Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County CoC
Coordinated Entry Committee
MEETING MINUTES - DRAFT
April 13, 2021
2:00-3:00

Meeting Attendees:	Tom Cottrell, Christina Slofstra, Gayle Witham, Brian Bruce, Jameela Maun, Julie Kendrick, Emily Schichtel, Lisa Cruden, Brooke Allen, Anna Diaz, Angela Gillisse, Johanna Schulte, Tanesha Jordan, Samantha Westhouse, Veronica Arvizu, Susan Cervantes Staff: Courtney Myers-Keaton, Brianne Czyzio Robach		
Time Convened:	3:02	Time Adjourned:	2:58

Introductions	

Approval of Agenda		April 13, 2021	
Motion by:	Lisa Cruden	Support from:	Brian Bruce
Discussion			
Amendments	Add Built for Zero Update at the end of the agenda		
Conclusion	All in favor, motion passes		

Approval of Minutes		March 2, 2021	
Motion by:	Brian Bruce	Support from:	Christina Slofstra
Discussion			
Amendments			
Conclusion	All in favor, motion passes		

Family Functional Zero List	Community Rebuilders
Discussion	

There have been conversations around formalizing the by-name list so we can reach the goal of reaching functional zero for families with Community Rebuilders, Family Promise, HAP, and other community partners. When developing this process, they want to ensure it is set up for success when applying for the functional zero designation based on USICH criteria and benchmarks. The goal of the enhanced process is to ensure all families who are literally homeless and families who are homeless under other federal statutes are entered onto the by-name list.

Angela Gillisse overviewed the process flow. The first component is ensuring that eligibility is determined before a family is added to the list. Families should connect to Community Housing Connect (either through an HMIS agency or another avenue). Solution Specialists (SS) will then confirm eligibility by completing the functional zero assessment and COVID-19 Prioritization assessment. If family is eligible, they will be added to the by-name list using Microsoft forms.

Clients who meet all requirements will be given a service transition in HMIS, indicating that they are active and connected to a resource. This allows the team to identify the number of families who are active on the list at any given time. Updates and follow-up information for individual families will be submitted to a Microsoft form. Once there is a program outcome, a family becomes inactive, or exits for another reason, the family is removed from the by-name list. If a client becomes inactive and then reappears, they can be added back to the by-name list. There are currently 199 active families on the list. All families are connected to a resource, either a Supportive Solutions Specialist or a supportive housing program.

Incorporating families who are fleeing domestic violence into the process will need to be discussed.

Family Functional Zero Meeting
Lisa Cruden and Anna Diaz will be leading an action-oriented Family Functional Zero Workgroup focusing on reaching functional zero for families. This workgroup will build on processes that house consumers quickly, monitor the by-name list process, regularly review resource needs and gaps, review equitable outcomes, and monitor and map system flow. They anticipate there will be a partnership agreement for workgroup members that identifies roles and responsibilities. In addition, they are working to develop a dedicated space on the CoC website for anyone interested in accessing information and hope to connect with landlords, business owners, other community stakeholders throughout the process.

Family Functional Zero meeting is on April 20th. Connect with Brianne for meeting information. is intending to bring in community support needed to reach functional zero for families in the community.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

Feedback from Families		
Discussion		

There has been some discussion around collecting feedback from families. Throughout the process, an evaluation platform and system are in place to ensure that feedback is collected from families and partners. Community Rebuilders should be able to follow-up with this information.

