



Contra Costa Continuum of Care

PLAN FOR ACCELERATING TRANSFORMATIVE HOUSING (PATH) INNOVATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

DATE: Thursday, October 19th, 2023, 9:30 am – 11:00 am

RECORDING OF MEETING:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/Fwg5Z-shLZUjGCRi3IP9cXw63jyhM7Ct20Q_5s7kw9H6FRFM5v6b0pFpiQzhMCoW.SpBre4BgxHAnnMAG

PASSCODE:

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Time	Agenda Item	Presenter/Facilitator
9:30	Welcome and Introductions	- <i>Matt Lemon, Focus Strategies</i>
	Hybrid Meeting Norms	- <i>Matt Lemon, Focus Strategies</i>
	Review and Approval of Minutes	- <i>Matt Lemon, Focus Strategies</i>
	Public Comment – Open Period for public comment on items discussed or not listed on the agenda.	- <i>Members of the public</i>
9:45	Accountability Corner – Quarterly review of Committee’s work in relation to 2023 workplan	- <i>Shelby Ferguson, H3</i>
9:50	Participant Satisfaction Survey – Review of feedback from Prevention and Rapid Exit participants	- <i>Shelby Ferguson, H3</i>
10:00	Unsheltered Data Dashboard Review – Quarterly review of unsheltered metrics	- <i>Jamie Schecter, H3</i>
10:15	Stakeholder Spotlight: All Home – Presentation from All Home on regional coordinated prevention	- <i>Mary Kate Johnson, All Home</i>
10:30	2024 Workplan Development and Feedback – Discussion on draft workplan and strategies	- <i>Jamie Schecter, H3</i>
10:50	Announcements	- <i>All</i>
10:55	Next Steps	- <i>Matt Lemon, Focus Strategies</i>



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Welcome and Introductions

Committee Members in Attendance: Iman Novin, Juno Hedrick, Shawn Ray, Teri House, Wayne Earl

Staff and Consultants: Shelby Ferguson (H3), Jamie Schecter (H3), Matt Lemon (Focus Strategies), Shae Rowe (Focus Strategies)

Additional Attendees: Mary Kate Johnson (All Home), Caroline Miller (H3), Laura Sharples (H3), Jessica Taran (unhoused resident of Richmond, CA)

Hybrid Meeting Norms

Matt Lemon described hybrid meetings norms including a recommendation to wear masks in person, practicing social distancing, raising your hand, saying your name before speaking and maintaining a safe and respectful environment. Individuals who behave in a manner that threatens the safety of the group or that does not honor meeting norms may be asked to leave.

Review and Approval of Minutes

Iman Novin made a motion to approve the minutes from September 21, 2023. Teri House seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed 4-0. Juno Hedrick was not present for the vote.

Public Comment

No public comment was offered.

Accountability Corner

Shelby Ferguson reviewed the goals and activities for Quarter 3 from the 2023 Workplan, including evaluating contracting outcomes in Prevention and Rapid exit, reviewing PIT count and annual report data, and meeting with stakeholders. She noted that the Committee accomplished several activities including discussing data from the PIT count, StoryMap, and Annual Report; reviewing progress on using flexible funds; reviewing project performance data for Prevention and Rapid Exit; and receiving presentations from the City of Antioch and Bay Area Legal Aid. Shelby Ferguson noted that the Committee did not accomplish further refinement of the Unsheltered Dashboard. She highlighted the new needs that were identified included affirming the Committee's goals, planning for CY 2024, and exploring opportunities for landlord engagement and discussed the Quarter 4 goals including reflecting and creating priorities for 2024 and iterating on previous improvement work.



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Participant Satisfaction Survey

Shelby Ferguson presented a recap of the development and distribution of the Participant Satisfaction Survey. She noted that the intent to develop the survey in partnership with people with lived experience was announced in July 2022, a workgroup helped to develop and finalized the survey from January through March 2023, and trainings for providers were held in June 2023. The survey was distributed in July 2023 and respondents were given one month to complete it. H3 analyzed the survey results between August and October 2023.

