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Date: October 15, 2021  
To: Family and Human Services Committee  
Supervisor Burgis, District III, Chair  
Supervisor Candace Anderson, District II, Co-Chair  
From: Christy Saxton, Interim Director, Health, Housing and Homeless Services Division  
CC: Anna Roth, RN, MS, MPH Health Services Director  
Subject: Annual Update on Homelessness Continuum of Care

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As directed in the November 13, 2019 Family and Human Services Committee meeting, Health Housing and Homeless Services would like to provide a report regarding progress on the effort to end homelessness and the activities of Contra Costa Council on Homelessness.

While the primary focus since March 2020 has been coordinating a collective homelessness system response to the COVID-pandemic, the Continuum of Care and Council on Homelessness were able to achieve progress on achieving goals outlined in the 2020 Priority Plan. This Priority Plan outlines the priority areas, goals and strategies that the Continuum of Care, Contra Costa Health, Housing and Homeless Services (H3), and partner stakeholders determined at the beginning of the year. The plan is grounded in the goals and strategies of the Contra Costa Continuum of Care's 2014 Strategic Plan, Forging Ahead, which emphasized two key goals and three strategies:

- Goals: Permanent Housing and Prevention
- Strategies: Coordinated Entry (CE), Performance Standards, Communication

## **GOALS**

- 1) **Permanent Housing:** Increase outflow (permanent housing) by:
  - a. Adding temporary housing capacity,
  - b. Adding Permanent Supportive Housing and other Permanent Housing, such as vouchers and rental assistance

### **2021 Accomplishments:**

- Remodeled and reopened Concord Shelter and Service site with Warming Center.
- Purchase of hotel in Pittsburg with state Homekey funds added approximately 170 units of shelter to system via East County Interim Housing Project (ECHIP).
- One hundred (100) Project Roomkey participants identified, approved for vouchers and supported in completing their Mainstream voucher applications.
- Implemented Rapid Rehousing Program to provide move in assistance and rental assistance to people to assist with exits to permanent housing from the hotels.



## 2) **Prevention:** Reduce inflow (prevention) by:

- a) Scaling rapid resolution
- b) Investing in prevention tools and technical assistance
- c) Supporting Emergency Rental Assistance Program outreach, access, and eligibility through information and data sharing

### 2021 Accomplishments:

- Provided comprehensive training on Rapid Resolution for over 130 CoC service provider staff
- Expanded Housing Security Fund to include Prevention resources
- Refined data collection for Rapid Resolution to better identify at risk versus literally homeless.
- Began participation in All Home California Regional Action Plan to update prevention triage tools and identify prevention strategies in line with CoC goals, funding, and current infrastructure
- Consistent and broad information sharing about state Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) via emails, newsletters and announcements at public meetings.

## **STRATEGIES**

### 1) **Coordinated Entry**

#### 2021 Accomplishments:

- Continued to prioritize COVID-19 hotel residents for permanent housing placements.
- In January, began development of a prevention triage tool with regional Bay Area CoC partners and All Home California as part of the Regional Action Plan.
- Coordinated and launched Emergency Housing Voucher (EHV) Program and Moving On Program with Housing Authority of Contra Costa County (HACCC) to support housing for more than 200 households.
- Collaborated with county stakeholders to implement coordinated approaches to homeless services for projects and funding, including Project Roomkey, Homekey, ESG-CV (rounds 2 and 3), and HHAP (round 2).

### 2) **Performance Standards**

#### 2021 Accomplishments:

- In June began implementing Continuous Quality Improvement processes to enhance ability to identify relevant performance metrics and create and maintain data reliability.
- Continued developing and using multiple data analyses to inform funding and policy decisions and develop system performance standards and public and research dashboards:
  - HMIS Analysis (for internal review and system improvements)
  - All Home Regional Contra Costa COVID-19 Homeless System Housing Intervention Modeling
- HMIS improvements: Updated HMIS Policies and Procedures with Role Clarification for HMIS End Users and participating partners, increased clarification about data privacy and security data standards for both end users and clients, updated HMIS Governance Charter



