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## Five Years In: An Update On the Palm Beach County Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness

Presenter: Norm Suchar, Director, Center for Capacity Building – National Alliance to End Homelessness

*The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) was contracted to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness in Palm Beach County. Please see attachment for a list of the biggest strengths, top areas of concerns and next steps. Also available is the full report prepared by the NAEH. The following are notes from the conference.*

Across the nation, there will be a shift to maximize Rapid Re-Housing within the next five years. Community homeless providers now will be measured on how they are doing as a whole, so it is important for all to comply with performance measurements. HMIS needs to be used by all. Funding will depend on whether all perform well. Performance matters and performance measurement efforts needs to be expanded. To expand and manage funding sources you need planning and data.

The average length of homelessness episodes starts when an individual becomes homeless and ends when they exit homelessness including every placement.

Performance measures on preventing homelessness will include; preventing return to homelessness status, reducing length of homelessness episodes, reducing the number of homeless and increasing income and employment.

What every community can do right now:

- Inventory and identify new funding sources such as; Veteran Affairs, SSVS (Supportive Services for Veterans), VASH. Federal funding will include 300 million this year and 450 million next year for prevention and Rapid Re-housing for homeless veterans. With VASH – resources are expanding for permanent supportive housing.
- Faith Community – historically they have been at the center of homeless assistance. As a community, have a Call to Action for all churches/synagogues/mosques/etc. and ask them to set aside one weekend for a special offering to help mentor, provide wrap around services and support one homeless family for \$2,000.
- Businesses-Get them involved as investors. Be solution focused – have them become part of governance. They should be personally and financially invested.
- Foundations-Usually uncomfortable about unrestricted funding. In Columbus, Ohio a local foundation filled the gaps that that couldn't get funded otherwise. Case management was funded.
- Dedicated Funding Source – several examples of communities where this has been successful, including Miami-Dade and Broward. Find a dedicated funding source.

- Public Housing Authorities- Part of their mission is to house homeless individuals and families. They need to be at the table and invested.
- Seek funding such as Medicaid, CDBG, TANF to help Rapid Re-House families.
- Restructure Governance – Structure in a way to promote collaboration and manage performance as the Ten-Year Plan is implemented and coordinates funding.

A community that has a best practice model for Governance and managing funding sources with planning and data is Franklin Columbus Ohio Community Shelter Board (CSB). All homeless funding flows through the CSB. Initiated a Direct Housing Program along with Rapid re-Housing as a Pilot in 2011. This increased capacity to place people in permanent housing and increase supply of permanent housing in their community. In line with shift to Rapid Re-Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing.

Promote system change by using a coordinated assessment process that includes:

- Eligibility
- Prioritization
- Permanent Housing
- Realistic process for how this would work

The fewer entities doing things the better. Governance in most communities usually consists of providers and advocates. Need major funders, businesses, hospitals and others as part of the governance board as shown with the CSB.

Finding suitable housing is a challenge everywhere. Landlords are reluctant to rent to those who are homeless because they want to make sure they have the rent paid, concerned about the condition of the unit, their reputation and the drama that ensues with personal problems. Having a case manager work closely with the clients and giving the landlord the case manager's business card can help. Another solution is tenant education classes. It is best to work with medium size landlords and try to recruit them at church.

### **Areas of Concern and Key Next Steps:**

#### **1. Identify New Funding - Mainstream/Private/Dedicated**

- Identify mainstream funding opportunities such as TANF. List is currently being developed.
- Businesses hire homeless and get positive media from Clear Channel
- Approach interfaith alliance (all on one Sunday or weekend) – get each church to speak about homelessness and specifically ask them to support one family
- Privatization/Business – Bring people through the Lewis Center
- Gather positive success stories of homeless for media
- Meet with foundations and share homeless funding strategy
- Dedicated Funding Stream Campaign
- Work on ballot amendment to support changing Florida Statute to include homeless/social services as a dedicated local funding stream.

- Identify unbiased advocacy group to advocate on behalf of funding
- Privatization/Business – Bring business executives (such as chambers, economic council, business leaders) together for a meet and greet in order to get their opinions and buy in. Offer to tour through the Lewis Center.

## **2) Expand Performance Measurement – Date Collection/Community-Wide Outcomes/Rewards and Incentives**

- Produce initial Performance Measurement Reports for current measures (including 14 performance measures identified)
- Review current Performance Measurement Plan to see how chronic programs will perform
- Develop a process to celebrate/reward high performance agencies rather than punitive
- Training on date entry
- Have continuous data entry training so all can continue to enter good data. Connect HMIS data with Palm Beach Counts
- Nationally, other CoC's are using the same HMIS system as PBC – find out what performance measures they use. Review current performance measurement plan to see how they work with the chronically homeless. Risk adjustment performance measure for the chronic.
- Use the media to share our outcomes.
- Return on investment will be due to good data collection.

