

# ***Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee***

## ***Meeting Minutes February 25, 2010***

<b><i>Bob Duranleau</i></b>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division
<b><i>John Shoos</i></b>	United Way
<b><i>Cindy Namer</i></b>	MaineHousing
<b><i>Aaron Geyer</i></b>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division
<b><i>Josh O'Brien</i></b>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept, Social Services Div, Oxford Street Shelter for Men
<b><i>Tammy Morse</i></b>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division
<b><i>Ginny Dill</i></b>	Shalom House
<b><i>Captain Penny Shaffer</i></b>	The Salvation Army
<b><i>Danielle Gudroe</i></b>	The Salvation Army
<b><i>Christina Griffin</i></b>	Preble Street
<b><i>Maureen Clancy</i></b>	Mercy Hospital
<b><i>Kimberly Curry</i></b>	United Way
<b><i>Heather Treadwell</i></b>	Family Crisis Services
<b><i>Elizabeth Szatkowski</i></b>	Youth Alternatives Ingraham
<b><i>Katie Hughes</i></b>	Youth Alternatives Ingraham
<b><i>Leah Bruns</i></b>	CCHPP, HPRP, PROP
<b><i>Linda Janson</i></b>	Step Up! Shelter Services
<b><i>Christine Ellis</i></b>	City of South Portland
<b><i>Bridget Mancini</i></b>	Cumberland County HPRP / PROP
<b><i>Heather Rhoda</i></b>	Frannie Peabody Center
<b><i>Kathleen Babeu</i></b>	City of South Portland
<b><i>Dee Clarke</i></b>	Homeless Voices for Justice
<b><i>Kira Maas</i></b>	City of Portland, Health & Human Services Dept., Social Services Division, Refugee Services
<b><i>Cullen Ryan</i></b>	Community Housing of Maine
<b><i>Kendra Danse</i></b>	Youth Alternatives Ingraham
<b><i>Nancy Berg</i></b>	2-1-1 Maine
<b><i>Mary Ellen Welch</i></b>	Portland Police Department, Midtown Community Policing
<b><i>Susannah Harnden</i></b>	Youth Alternatives Ingraham

### ***I. Introductions***

Bob Duranleau, ESAC Tri-Chair, welcomed everyone and brief introductions were made.

## II. *December Bed Usage Statistics – Bob Duranleau*

Bob reviewed the monthly shelter statistics for January 2010:

	<u>January 2009</u>	<u>January 2010</u>
Adolescents	9 Individuals	14 Individuals
Adults	209 Individuals	217 Individuals
Families	<u>53 Individuals (10 Families)</u>	<u>76 Individuals (14 Families)</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>270 Individuals</b>	<b>307 Individuals</b>

### Adolescent Shelter

The total adolescent bed nights for January 2009 were 270 while the total bed nights for January 2010 were 439. These figures indicate an increase of 169 bed nights, or 63% between January 2009 and January 2010. Five (5) individuals stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

### Adult Shelters

Adult Shelter bed nights usage increased by 4% in January 2010 compared to January 2009. Total bed night usage during January 2009 was 6493 while it was 6733 during January 2010, a difference of 240 bed nights.

During the month of January, there were 100 intakes at the Oxford Street Shelter for Men. An Intake or New Arrival is defined as an individual that has not stayed at the Shelter for a period of three (3) months or longer. Based on self-reporting, 56 individuals stated they had never been homeless before in January.

Oxford Street Shelter for Men Support Services team placed 25 individuals into permanent housing, with one (1) individual returning to the shelter within 90 days of housing placement.

Preble Street Women's Shelter served a total of 101 women during the month of January, including 24 new intakes. Based on self-reporting, 8 of these 24 intakes stated that they were experiencing homelessness for the first time.

The Shelter placed 10 individuals into housing, with 2 women returning.

### Family Shelters

There was a total of 2343 bed nights used for all Family Shelters in January 2010 as compared to 1634 bed nights in January 2009. This represents an increase of 43% in Family Shelter bed usage between January 2009 and January 2010.

The Family Shelter placed 14 families for a total of 54 individuals into housing in January.

The Family Shelter received 23 new families (intakes) for a total of 78 individuals in January. Based on self-reporting 14 families for a total of 50 individuals stated they had never been homeless before in January, of these 11 families for a total of 35 individuals were refugees.

Bob noted that this month there were intakes at the Family Shelter that came directly from other countries. He stated that the Family Shelter has seen an increase in refugees with B1/B2 statuses. Cindy mentioned that this is the **first time she can recall seeing the intakes from out of town column at the Family Shelter empty**. Bob mentioned that can probably be attributed to the HPRP program.

### First Time Homelessness

For the month of January 119 individuals, or 56% of all new intakes, reported experiencing homelessness for the first time.

### Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing (HPRP)

In the month of January 2010 the Portland HPRP Program housed 35 households, for a total of 55 individuals. These housing placements represent 2,177 bed nights at the Oxford Street Shelter for Men, 1,889 bed nights at the Preble Street Women's Shelter, and 2 unsheltered individuals.

