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U.S. Department of Housing
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Office of
Special Needs Assistance
Programs

HMIS Grant Training Materials Now Available



Grant Administration Training for HMIS Grantees

The grant administration training for grantees that receive Supportive Housing Program (SHP) funding for Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) held in Minneapolis, MN was a great success. Covered subjects included financial management, grantee self-monitoring, using HMIS data to compete Exhibit 1, cost estimation, vendor relations/HMIS contracting, data integration, program and CoC system performance measurement, security and risk assessment, and the AHAR. Materials from the training are available at www.HMIS.info.

AHAR Updates

The AHAR 3 period ended on September 30, 2007, and it's time to produce the AHAR 3 table shells! AHAR research staff will be contacting you shortly to answer questions about the data collection process. Draft AHAR 3 table shells were due by November 1, 2007.

The AHAR 4 time period began on October 1, 2007! Continuums of Care and homeless service providers are strongly encouraged to monitor their HMIS data-quality throughout the AHAR 4 reporting period. For quick tips on HMIS data quality and monitoring approaches, please contact the AHAR research team at AHAR@abtassoc.com or 1-877-789-2427.

The AHAR research team occasionally sends AHAR information (AHAR CDs, official letters, awards, etc.) via mail. If you are a current or newly identified AHAR site, please help us ensure that we have the most up-to-date mailing addresses by updating your current AHAR contact information at AHAR@abtassoc.com.

New CoC Resources – Homelessness Resource Exchange (HRE) & APR Hotline

HUD's Homelessness Resource Exchange (HRE)

www.HUDHRE.info

The HRE is HUD's one-stop shop for information and resources for communities, service providers and other interested parties including homeless persons and those at risk of becoming homeless. The HRE includes **What's New, Listserv Sign-up, Quicklinks** and **Resources** (organized by **Topic, Audience** and **Type**).

APR HOTLINE AND HELPLINE

If you have APR questions, please contact the Hotline at **1-877-277-1460** or the Helpline at APR@abtassoc.com. Contact either of these resources with your questions or issues to get help from an expert!



2006 CoC Reports Available

Population/Subpopulation Reports based on the 2006 CoC applications are available at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/local/index.cfm>. Reports are available for each CoC, State and Territory, as well as two national summary reports.

Meet the  SNAPpers!

The Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS) under the wing of Community Planning and Development at HUD is comprised of three divisions who are all dedicated to providing support and resources to Continuums of Care. Each division is responsible for specific geographic assignments. SNAPS is proud of its staff and is excited to introduce these divisions and their employees over the next three issues.

State Assistance Division

The State Assistance Division's primary responsibility is administration and management of the Supportive Housing Program. It is comprised of eight staff. This division's state geography assignments are: Southern California, Florida (North - 500 and South - 600), Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland (North -500), Michigan, Missouri (East – 500 and West 600), Nebraska, New Jersey, New York Metro (600), South Carolina, Texas, Virginia (South – 500), and Washington State.

The staff in the State Assistance Division is an excellent source of information and support for communities and grantees. HUD recognizes the vast wealth of resources their staff brings to their program's administration and wants to pass that recognition on to you, its grantees. So come on – **Meet your SNAPpers!**

Marcy Kinnaman is a Special Needs Assistance Specialist. She works on all tasks related to the annual Continuum of Care competition including reviewing applications, determining eligibility, data verification, granting rewards, and responding to requests for technical and non-technical information regarding the application and award process. Marcy is a recent addition as a permanent employee in the SNAPs office (starting in August 2006), but she has prior history of working in the department – when she returned to school in 2004 to obtain her MSW, she was selected for a Field Placement Internship in the SNAPs Office, working in the State Assistance Division with Cynthia High, where she worked on a variety of projects and learned about SNAPs programs. Marcy has worked doing case management for a Shelter Plus Care program as well as for the Arlington County Section 8 office as a housing specialist. At SNAPs, Marcy serves as the point of contact for field offices, Continuum of Care representatives, agency officials, and community members. She is responsible for New York and South Carolina and says that, “these areas are so different, and it is interesting to see the differences in CoCs in the two regions. I am most interested in the issues of rural homelessness and Safe Havens, and work on a variety of projects related to these topics. As a newer addition to the SNAPs team, I try to be involved in as many projects as possible so that I can constantly broaden my level of knowledge.”

