



**Coalition of Service Providers for the Homeless
--A Continuum of Care and Homeless Task Force
Meeting Summary
Wednesday, July 8, 2020,
10:00am-11:00am
Go To Meeting**

This meeting was held through Go To Meeting due to Covid-19 restrictions. There were no introductions.

COVID-19 and Coordinated Assessment: Workgroup updates on best serving people during COVID-19, [Melissa Baker](#), Council for the Homeless

Melissa reported regarding what needs and increases of need has come through the Housing Solutions Center and what the HSC has done to shift to meet those needs. Here is a summary of updates in practices to address timely needs.

- The Coordinated Assessment work group is working to identify systemic level changes and addressing the needs of those who are more affected by Covid – which primarily affects People of Color, specifically African American.
- In regards to increases from callers the one that has increased the most is the folks who are experiencing DV a lot more than they used to be. That is especially difficult. We connect them to the YWCA understanding they are overwhelmed by this need. We are also giving out the National Hotline and contact information for the CVAB Warm Line.
- Another increase is seniors or elderly who are not able to stay in a couching situation. That ties into the next area.
- Another tremendous area is calls for rental assistance. Nationwide numbers are an increase in 30% - consistent across the nation. The slide shows actual people in our community that we are screening for rental assistance. We have made available more funding for prevention – one of the primary reasons that we are having quite an increase in serving people – but the need is still far outweighing what we are able to do. CFTH has also created equitable access by accepting referrals from culturally specific partners.
- We have streamlined the Housing Hotline so there is a separate cue for Prevention and we have dedicated staff to answer those particular calls. And this way we can be more trauma informed with these calls.

Services are still being provided to those experiencing homelessness. We have adopted new practices to successfully serve people. Many of these improvements have to do with advances in our use of technology.

- One of the barriers initially was the release of information – not much happens unless you have permission to share information. The first thing we did was collect verbal ROIs and implement E-signatures.
- We have also transferred housing assessments to the phone so we can continue to get people placed in the priority pool.
- Software allows for texting automatically – so we can reach out to folks when spots are available and sends out reminders.
- We have implemented fillable PDFs. The benefit is around placements so we can complete paperwork and e-sign all electronically.
- Some clients have accessed us through virtual face-to-face contact.

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HCRS Equity Report, [Gwen Beebe](#), Council for the Homeless

Laura introduced Gwen to share our [2019 Equity Report](#). CFTH is committed to racial equity. These are the primary content pieces of the report.

- Overview: Racial Equity is focused on outcomes.
- Table of Contents
- Who is Vulnerable? (36% of people experiencing homelessness identified as people of color)
- RACE is tied to likelihood of experiencing homelessness
- We can illustrate vulnerability by household make up as well.
- Context for VI-SPDAT used at the point of Coordinated Entry and the disparities in placement of white heads of household compared to vulnerable populations by proportionality
- Types of Exits – where do people go when they leave a program?
- PSH Program Outcomes
- Diversion Outcomes
- Opportunities to Increase Equity

Equity Report Discussion, [Heather Sheppard](#), Council for the Homeless

Laura introduced Heather to lead the discussion on how to advance equity.

Comments from the group – did anything surprise anybody? (Following are comments from the discussion)

- Providers learned demographics of the Pacific Islander community. It is a very large percentage. Does anyone have an idea of why that might be such a higher percentage?
 - Increase in representation in the area
 - Multi-generational household, larger household – limits on number of people in rental situations = evictions that we see around that
- VI-SPDAT is more favorable for white households. It will be great to compare this current year with last year's data to see if the tool adjustments will bear out in the data.
- Across all racial demographics, single seniors is lower in terms of engagement.
- More white folks score into PSH
 - Possibly could next take a look at the VAT to see if it is more white centric
 - Possibly because of access to services favoring white; also there is
 - Mistrust regarding "how to answer the questions."
 - Folks of color are more likely to request Diversion – because historically the coordinated entry system has not served them well.
 - It is traumatizing to go through all of the steps and how many times you have to tell the story to someone you don't know, aren't sure if you can trust, and doesn't look like you.
 - How can we use more culturally specific partners to engage with People of Color?
 - Is it possible to have a system that a client's story could be stored so that when they call their information could be pulled up showing their story. This would allow them not to have to repeat their story.
 - VAT procedure is that the information gathered has to come from that moment.
 - How are we going to partner and integrate with communities in a different way moving forward?

Other updates: Advocacy and Census 2020, [Laura Ellsworth](#), Council for the Homeless

Advocacy: Normally ebbs and flows pretty predictably but with Covid there are additional opportunities for advocacy:

- Federally: encouraging congress to pass the Heroes Act – back to DC on July 20th. This would address specific things related to rent assistance, housing and homelessness, programs that were minimally addressed in the first round – and would address people who have lost income.

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- State: We had huge historic investments made and now because of Covid we are facing a deficit. The WA State Constitution does not allow our budget to function at a deficit. We are discouraging an all cuts approach, and instead a strategic approach that also raises revenue to address the deficit. There is a fairly good appetite to raise revenue as part of the balanced budgeting needed, and to protect cuts from programs that impact people affected most by Covid-19. We are sending out action alerts; please sign up for our Housing and Homelessness advocacy list for tangible ways to be involved.

Census: Originally, the plan was to count people at the end of March but it has been pushed back to September 22-24th. Clark County has the #1 response rate in the state. We still have 29% of people left in our county who need to get counted. Please encourage people to engage – there are many languages to engage. Do it online if possible.

Upcoming Events:

July 14th – Covid-19 and Homelessness

July 30th – Eviction Moratorium Expiration, 5:30-6:30pm

October 7-8, 2020 **(Virtual) Conference on Ending Homelessness**

[CFTH Resource Guide & Spanish Resource Guide](#)
[CFTH COVID-19 Web Page](#)

Next Coalition Meeting: September 12, 2020, from 10:00am-11:30m
Most likely the Go To Meeting Format, TBA

The Coalition meets on the 2nd Wed, bi-monthly for planning to prevent and end homelessness in Clark County.

General Contact or Accessibility Needs: Council for the Homeless (360) 993-9561 or

bschallberger@councilforthehomeless.org

For more information on the Coalition, visit www.councilforthehomeless.org and click on Agency Resources.

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