### 3) Communication

#### 2021 Accomplishments:

- Implemented quarterly reports from the Council on Homelessness to the Family and Human Services Committee to increase awareness of data trends, system utilization, priorities and accomplishments related to homelessness in Contra Costa.
- Implementation of online Data Request portal to facilitate community access to data related to homelessness in Contra Costa.
- Improved analysis of CoC-wide demographic and outcome data via comprehensive Annual Report
- Translated client facing documents in multiple languages as part of transparency and equity strategy.
- Utilized Homelessness Awareness Month (November) as an opportunity to engage and educate community about homelessness through development of awards, toolkit, video, community panel discussion and presentation to Board of Supervisors,
- Engaged homeless service agency Executive Directors and staff through monthly provider meetings and Executive Directors meetings.
- Maintained public facing calendar for activities, training and events to promote transparency and planning and increase participation in meetings, trainings, and events.
- Regularly communicated trainings, events, upcoming meetings, provider updates and funding opportunities in monthly newsletters and emails.
- Developed integrated online tool to designed to help local agencies and partners understand how various local systems and partners are currently connected to the homeless system. Tool can be found here: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/#Map>.
- Moved all CoC meetings online and developed YouTube channel to facilitate access to meetings and recordings.

#### **OTHER ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- 1) **Education & Expertise:** Hosted and participated in a series of 4 Equity focused trainings for the CoC. Engaged Technical Assistance to conduct equity assessment of CoC. CoC staff and members participated in Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII) Racial Equity Action Lab. Enhanced CoC Trainings for providers including tailored trainings for specific staff types.
- 2) **Expanded Diverse Composition of Council on Homelessness:** Revised supplemental Council membership application and review process to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion and broader diversity of representatives.
- 3) **Compliance:** Improved system and project compliance with federal and state regulations by developing a Monitoring Plan for homeless service agencies. Conducted HMIS analysis to ensure compliance with HUD data regulations and standard and made appropriate modifications.
- 4) **Strengthened Partnerships:** Partnered with Workforce Development program in EHSD to better integrate workforce and homeless services. Continued to partner with Adult Protective Services to provide housing and homeless services for vulnerable older adults. Strengthened Holistic Intervention Partnership program (HIP), a collaboration between Contra Costa County Health, Housing, and Homeless Services (H3) and the Contra Costa County Public Defender's Office designed to help residents successfully resolve justice-related issues while attaining or maintaining housing for them and their household. Increased participation in Contra Costa Human Trafficking Coalition meetings.
- 5) **Provided Input:** H3 provided information and recommendations needed to support the County's homeless service efforts by meeting with the County lobbyists and submitting letters of support to the



County Administrator's Office on state and federal legislation in alignment with the Board of Supervisors policy platform. Council on Homelessness provided recommendations and input to Measure X Community Advisory Board and Board of Supervisors.

- 6) **Collaborate on Local Housing Strategies:** Staff to Council participated in drafting and revision of Consolidated Plan, grant applications for DCD administered funding to address homelessness, and local planning for Living Contra Costa, Value Mapping, and other local strategies impacting homelessness.
- 7) **Annual State of the System:** Developed new annual report to support data driven decision making. State of the System Report here: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/State-of-the-System-July-2021.pdf>.
- 8) **2020 Continuum of Care Annual Report:** This report reflects on the system and client demographics during the pandemic. Report can be found here: <https://cchealth.org/h3/coc/pdf/Annual-Report-2020.pdf>.

Looking forward, in 2022 the Council on Homelessness and the Continuum of Care will be participating in a number of initiatives including:

- Continuous Quality Improvement, including refining the Work Plan to include strategies around our foundational principles of equity, transparency, and data informed decision making.
- Completion of Equity assessment and development of improvement plan based on results.
- Participation in All Home and Homebase Regional Work to implement Regional Action Plan to house 75% of the Bay Area's unsheltered population by 2024 using a 1-2-4 framework.
- Completion of evaluation of Coordinated Entry Assessment, identification of processes and metrics to measure CES activities and outcomes and update Coordinated Entry Policies and Procedures
- Revamp the HUD CoC Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) process to ensure transparency, access, and opportunities for success by smaller providers and BIPOC led and serving providers
- Conduct homeless Point in Time Count, a comprehensive single day point-in-time count of families and individuals experiencing homelessness, conducted at the end of January. PIT data is used for local, regional, and federal strategic planning, decision making, allocation of resources, and advocacy to prevent and end homelessness in Contra Costa County.

Future communications from the Council on Homelessness and the CoC will include:

- Quarterly written reports from the Council on Homelessness to the Family and Human Services as a way to keep the Committee and Board of Supervisors updated on the activities and priorities of the Council and homeless continuum of care throughout the year.

Recommendation(s)/Next Step(s):

1. Accept this report from the Health Services Department; and
2. Forward this report to the Board of Supervisors for acceptance

Encl: Contra Costa County Continuum of Care Calendar Year 2020 Annual Report