Shelby Ferguson stated that the survey had two sections, including required questions and recommended questions. The required questions included what programs respondents were accessing, how long respondents received services, and how respondents heard about services. She noted that H3 was encouraging agencies to adopt the recommended questions, which include staffing, safety, physical location, and open-ended questions about respondent's experiences.

Shelby Ferguson stated that 450 surveys were received from the seven CoC Program Models, of which 70 were from CORE Outreach, Prevention/Diversion, and Rapid Exit programs. She presented results from the 70 surveys in select programs which showed that 76% of respondents were engaged in services for 6 months or more, 48% had heard about services from flyers, and 31% had heard about services from 211 or on the website. Shelby Ferguson noted that the length of time engaged in services for Prevention and Rapid exit may be slightly skewed and could reflect the time since participants received services, rather than the time they were actively receiving services.

Shawn Ray asked whether receiving CARE packages counted as engagement in services. Wayne Earl stated that the 23 responses from CORE was low and that many participants may have complaints about CORE but are often in crisis. Jamie Schecter and Shelby Ferguson discussed how participants who are engaging with CORE are in crisis and are often wondering where they will be sleeping that night, and thus may not want to complete surveys at that time. Jessica Taran noted that there has been a change in CORE administration practices and that they used to provide a wider range of services. Wayne Earl noted that their shelter is at over 100% capacity which implies significant demand for services. Shelby Ferguson stated that CORE practices have changed and that participants can call or go online to apply for shelter placements that can provide a range of services.

Shelby Ferguson presented additional results from the survey including 100% of respondents from CORE says staff treats them with dignity and demonstrate compassion always or most of the time. Areas for improvement for CORE staffing include only 77% who said staff empower them to achieve their goals and 86% who said staff understand how to meet their needs. Wayne Earl stated that a larger sample size would help to better understand areas of concern.

Shelby Ferguson reviewed results for Prevention and Rapid Exit which showed 100% of respondents felt staff treated them with dignity and listened to what they had to say always or most of the time. She noted that there were positives from qualitative responses including clear understanding of services and



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being able to help in times of need, as well as some areas for improvement including more outreach, more shelter beds, and providing gas cards. She highlighted some strategies to address those areas including better connections with community resources and working to increase Warming Center beds and permanent housing beds in projects like El Portal. Wayne Earl commented that they are making more effective use of the resources, but the challenge is that permanent housing is hard to get. Jamie Schechter stated they have to look at both the short- and long-term game when it comes to housing and noted that they are looking at non-congregate options for interim housing and warming centers.

Shelby Ferguson presented some lessons learned including a preference for surveys in a paper format, ensuring paper surveys are translated to Spanish, and increasing accessibility related to reading levels. Teri House asked about respondent's experiences with Google Forms. Shelby Ferguson stated they did not get any feedback that Google Forms was not user friendly. She noted that most respondents using the online form were in permanent supportive housing.

The Committee discussed moving on from permanent housing and the experience of being in shelter. Wayne Earl noted that permanent supportive housing provides stability, and many people may not want to move on. Jessica Taran noted that families may not want to expose children to a shelter environment.

Unsheltered Data Dashboard Review

Jamie Schechter presented results for the Unsheltered Data Dashboard from April 1, 2023, through June 30, 2023. She noted that new HUD Data Standards went into effect on October 1, 2023, and that the changes impacted reporting on race and ethnicity. Jamie Schechter highlighted results from the dashboard including 3,369 households experiencing unsheltered homelessness during the quarter, 170 moving from unsheltered status to shelter, 109 households moving from shelter to permanent housing, and 139 households experiencing unsheltered homelessness for the first time.

Jamie Schechter discussed key takeaways from the data including the impact of the new HUD Data Standards, increased counts due to improved data quality, and a low percentage of households new to unsheltered homelessness. She discussed changes from the previous quarter. She noted there were some positive takeaways and some areas to improve. Overall positive include a decrease in exits to unsheltered status from shelter or permanent housing, a decrease in the number of households new to unsheltered homelessness, and an increase in the number served. Areas to improve included a decrease in exits to permanent housing from shelter, a decrease in the exits to shelter and permanent housing from unsheltered status, and an increase in the length of time in both shelter and unsheltered status.