Bob handed out the 2-1-1 Maine Housing/Shelter Call statistics for the month of January. Nancy presented the 2-1-1 Maine information. There were 321 calls for housing/shelter in all counties in the month of January, out of a total of 8,391 calls. From July 2009 through January 2010 there were a total of 2,615 calls for housing/shelter, versus 2,647 calls for housing/shelter from July 2008 through January 2009. There were 117 calls for housing/shelter in Cumberland County in the month of January, out of a total of 2,859 calls. From July 2009 through January 2010 there were 916 calls for housing/shelter, compared to 945 from July 2008 through January 2009.

### **III. Homelessness Prevention & rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) Updates –**

Josh mentioned that the HPRP program currently has 42 households enrolled in the diversion and prevention program, and 36 households enrolled in the engagement and stabilization program. He commented that HPRP staff is still seeing new people and that the program is not yet at capacity. Josh reminded everyone that open-hours are Monday through Friday, from 8:30am-9:30am at 192 Lancaster Street and 5pm-6pm at the Oxford Street Shelter for Men. The referral line is monitored from 8am-9:30pm and the number is 828-4774. This year to date, the program has placed over 100 households in housing, representing over 10,000 bed nights. Josh added that the HPRP staff has also been screening applicants for the Family Housing Stabilization Program for DHHS, 10:30am-12:00pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Cindy stated that the program is for households with minor children, and applicants must at least meet the first brush of HPRP screenings. Josh stated that the screenings have been going okay, with a few ups and downs, as DHHS began requiring more documentation, primarily income documentation. Bob mentioned that the program has around one million dollars statewide, and that it caps the amount that each family can receive at \$2,500 per family. Josh commented that this program has helped a lot of families already, and that they are looking forward to it continuing. Cindy mentioned that the program's funds are only available until September 2010.

Leah mentioned that the Cumberland County HPRP program has been going well, though it has been a little more difficult working with homeowners. Dee asked how do people that may have back mortgages know about the HPRP program. Cindy stated that HPRP programs are doing a lot of linking with General Assistance programs and other agencies, so HPRP sub-grantees see different people than the shelters see. Leah stated that they sent out a letter to all the towns in Cumberland County, excluding Portland and Brunswick, letting them know how many people from their town ended up in a Portland shelter last year. She commented that it was interesting to see the town's reactions, because many didn't know that this was occurring. From the start of the grant to date, the Cumberland County HPRP program has served 143 people, comprising 80 households; for this quarter (since January 1, 2010) the program has served 45 households. Leah stated that she is planning on talking with other HPRP programs across the state to see how they've worked out caps.

### **IV. Preble Street Florence House Update – Christina Griffin**

Christina stated that Avesta will be getting the occupancy apartments the first week of March, and they are looking to move women into the units the first week of April. She stated they will be moving women going into the apartments first, then women moving into the safe haven, then finally the shelter. There are 25 apartment units, and they are looking to have 35 applications ready to go, and currently they are halfway there. There has been a lot of interest and calls about the opening of Florence House and everyone is very excited. John asked if the Preble Street Shelter would remain open. Christina stated that they will be keeping the Preble Street shelter open for a few weeks to help with the transition, staffing both sites. The letter to providers regarding the status of Florence House, which was sent via email earlier in the week, was distributed. Cindy asked about the emergency shelter cap mentioned in the letter to providers Amanda emailed to ESAC members. Christina stated that it is not a hard and fast 60 day cap for individuals' duration at the shelter.

**V. *Salvation Army – Self-Sufficiency Services for Homeless Families – Captain Penny Shaffer***  
Captain Penny Shaffer stated that she is very pleased to be a part of the ESAC meeting. She stated that the Salvation Army completed its renovation project, and is hoping within the next month that the kitchen will be fully operational. The Salvation Army is looking to fill the gaps where funding has fallen through or to address identified needs. They have adapted a self-sufficiency program, which has been identified as a need. A pilot program will begin the first week in April, starting with the Family Shelter. They are beginning to identify what training needs to be done. The program will start out with budgeting, how to stretch food stamps, shopping, resume training, trainings covering how to fill out job applications and interview skills, and cleaning. This is solely a place to begin based on identified needs. She mentioned that they are still working on the logistics and specifics of the trainings. Danielle stated that if anyone who has been involved in a life skills program wants to give input that it's greatly welcomed. Bob stated that Danielle has already had meetings with families at the shelter, and that it went very well. Danielle mentioned that childcare was a large issue addressed and stated that they are exploring options to provide childcare while parents are in the trainings. Dee stated that in past with the WELLness program trainings volunteer students from McCauley provided the childcare as part of their volunteer efforts. When asked if this would solely be for people in the Portland area Captain Shaffer stated that logistically it makes sense to start with Portland, as once you go outside of Portland transportation becomes an issue. Elizabeth asked when they have a schedule of classes could they let the group know, and what about the referral process consists of. Captain Shaffer stated that they will be certain to send information regarding the program and the referral process to everyone in the ESAC mailing list. John asked what the duration of the program was going to be. Captain Shaffer stated that they are looking at a six (6) week rotation with two (2) hour classes. Tammy asked about the refugee population and interpreters. Captain Shaffer stated that they are looking into this aspect.