Rudene Thomas is a Special Needs Assistance Specialist and has the distinction of being the newest addition to the division. She helps manage grants by working directly with funding mechanisms, homeless grants, policy and budget issues – in fact, she refers to her job as “grant management”. Rudene has been with HUD since October 2006 and is assigned to four geographic areas: Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, and Kansas. Previously, she was employed at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for nine years and had received several promotions. Also prior to HUD, she worked in the Office of AIDS Research as a Program Support Assistant. She holds a B.S. in Technical Management from DeVry University and is currently attending Keller Graduate School of Management and expects to obtain degrees in Project Management and Government Emphasis by 2009. She is a lifetime member of the Federally Employed Women (FEW) association and currently serves on the Nominations Committee of the National Board of Directors. She has held several leadership roles - President of the FEW Bethesda Chapter at the NIH (2 terms); FEW DC-Metro Regional Representative; FEW DC-Metro Interim Regional Manager; FEW DC-Metro Policies and Procedures Chair; and NIH Women’s History Month Chair (2 years). Rudene says that SNAPs “serves the community at all levels – state, city, and town – on homeless grants for Shelter Plus Care, transitional housing, and Section 8.”

Cynthia High is also a Special Needs Assistance Specialist. Like the other specialists, Cynthia reviews grant applications and assists in the development of policies and procedures related to carrying out the requirements of HUD’s homeless programs. She is also a Grants Technical Monitor (reviews work requested by the SNAPs Office for technical assistance projects), is the point of contact for the President’s Prisoner Re-entry Initiative, serves as the SNAPs point of contact for homeless veterans issues and funding, serves as primary contact for HUD’s three Collaborative Initiatives to provide permanent housing to chronically homeless persons, and is the Field Instructor/Supervisor for two Social Work Interns completing their Masters level training through placement within SNAPs. Cynthia came to SNAPs in December 2001 and prior to that was employed at the DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center as a Social Work Clinician for 10 years. In that position, she provided discharge planning/housing placement services to homeless substance users and veterans participating in a compensated work therapy program, served as the Women’s Programs Coordinator (including sexual trauma counseling and treatment), facilitated housing placement for homeless women veterans, maternity care coordination for pregnant veterans (some of whom were also homeless), and was the Persian Gulf Coordinator for veterans returning with health, mental health (PTSD) and social service needs. Prior to her work at the Veterans Administration, Cynthia served as a social services supervisor and child care center manager for the Department of Army’s programs to address housing, substance use, domestic violence and other special needs of active duty military members and their families. Cynthia is currently responsible for the states of Michigan and Washington. Cynthia believes that it is important for communities and grantees to understand that “HUD is very inclusive and fair in the development of policies and procedures that affect programs to serve homeless persons in this country. Our office encourages communities to be thorough, forwarding-thinking, and strategic as they address the needs of homeless persons”.

Susana Limon has worked as a policy analyst for HUD for thirteen years. Susana analyzes policies for the Supportive Housing Program and makes recommendations about changes. Her geographic duties include Indiana, Texas, and Virginia. Susana is a former Peace Corps Volunteer serving in Honduras, and she just completed her Ph.D. in Public Administration from Virginia Tech. Susana began her service with HUD as a Presidential Management Intern, a two-year program allowing rotational opportunities to various headquarters and field offices. Susana’s rotations included 3 months in the Indianapolis Field Office, 3 months working for the National Homeownership Strategy, and 6 months working for the Senate Subcommittee on Housing. Prior to working at HUD, Susana worked in the Mayor’s Office in Bloomington, Indiana while she completed her Master’s Degree in Public Affairs from Indiana University. While in Bloomington, Susana served as volunteer coordinator for Habitat for Humanity, and financial secretary for Sister Cities, International. Her undergraduate degree is from Emory

University in Atlanta, where she taught middle school for three years.

