

Brief Activity Summary from Director

December 2022

Funding

HUD CoC Competition

We successfully submitted our collaborative application to HUD on September 30th. We now wait for the decision. Copies of the project grant applications and the collaborative application are available on our website: <https://racinecoc.org/fy2022-hud-coc-application-information>.

Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS)

After two years of the 4 CoCs working with the WI DHS Division of Medicaid & Medicare, DHS released a request for proposals for funding of Supportive Services and Housing Navigator positions throughout the State. The process was long in coming as it required approval from the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Racine is eligible to receive one three-year award for one position each. HALO has taken the lead and is in the process of applying for the funds. This funding is to serve the CoC agencies and addresses a specific population. The grant requires Coordinated Entry and use of the Homeless Management Information System, which our CoC-funded agencies must use for any HUD funding. It also requires following the Housing First philosophy. All applicants statewide must submit a letter of support from their respective CoC to be considered for funding.

Workgroups

Rating and Ranking Workgroup

This HUD CoC grant cycle had changes in the committee with the chair stepping aside; it was necessary for me to step in and keep the process moving. I have decided to schedule a January meeting of members who have indicated they will remain with the committee. We will be working to organize an earlier rating process of renewal grants before HUD releases the 2023 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). This should allow us to evaluate what our needs are for funding projects. We will also review our tools and criteria to determine the best means of evaluating and rating projects going forward.

Landlord Engagement Workgroup

In December, our housing navigator Becca and I met with the President of the SE WI Landlord Association. (SWLA) Becca will be presenting to the Association's members in the Spring. We are set to meet again in February. One area we are looking into with the SWLA president is housing inspections for HUD housing quality standards.

Health Services and Homelessness Workgroup

This is a new group that met in December. We have members from NAMI of Racine, Health Care Network, Ascension All Saints Hospital, United Health Care, Chorus Community Health Plan (formerly Children's), and Lutheran Social Services. Altogether, nine community members met with Darlene and me. The group decided to meet again in mid-January. The City of Racine will be joining the group in January.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workgroup

After two years, we have volunteers who will meet before the end of the year to organize our CoC concerning policies and procedures of CoC-funded agencies' staffing, board structure, and program requirements. While we are sure that our agencies are following diversity, equity, and inclusion within their organizations, HUD has increased the requirements for CoCs to review agencies and develop CoC-wide policies. While D, E, &I consist of more than policies and procedures, it is a way for us to jump in and get some work completed. I am hopeful that others will join once they become aware of our activity.

State level participation

Wisconsin Interagency Council on Homelessness

I continue to represent us at quarterly meetings of this group. It consists of the various Department Secretaries within the state government and is housed in the Department of Administration (DOA). Previously chaired by Governor Evers, it is now chaired by State Rep. Sara Rodriguez, the Lieutenant Governor-Elect. We are excited to have her on board and look to her interest in advancing public health within our homelessness services throughout the state.

Wisconsin Department of Health Services Emergency Support Function 6 (ESF6)

While we met weekly for approximately one year during the height of the COVID pandemic, we have now restructured the group. We continue to share ideas for planning the Monthly Homelessness Forum hosted by DHS. Our new focus is working on the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) as it undergoes its next iteration. When reviewing health service needs, we aim to include areas related to homelessness and those at risk of homelessness.

New Opportunities

Gorman & Company Project: Harbor on State and Main

The developers at Gorman & company have approached us with an opportunity to work with them on their project at the Harbor at State & Main. Their project is an extension of apartments already located at that site and consists of 21 project-based vouchers they received from the Housing Authority of Racine County. They are requesting to partner with us and asking us to sign Appendix T Certification to Create Rental Units for Chronically Homeless Persons. (Attached at the end of this summary)