Stakeholder Spotlight: All Home

Mary Kate Johnson presented on coordinated prevention work that All Home is conducting. She stated that All Home is pursuing a 1-2-4 strategy in which for every investment in one interim housing resource created there are two investments in permanent housing and four in prevention resources. She noted



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that prevention resources are understood as direct financial assistance and housing stabilization services as well as legal services, targeted to the households at highest risk of being pushed into homelessness.

Mary Kate Johnson stated that there is a higher number of people becoming homeless compared to those who are becoming housed. She stated that this highlights the need for prevention to reduce the number of people who are entering homelessness. Mary Kate Johnson noted that about 2,350 residents each year in Contra Costa experience homelessness for the first time. She stated that this is not unique to Contra Costa and that All Home is working to support a regional prevention strategy where every county is rowing in the same direction.

Mary Kate Johnson described prevention services as a continuum and noted that All Home is working on a targeted prevention strategy (called “Coordinated Prevention” in Contra Costa) that targets people at imminent risk of homelessness by responding flexibly and creatively with emergency financial assistance, housing stabilization services, and legal services.

Jessica Taran asked how more people can be moved into housing when there are more unhoused people than available affordable units. Mary Kate Johnson stated that the 1-2-4 strategy is working to respond to that problem such that there are interim and prevention approaches in place while deeply affordable and subsidized housing is approved and built. She noted that prevention programs are easier than housing programs to set up quickly and can have lower costs than providing a subsidy to households who are already experiencing homelessness.

Mary Kate Johnson discussed All Home’s partnership with Bay Area Community Services to set up an online platform to host prevention application portals. She noted that applications are available in multiple languages and are designed to be completed in about 15 minutes. The application includes an embedded assessment tool to gauge household risk of experiencing homelessness. The assessment helps deploy resources strategically to those households at the highest risk to help stem inflow.

Mary Kate Johnson discussed three categories of risk factors for homelessness including household composition like pregnancy or age of the head of household; housing and income status like a prior experience of homelessness and income below 50% of the area median; and other situational risk factors involvement in the legal system and disabling conditions. She noted that the assessment tool assigns points to these risk factors and prioritizes those over a certain threshold.

Mary Kate Johnson discussed prevention work occurring in the region including a program in Santa Clara that has been operating since 2017, recently launched programs in Napa County and San Francisco, and pilots or planned launches in Fremont, Oakland, and Sonoma County. She also noted that All Home is in active conversations with Sonoma, Solano, and Contra Costa counties and that All Home hopes to help coordinate the way prevention is provided across the region.

Mary Kate Johnson discussed results from pilots and studies of prevention programs in San Francisco, Oakland, and Santa Clara. She noted that in San Francisco and Oakland, there were over 34,000



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applications received, over 10,000 checks issued, and tens of millions in financial assistance dispersed, with an average household receiving around \$7,000 in assistance. She explained that the early results of their assessment tool show that it is working to prioritize the households who are at the highest risk, and they believe that with sustained investments at the local level, they can continue to stabilize these households with a program in each county and then start to dramatically reduce homelessness across the region.

Mary Kate Johnson discussed outcomes from a study of Santa Clara County's prevention system by researchers from Norte Dame. She noted the program is similar to All Home's but does assessments over the phone instead of via website. The study found that over 90% of households are retaining their housing over two years after receiving assistance and are 74% less likely to become homeless than those not receiving assistance. She stated that this shows they are targeting the most vulnerable households. She also noted that the results show racial equity in outcomes and that 87% of households served were extremely low income and 87% were people of color. Mary Kate Johnson discussed how the program has helped reduce homelessness from a ratio of 3.2 people becoming homeless for every 1 person housed to a ratio of 1.7 people per person housed.

Mary Kate Johnson stated that BACS and All Home are exploring opportunities to partner with H3 and opportunities to work with service providers in Contra Costa. She also noted that All Home is planning to make grants to accelerate the implementation of the regional prevention strategy, which may include smaller grants for pilot projects and potentially larger grants in the future.