**VI. *Females at Very High Risk (FAVA) for HIV/AIDS – Dee Clarke –***  
Dee stated that she was recently a part of a Community Planning Group (CPG) that works with the Maine CDC regarding HIV/AIDS prevention. She stated that she learned a great deal from the recent statewide survey. Every year the CPG with the CDC picks a group of people to study who are considered at the highest risk for HIV/AIDS; this year they looked at females at very high risk. Dee completed surveys as part of the CPG and stated that all of the women she surveyed expressed a lot of interest in discussing the issues. The other aspect of the CPG's survey was to examine agencies that get funded for outreach and education on the issue, and determine whether they are on target or missing the mark. Locally, Dee stated she learned that women with HIV have a support system and community in the area, but many women don't access these services mainly out of fear. She is hoping to help get information regarding support services available out there through the WELLness program. Dee stated that 47% of women that took the survey stated that they were intimidated by their partners and wouldn't talk about this issue of HIV/AIDS with their partners, despite their being at high risk. Her push today is to encourage people to get tested. Dee mentioned that she has copies of this specific data regarding the survey results, how it was collected and what they did with the information. She learned that 53% of women surveyed knew where to get tested but did not do so. Dee stated that she has posters available in English and Spanish, and hopefully more languages in the near future, that encourage people to get tested. She asked that everyone who is able hang the posters where people can view them. Bob stated that he will hang a poster in the GA reception area. Elizabeth stated once you've been through the process of getting tested yourself you have a much deeper feeling regarding the issue, as it's a very intense process. For us all to understand the issue and talk to people about it is important, but the first place to make change is with ourselves. Thus she encouraged everyone in the group who has not been tested to do so.

**VII. *Annual Homeless Point in Time Survey – Follow Up***  
Bob stated that the annual Point in Time (PIT) survey was on Wednesday, January 27, 2010. Next month MaineHousing will come down and present the results of the survey. Josh stated that they had the largest group ever to assist with the unsheltered count, with close to 20 individuals. They had pre-planning meetings to map out areas and sites to visit. The group went out from 6:00 pm - midnight, with

five (5) different teams, some on foot and some by car to reach the different sites indicated in the planning meeting. Due to the larger group, methodic planning, and better weather the team covered more ground than ever this year. Josh stated that he appreciated all the support from the community and that the night's success was a great community effort. The outreach team found five (5) individuals, though they talked to many others not everyone who they met was without shelter. Bob mentioned that the exact process for uploading the information is to be determined; however, HUD is coming up with a new process in order to receive this information. He stated that there will be a CoC meeting on Thursday, March 4<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 am – 12:00 pm to go over this more thoroughly. The overall deadline is sometime in April for submission to HUD. Cindy mentioned that the HMIS team at MaineHousing wanted to acknowledge Josh's efforts to ensure high-quality data entry for the 2010 PIT survey; thus, Cindy presented Josh with the Herculean award, and thanked him for all of his efforts.

### **VIII. Other Business –**

Dee stated that every year Homeless Voices for Justice (HVJ) has their annual campaign with all of the chapters in the state. Each year they go to the State House to tour it and meet with the legislature. HVJ is meeting at 8:00 am tomorrow, Friday, February 26<sup>th</sup> to go to Augusta. Dee also stated that on March 17<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 pm – 9:00 pm HVJ is joining with the Maine People's Alliance to show a movie about people coming together to form solidarity over housing.

Dee mentioned that she has been involved with a project that has been soliciting feedback from HUD recipients of section 8, regarding possible future changes to the program. She has been involved in emailing information about transforming the rental assistance program; possibilities suggested include rearranging of the housing project system. She will provide more information as it becomes available.

Cullen stated that there is a small window of opportunity to participate in some advocacy for increasing funding for McKinney-Vento. Letters are due by March 1<sup>st</sup> at the latest. ESAC voted unanimously to support this; however Cullen stated that this is also an opportunity for individual organizations to advocate as well. It's important to get a lot of letters to our delegation in support of this measure. For more information or for letter templates email Cullen at [cullen@chomhousing.org](mailto:cullen@chomhousing.org). Cindy stated that it is also HUD's intention that when the HPRP program concludes that the HEARTH act will pick up and keep everything going, so this measure is very important.

Cullen stated another area where there is still time to participate in advocacy is regarding the proposed State budget cuts. At the previous ESAC meeting the majority of people voted to write a letter from ESAC against the cuts that would impact GA reimbursements as well as MaineCare cuts. The letter from ESAC has already been sent to the Joint Standing Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs. Individual organizations are encouraged to advocate for this as well.

### ***NEXT MEETING:***

***Thursday, March 18, 2010***

***8:30 – 10am***

***Refugee Services Area***

***190 Lancaster Street***

*Please contact Robert Duranleau, Health & Human Services Department, Social Services Division at 775-6315, extension 224; John Shoos, United Way at 874-1000, or Dee Clark, Preble Street at 775-0026; if you should have any agenda items for the next meeting.*