



Coordinated Entry Workgroup

9830 Patuxent Woods Drive • Columbia, MD 21046

Minutes of the October 9, 2018 Meeting

9830 Patuxent Woods Drive, Room 346, Columbia, MD 21046

Attendance:

Department of Community Resources and Services Staff: Cara Baumgartner, Rose Burton, Jennifer Corcoran, Elizabeth Van Oeveren

Attendees: Donna Blackwell, Anne Brinker, Jen Broderick, Shanika Cooper, Sara Smoley, Linda Zumbrun

Meeting called to order by Jennifer Corcoran at 2:09 pm

Shelter Prioritization Standard – Literally Homeless Families

The Committee had previously discussed shelter prioritization for single adults, and had reviewed the F-VI-SPDAT for use with families. Committee members continued to discuss what factors might reflect increased vulnerability for a family, such as age, household size, or repeated episodes of need, and whether information could be gleaned from data in ServicePoint (HMIS). It was noted that it could be easier to use the same tool (VI-SPDAT suite) for both populations, and that developing an alternative way to prioritize households has proved to be very complex and subjective. Further discussion was held with regard to the efficacy of the VI-SPDAT, such as the way scores can be impacted by a household's refusal to answer all of the questions. This may be a special consideration for families who may have fears related to losing custody of their children if they share information regarding child welfare or criminal history. Additionally, households may try to present themselves as positively as possible, with the result being that their true level of vulnerability is not captured. There was also discussion of the way the VI-SPDAT is designed to detect the presence of vulnerability rather than the extent of it. For example, someone with mild sporadic depression could receive the same score in the wellness section as someone with a psychotic disorder. Given these concerns, the Committee discussed the possibility of a prioritization workgroup that would allow providers to have input into the ultimate placement decisions so that information about households well known to the system would not have information overlooked. In this scenario, the VI-SPDAT score itself would not be updated, but people with inappropriately low scores could be moved forward on the list. The Committee agreed such a workgroup should be put into place, and that under those circumstances, with one abstention, the Committee agreed the prioritization for literally homeless families should follow the general outline established for singles and the other interventions.

There was brief discussion in anticipation of setting a prioritization standard for shelter access for imminently homeless households, with concerns raised over how difficult it is to quantify these situations as well as concern about identifying households who might be engaging in risky behavior to maintain whatever housing situation they are in.

Meeting adjourned by Jennifer Corcoran at 3:27 pm

Minutes submitted by Cara Baumgartner