Wayne Earl asked how this will be funded since most federal funds have been reduced. Teri House noted that CDBG funding sources specific to the pandemic are ending. Mary Kate Johnson stated that All Home has helped to develop a pool of prevention funding from philanthropic sources and private funders with the idea that the funds can help set up infrastructure while they work with counties to identify local funding options. She noted that San Francisco's program is 100% locally funded and that Oakland's program will combine some city funding with some All Home funds. She stated that Contra Costa is fortunate to have Measure X funding as well as some other local sources, and that All Home is advocating for regional and state level funding sources including a potential bond for the Bay Area Housing Finance Authority.

Jessica Taran asked about oversight protocols to ensure the funds are reaching the intended recipients. Mary Kate Johnson described protocols including a comprehensive regional training curriculum, tracking check disbursement through the online platform, verification of household situations, deduplication of applications, and making checks directly payable to landlords. She stated that they work to balance flexibility with oversight and verification.

Mary Kate Johnson discussed barriers across the system, including funding for prevention and the way traditional prevention programs operate. She noted that federal funds for rent relief and eviction moratoria were helpful in keeping people housed, but that now large-scale funding is needed to replace those resources. She also noted that traditional prevention often worked on a first come, first served



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basis. She stated that All Home is working to change that by doing robust outreach in high impact zip codes and using the assessment tool and data to be more strategic about the use of funds.

2024 Workplan Development and Feedback

Jamie Schecter reviewed the process to develop a workplan for 2024 that outlines the Committee's activities for the year, clarifies connections between those activities and the Committee's objectives, and can roll up to a high-level workplan for the Council on Homelessness. She reviewed three strategies that will be reflected in the workplan.

Jamie Schecter described Strategy 1, which is funding that can be used to prevent homelessness and impact rates of unsheltered homelessness. She discussed some funding opportunities including the Special NOFO to address unsheltered and rural homelessness and Measure X. The Special NOFO will add one more housing program which should start in the upcoming months.

Jamie Schecter discussed Strategy 2, which includes tools and processes like the Unsheltered Dashboard and Coordinated Prevention tools. She stated that the Committee will review the Unsheltered Dashboard and adopt revisions to the metrics to monitor progress on the Committee's goals. She also noted that the Committee will review and recommend a Prevention prioritization tool. Teri House stated that coordination on high impact areas and regional strategies can help increase equitable access to resources across the county.

Jamie Schecter described Strategy 3, which is related to communication and coordination. She stated that the Committee can serve as thought partners helping to develop a Coordinated Prevention approach and that the Committee can engage with stakeholders to discuss innovative approaches, identify opportunities for partnerships in the community, and explore models of landlord engagement.

Jamie Schecter stated that the Committee will also have flexibility through the year to pursue new opportunities as they arise. She discussed goals for workplan development including taking feedback from the Committee, aligning with other CoH Committees, keeping a high-level focus with adequate flexibility, being ambitious with high-impact strategies, and strategically building on identified priorities and strategies.

Teri House suggested consulting with the entitlement jurisdictions to help align resources and approaches. Jamie Schecter noted that they are required to create a regional action plan around HHAP funding and that H3 has a goal of aligning and keeping everyone going in the same direction. Iman Novin noted that there are lots of lessons learned from COVID programs on what worked well and didn't work well in terms of engaging with landlords. He stated that while that funding has gone away, it may be useful to recreate that ecosystem with other funding sources, such as finding ways to help landlords be aware of resources and motivated to advocate or apply on behalf of residents. Teri House stated that landlord database that is housed a single place and has broad coverage across cities would be helpful. She noted that many cities have landlord registries and other data that could be used.



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Announcements

There were no announcements offered.

Next Steps

Matt Lemon noted that the Committee is in Quarter 4, and that the Committee will continue reflecting on their work and creating priorities for 2024 at the next meeting. He also noted that the December 2023 meeting has been cancelled.

The meeting adjourned at 11:04 a.m.