Tonya Proctor is a Special Needs Assistance Specialist. Like her colleagues, she reviews grant applications and assists with the development of program policies and procedures. Tonya has been with HUD in the Office of Community Planning and Development (CPD) for 17 years. She has worked in several offices within CPD. In 1997, she relocated to HUD's Denver Field Office as a CPD Representative. In that position, she was able to work with entitlement cities, urban counties and non-profit organizations. She really enjoyed her work as a CPD Representative because she was able to have direct contact with HUD's clients. Tonya has been with SNAPS for the last 7 years. She is the desk officer for New Jersey and Southern California.

Beverly Moore is a Senior Program Manager with more than 18 years with the Department. She has spent more than 16 years specializing in the Department's homeless assistance programs at both the Field Office and Headquarter levels. Like her colleagues, Beverly completes all tasks associated with the Continuum of Care competition for her geographical area of Northern and Central Florida and serves as a National SNAPS trainer. Additional duties include the completion of numerous special projects and lead regarding all aspects of compliance monitoring. Beverly feels that her combination of HUD and non-profit work experience has given her an advantage in meeting the varying needs of the funding agency, project sponsors and homeless individuals and families with children. Beverly is a Navy veteran and during her tenure as a Veterans Service Officer in Florida she wrote, implemented and administered one of the first U.S. Department of Labor grants for homeless veterans in the nation. According to Beverly "there is nothing more rewarding" than knowing you are part of a program that enables individuals and families with children to recover from homelessness and live independently.

Alma Thomas is a Senior Program Officer and has an extensive history with HUD. She began working at HUD in 1974 in the Office of Field Operations and Monitoring. This Office was primarily responsible for assisting the many Regional and Field Offices with programmatic issues on community development, rehabilitation and affordable housing, and economic development issues. It was one of the offices that supported the field functions with serving low-income persons. In addition, she worked in the Secretary's Office during the Patricia Harris Administration and the Assistant Secretary's Office for Community Planning and Development. She began working in the Special Needs Programs office which handles homelessness issues in 1990. She has grown tremendously in the office and is responsible for several geographical areas, including Louisiana, South Florida, and Maryland. She is responsible for responding to congressional inquiries, developing policy and program guidance to support the housing programs within her areas and throughout the country. As a senior official she has supported the office in many capacities including serving as the Director for the Supportive Housing Programs. She mentors many of the new employees and looks forward to passing on her knowledge to help sustain the office in its mission to alleviate homelessness in the future. Alma says that, these programs have benefited thousands of homeless individuals and families since 1987 and that she is very appreciative of the many non-profit organizations that are committed to serving homeless person.

Lora Routt is the Director of the State Assistance Division. Since becoming the Director in May 2006, her primary responsibilities include managing the daily operations and personnel management of the division, policy development, training, technical assistance, and day-to-day management of the Supportive Housing Program; facilitating guidance to help States implement effective Continuum of Care systems; providing oversight of all Continuum of Care grant programs assigned to the division's geography assignments (16 states, 190 Continuums of Care); and assisting in the planning and management of the annual Continuum of Care competition. Before moving to Washington D.C., Lora served as the Harris County (Houston, Texas) Community and Economic Development Department Assistant Director for Planning and Development. During her eight-year tenure at that department, she directed the efforts to provide homelessness, housing, economic development, and community development services, including managing the community revitalization program, administering that department's HUD Entitlement Request for Proposal and funding allocation processes. In addition, she served as project manager of the Houston/Harris County CoC Consolidated Grant Application process for two years and provided oversight of the County's participation in the CoC process for a total of six years. She has also served the YWCA of Houston as the Chief Operating Officer/Director of Grant Programs, and as a Management Analyst in the City of Houston's Finance and Administration Department. She received her Bachelor of Arts from the University of Texas at Austin and her Master of Public Administration from Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts.