Anecdotal feedback from providers:
- On the Coordinated Entry end, Sam shared that HAP has been able to partner effectively to resolve issues when they arise.
- At Family Promise, they have several staff who are Solutions Specialists and they have adjusted to provide real-time openings if available to meet emergent needs. The same after-hours process is being used, families who connect with HAP are referred to a solutions specialist or to shelter if needed. There may be the ability to add Solutions Specialist after hours.
- Solutions Specialists are currently staffed at Family Promise, Arbor Circle, and Community Rebuilders. Additional community partners have requested training to be onboarded. Have been able to modify scheduling structure to open urgent appointments.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

MSHDA and MDHHS Statement on the VI-SPDAT		
Discussion		

A statement (included on page 4 of the minutes) was jointly released by MSHDA and MCAH a few weeks ago. It recognizes that the VI-SPDAT is not an equitable tool but indicates that communities will still be required to use this tool until a replacement tool is identified. The statement does indicate

that communities should not use the VI-SPDAT alone as an assessment for eligibility. Johanna indicated that it would be helpful to know the State's intentions in identifying a new tool.

There is an opportunity to be involved in gathering feedback around alternatives to the VI-SPDAT MDHHS, MSHDA, and the Interagency Council on Homelessness. This could be an opportunity for our community to provide input and ask questions that have been discussed within this committee. Courtney can connect with Jason Weller and ask to be included in the process.

MCAH is holding a neurobiology of trauma webinar with the Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence focused on those who are administer the tool. Register for the April 27 webinar here: https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3957422037996673552

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Request involvement in VI-SPDAT workgroup	Courtney	
Built for Zero Update		
Discussion		

If you have not attended a Built for Zero onboarding session yet, there is one on April 20th. Members are encouraged to attend so the committee can have robust conversations around how this will be implemented in the community at the May Coordinated Entry meeting.

There are differences in the USICH functional zero framework and the Built for Zero framework. These differences are likely not contradictory and would not impact USICH accreditation but should be discussed at the next meeting.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Next Steps		
Discussion		

Next meeting, the group will be debriefing from the Built for Zero onboarding and discuss how it will intersect with family functional zero work.

If you can attend the Family Functional Zero meeting and a Built for Zero onboarding session, please do so the committee can have robust conversation at the next meeting.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Adjourn		

Joint Statement from MSHDA and MDHHS Regarding the VI-SPDAT

In 2014, MSHDA and MDHHS started requiring the use of the Vulnerability Index – Special Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) to accomplish two significant needs: to support Continuums of Care (CoCs) in meeting federal standardized assessment requirements for coordinated entry and to improve access to vital housing resources based on vulnerability. As a result, MSHDA and MDHHS would like to jointly address the recent communications issued by OrgCode, Inc. about their decision to stop supporting the VI-SPDAT (version 2).

State partners are working to identify a replacement tool and/or process for the VI-SPDAT (version 2) that is equitable, will accurately represent the needs of the people we serve, and will sufficiently meet the needs of our providers to gather crucial information and connect people to housing. MSHDA and MDHHS are partnering with the Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH) and the Michigan Homeless Policy Council (MHPC) to identify opportunities to gain direct feedback from all stakeholders to help inform future decisions. The MHPC has a VI-SPDAT workgroup that will help explore alternatives to VI-SPDAT and is currently open for new members. Please contact Jason Weller, Coordinator for Michigan's Campaign to End Homelessness, if you are interested in joining this group.

In the meantime, we want to share the following updates:
- *The use of an assessment tool by all CoCs to support decision making and prioritization during the Coordinated Entry process is still required.*
- *MSHDA and MDHHS continue to require the use of the VI-SPDAT (version 2) as the uniform tool for providers funded with Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), Emergency Shelter Program (ESP), HUD Rapid Re-Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing, and Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS (HOPWA) funds until the identification and roll-out of a new tool can be completed.*
- *State partners are currently identifying training resources to support the continued use of the VI-SPDAT - both for use of the tool itself and ways to ensure greater equity until a new tool/process is identified.*
- ***As a reminder, the VI-SPDAT alone does NOT determine access or eligibility for a program and should not be used as the sole determinant of program access or eligibility. Please continue to follow your CoC Coordinated Entry policy to determine client prioritization for housing resources.***

Please feel free to reach out to us at mshda-hs@michigan.gov or mdhhs-homeless@michigan.gov to share your feedback or questions.

Thank you all for your continued dedication and partnership.