

Meeting Minutes

Unified Supportive Housing System Consumer Feedback Meeting

August 18, 2008

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

CSB: Conference Room

Meeting Purpose: To elicit feedback on the Unified Supportive Housing System

Attendees:

ADAMH: Elaine Haines

CSB: Dave Davis

USHS: Anna Bianco

CAC Members: Douglass White, David Simmons, Sheila Prillerman, Ronald Baecker, Bruce Garrard, Rhonda Tucker

Welcome, Review Agenda, and Introductions

Dave Davis welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming to assist in the system development process. Dave reviewed the agenda and explained the flow of the meeting. All attendees introduced themselves to the group with their name and their place of residence.

System Background and Overview

Anna Bianco introduced herself as the new USHS Project Manager. She explained that the Unified Supportive Housing System was developed as a response to the community's request for a more coordinated effort to house persons utilizing the shelter and mental health systems.

The Unified Supportive Housing System has three pilot projects, two of which are housing pilots. The first housing pilot is Southpoint Place. Southpoint Place will test the centralized prioritization and eligibility screening for the system and unified service payment. An evaluation will be held during and after the pilot process. The evaluation will be able to show parts of the process that are working well and parts of the process that need to be improved for the future pilots and overall system.

The second housing pilot is National Church Residences' Commons at Buckingham. CAB will have 50 Rebuilding Lives units and 50 non-Rebuilding Lives units. CAB will test the vulnerability assessment for the system.

The third pilot is the utilization review and move up pilot. This will test assessments of client's conditions to determine whether or not the client needs higher or lower amounts of service. For those who need higher amounts of services, they will be able to move to vacant available units with more supportive services within the system. Those clients that

have improving conditions will be able to move to housing with less supports and eventually market rate housing or other affordable non-service enriched housing. This pilot will also test which types of incentives are successful at encouraging those clients who have become independent to move into independent housing. Financial assistance and other moving assistance may be available along with interim services for the client during transition.

Evaluations will be conducted during and after each of the individual pilots. A final evaluation will be conducted at the end of the pilot process to assess the overall system and its functions.

Goals of the system:

1. Ensure more efficient and targeted use of supportive housing through a centralized determination, prioritization, and placement system.
2. Promote efficient use of community resources for supportive services through a unified services payment model.
3. Promote recovery and support community re-integration through a centralized utilization review system and “move-up” assistance.

The system serves persons who are disabled and who may also be:

1. homeless
2. at-risk of homelessness
3. transitioning out of institutions (hospitals, correctional facilities, etc.)

All homeless units (~1300 units currently) will be in the system. In addition, other non-homeless units at housing projects with homeless units will be included in USHS. Housing providers may also have the option in the future to be able to opt into the system.

The basic system processes were reviewed. The system will have these components: an open referral system, one application for all units within USHS, centralized screening and assessment, a common data management system, vacancy management for all properties in the system, a move-up utilization review for clients, and unified services payment. Participants also received a flow diagram, which visually showed these components of the system.

Partner Roles

Dave gave an overview of each partner’s role:

ADAMH views this as a more mature system. ADAMH has learned many lessons from its experience with Briggsdale and knows that moving clients from very expensive, high service units into less service intensive units can provide not only a cost-savings but a more appropriate environment for some clients. This allows other clients who need high levels of service to move into the more service intensive units.

CMHA is contributing subsidies for the units within the system. The goal for CMHA is to make the process easier by having clients come to CMHA’s building as few times as

possible. Another goal is to reduce the time it takes to process an application and gain a subsidy. Current processes take months.

CSB is contributing the USHS Project Manager staff time and administering grants from several funders for the system. The Osteopathic Heritage Foundations awarded a \$200,000 grant for system development and a \$250,000 grant that will be awarded through an RFP process for housing providers. Battelle contributed \$50,000 in funds for the system development as well. CSB will also be hiring an evaluator to assess each of the pilots and the system overall.

Questions & Comments

1. In regards to the Americans with Disabilities Act, usually you cannot ask a client to confirm or provide documentation of his/her disability. How are you able to do that for this system?
2. Impressed with the speed of addressing issues: centralization of processes
3. One application is necessary
4. Staff on-site should be properly trained and held accountable to standards and to the responsibilities to which they are assigned. Staff should be educated and should be paid more than they are currently receiving. [Two staff making \$7 an hour should be replaced with a more competent, more professional staff person who earns \$14 an hour].
5. There should be a monitoring system for on-site managers. Managers should be monitored for compliance to standards and to ensure that they are assisting clients in their transitions.
6. Staff should be dedicated to the cause
7. Need to have the proper amount of trained staff for the project size
8. Case managers should not be overloaded
9. There should be more education programs to assist clients. Programs that help clients to get their GEDs would help to ensure that as a client moves through the system, they are able to find better paying jobs and transition completely out of the system over time.
10. There is a need for clients to receive more information as to what services are available in the community. Clients should be given options and an explanation of programs that may be beneficial to them and their situation.
11. It is important that all assessments be fair and objective and that no individual or agency "stacks the deck." All clients should be treated fairly.
12. How will USHS know when units are vacant? USHS cannot fill vacancies that they do not know are empty. [Concern that some housing projects are not reporting vacancies.]
13. Does the case manager remain with the client throughout the system even if the client moves?

The Unified Supportive Housing System is not yet fully developed. Input from providers and consumers is essential to the success of this system. If further questions arise, please contact Anna Bianco at 614-221-9195, ext 127 or abianco@csb.org.