Lora's staff is a learned, experienced, and devoted group. When asked "What is the most important thing you would like communities to know about your division", Lora didn't hesitate - "I would like grantees to know that the SNAPS office is comprised of a team of professionals who are **dedicated** to alleviating poverty and ending chronic homelessness and who believe in providing quality customer service to our grantees and general public". Lora and her staff in the State Assistance Division can be reached at 202-708-2140.

Governing through Neutrality: Managing a Community Response to Homelessness, Appalachian Regional CoC

Community Spotlight

"Governing through Neutrality"

According to the Appalachian Regional Continuum of Care 2007 point in time survey, there were 559 homeless men, women, and children in the eight counties of Northeast Tennessee on one night in January. Of those, 38% were unsheltered and approximately 16% qualified as chronically homeless. On that same night, 40% of the homeless population suffered from severe mental illness and/or chronic substance abuse, while 18% were veterans and 16% were victims of domestic violence. And, according to the 2003 Census, they were homeless in one of the poorest and most rural communities in the U.S.

Covering over 2,900 square miles, the Appalachian Regional Coalition on Homelessness (ARCH) is a public/private 501(c)(3) partnership whose Board of Directors primarily consists of private entities. It is recognized by HUD as the region's Continuum of Care and is the hub for managing a community response to a community problem – homelessness. ARCH does not work directly with homeless persons, rather they provide necessary support to the community to facilitate information and idea exchange, to assist with proposal writing and grant administration (including accessing funds through

the Continuum of Care competitive grant process), and to provide a technical infrastructure through the management of the community Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). By continually developing partnerships and resources that will support service providers in the development of programs to provide housing, counseling, and healthcare, ARCH is providing a service that many communities admit is needed – someone to help the helpers.

ARCH has prioritized a community planning process that is truly inclusive of all interested stakeholder groups. Being a neutral organization, neither a funder nor a service provider, allows ARCH to focus on facilitating strong relationships and fostering good communications. ARCH's Board of Directors and Executive Committee use a transparent process where all ideas and issues are openly discussed in a neutral environment. The Board of Directors is responsible for transforming these ideas and information into community strategic planning decisions while the Executive Committee handles day-to-day CoC affairs and the HMIS administration. ARCH has actively demonstrated their support by making available to all service providers assistance in obtaining grant funding.

ARCH must raise funds from the business community and general public for grant cash match for their Continuum of Care competitive funding as well as for administrative dollars to support ARCH and the HMIS. ARCH has been instrumental and very fortunate in leveraging the local community's commitment to ending homelessness. Cash donations have been obtained from local banks, colleges as well as a local network of healthcare providers who provided the cash match to apply for the initial HMIS grant even though they do not use the system themselves. A local advertising company donates in-kind resources to develop professional marketing materials and their marketing division identifies opportunities for ARCH to educate and inform the community. A local software company, who already handled another software application (Charity Check) utilized by the faith based providers to de-duplicate and manage benevolent fund usage agreed to implement and manage the HMIS under ARCH's leadership. The use of this trusted community vendor increased participation in the HMIS by faith based service providers that was previously unknown to the community.

ARCH is pragmatic about their success as the CoC's organizing body. They know there are still challenges to overcome, but they have faith that their community is ready to tackle them. When asked what they believed was their defining feature to success, they identified their governing structure as the most critical piece. Over time, misperceptions between the faith based and government entities have begun to dissolve. They have discovered that they do indeed share a common mission ~ ending homelessness in their corner of the world.

For more information about ARCH's HMIS, you can contact Todd Barkman, Director of HMIS Operations & Grant Development, Appalachian Regional Coalition on Homelessness at hmis@appalachianhomeless.org.

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