advocacy and implementation if successful.

Coordinated Access Network/ Homeless Delivery System

The Coordinated Access Network (CAN)/Homeless Delivery System workgroup's main priorities include addressing regional needs to effectively respond to COVID -19, improve outcomes for unsheltered homelessness, improve and standardize coordinated entry, and provide quick access to diversion and/or housing opportunities. Each workgroup convenes monthly and includes members from across the state. The CAN/HDS workgroup utilizes several task groups to drive their work forward.

The CAN COVID Taskforce has continued to respond to surveillance and outbreak testing needs at shelters and other congregate settings as well as establishing isolation and quarantine protocols. The Housing Solutions Collaborative is supporting the build and rollout of the By-Name-List 2.0 and the Unsheltered Engagement Taskforce is working to scale successful outreach practices and create consistency to services offered and tracked. The Youth and Young Adult Homelessness (YYA) Taskgroup has been working to implement a case conferencing process for minors experiencing homelessness and housing instability in Stamford, Manchester and select towns in the Eastern region. The Stamford pilot is accepting referrals and is using a Community Care Team approach. The Manchester and Eastern pilots are engaging stakeholders and designing outreach strategies. The Youth Action Hub is working to develop a statewide youth action network and to design a virtual drop-in center for youth and young adults. The virtual drop-in center is a longer-term project developed in response to youths' requests for peer-to-peer support. The YYA

Taskgroup refined its Priority Areas of Work & identified where youth work is happening across the RH Campaign. The YYA Taskgroup submitted a request to the Connecticut State Department of Education to incorporate student homelessness data to Edsight- CSDE's public-facing data dashboard.

Lastly, the CAN/Homeless Delivery System workgroup is monitoring critical data to ensure that each function in the system is working efficiently and supporting efforts to make homelessness brief for all households.

Sustainability Workgroup
The Sustainability Workgroup's main priorities include system and tenant sustainability. The *Affordable Housing Task Group* is focused on increasing HOME-ARP technical assistance and outreach in order to meet with participating jurisdictions on what elements will be included in their plans. The *Economic Security Task Group* is focusing on working with 211 on establishing an inventory of workforce programs to circulate to all regions and is targeting February 2022. The *Behavioral Health Services Survey* and *Hospital Initiatives* merged in 2021 and are now both under the *Hospital Initiatives Task Group. Hospital Initiatives* is focused on attending Community Care Team (CCT) meetings and initiating conversations with Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs) in early 2022. The goal is to create a report on CCT data to help decrease the number of patients discharging from hospitals from entering street homelessness and reducing utilization of emergency services by those housed in RRH and PSH. Additionally, a goal is to develop and form collaborative relationships with LMHAs for continued interface and referrals between the homeless services system and behavioral health services.

Data and Accountability
The Data and Accountability Workgroup's priorities include defining, measuring, and analyzing program and campaign metrics, as well as providing feedback on statewide data projects. The workgroup recently created a dashboard to show systemwide performance data for the Reaching Home Campaign's "Rare, Brief, and One-Time". The group is presently working on a data report and dashboard guide that will list all the available data resources and their primary use cases. Further, the workgroup has started assessing the adequacy of resources around the homeless data infrastructure. The Data and Accountability Workgroup put forward a legislative priority around data infrastructure funding and will work to support advocacy and implementation if successful.

Resources
The Resources Workgroup's main priorities include identifying new funding opportunities and maximizing existing resources. As a result of the work of the workgroup, DOH released an RFP for a consultant to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the funding available for homeless services and formulate a plan to allocate those funds in a way that streamlines and centralizes services for persons experiencing homelessness. DOH is currently reviewing those applications and we expect the work to begin in Spring. The plan will inform the design of the upcoming RFP for homeless shelters and other service funding (Rapid Rehousing, Diversion, etc.). Members of the Resources Workgroup reviewed legislative priorities to help coordinate and provide insight from an administrative perspective.