## **3) Increase Capacity to Place and Support Clients in Housing – Housing Search (Landlord Eng.)/Stabilization Services**

- Review other Models, i.e. Oxford Models for housing
- Streamline Housing Specialist for all agencies
- Create a standard process on how to work with landlords
- Sober Houses need to be regulated, have oversight and accountability
- Housing First Model needed - Increase capacity to place and support clients in true Housing First Model
- Engage apartment communities. Host a landlord appreciation breakfast.
- Every family needs to have a case manager when leaving the system
- Create and streamline housing database
- Have discussion on harm reduction.

## **4) Increase Permanent Housing Supply – Finding Affordable Stock/Subsidies/Short-Term/Perm/ Public Housing Authorities**

- Home Funds – Bank of America/Wells Fargo/Chase/ Portion for Tenant Based Rental/Letter to BCC, Public Hearing on July 16, 2013
- Start relationships and partnerships with banks to utilize foreclosed homes
- DES approach re: use of foreclosed properties
- Roommate matching program
- PHA meeting to develop partnership

- White Paper for NSP Housing – reevaluate to review % of resource allocation
- Housing Luncheon
- Develop plan to partner with faith-based community
- Reach out to apartments
- Look at expiring tax credit properties, finalize the housing plan.

**5) Use Coordinated Assessment to Drive System Change – Removing Barriers to Programs/  
Prioritizing Housing Plan/Realistic and Fast**

- Have a discussion via HHA on need for priority
- Identify gaps. Evaluate data since inception of opening of Lewis Center.
- Have a meeting about eligibility
- Recommendations based on gaps
- Organize information sharing session
- Set up committee on medical respite and engage the medical community.
- Develop firm policy and procedures so all side doors are closed.
- Organize information in a sharing system.

**CONCRETE ACTION STEPS THAT CAN BE TAKEN IN THE NEXT 90 DAYS AND THOSE TAKING OWNERSHIP**

**1) Identify New Funding - Mainstream/Private/Dedicated**

- Dedicated Funding Stream – Education and advocacy through **Homeless Coalition and County**. Campaign to educate and advocate.
- Work on ballot amendment to support changing Florida Statute to include homeless/social services as a dedicated local funding stream. This will be worked on through the **HAB Policy and Legislative Committee** which includes the County Legislative Delegation and PBC Commissioner support.
- Privatization/Business – Bring business executives together for a meet and greet. Offer to tour through the Lewis Center. **Pam Goodman (Homeless Coalition)**

**2) Expand Performance Measurement – Data Collection/Community-Wide Outcomes/Rewards and Incentives**

- Return on Investment Strategy – need to determine what we can get from our information system. Would like to see a plan written. 90 day goal is to get a copy of a performance plan that has been written out and to have a draft ready. **Georgiana Devine (Lead Entity)** is the lead.

### **3) Increase Capacity to Place and Support Clients in Housing – Housing Search (Landlord Eng.)/Stabilization Services**

- Each individual family should leave the Lewis Center with a case manager. Find out how many families are exiting without a case manager. **Lewis Center (Ezra Krieg), HOT and HMIS (CoC)**
- Continue discussion on Harm Reduction. **Lord's Place (Diana Stanley)**
- Host landlord appreciation breakfast. **Lewis Center (Ezra Krieg) host. Lord's Place (Diana Stanley) will cater.**

### **4) Increase Permanent Housing Supply – Finding Affordable Stock/Subsidies/Short-Term/Perm/Public Housing Authorities**

- Finalize Housing Plan; include information on developing local housing vouchers. **David Raymond**

### **5) Use Coordinated Assessment to Drive System Change – Removing Barriers to Programs/Prioritizing Housing Plan/Realistic and Fast**

- Engage Medical Community including Catholic Charities to meet regarding medical respite beds. Memorandum of Understanding has been started but not embraced. Develop a plan and engage the decision makers of hospitals to move this forward. **Claudia Tuck to contact Catholic Charities. Ezra Krieg and Pam O'Brien will work on engagement of hospitals.**
- Review data (from 3 partners) since inception of Lewis Center including the Navigation Center and create a report for distribution. **CoC will take Lead (Georgiana Devine and Pam O'Brien)**
- Have a meeting on eligibility – discuss what our standards are and develop policy and procedure on intake. **CoC will take Lead (Georgiana Devine and Pam O'Brien)**

## **Governance**

**Vision** – articulate and promote a vision in the community. Elevator pitch version to be understood by all. Everything that is worked on needs to be associated to the vision.

**Funding** – Who will go and ask for money? Who can go to DCF and ask from TANF funds. Who can ask for help with Medicaid? Who goes to look for funding?

**Performance** – Measure what is going on and reward with incentives.

**Policy and Planning** – How to decide collectively.

**Admin** – Fill out forms, certification, etc.

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For Governance cannot use volunteers, need dedicated staff. The external thread that runs through all is a communication thread.

In Palm Beach County, small pieces owned by many groups. Not one group to tap the power/influence that is needed. Where is vision coming from? CoC provider board will not work. Advisory board is big picture and mainstream.

**CONCRETE ACTION STEPS THAT CAN BE TAKEN IN THE NEXT 90 DAYS AND THOSE TAKING OWNERSHIP**

**Governance:** Work on structure, lay out options and vote on it. **HAB Strategic Planning Committee**