

SOAR Dialogue Highlights

8/15/13

Attendees: Emily Carmody, Charlene Powell, Joyce Allen, Nitiki Kilgore, Jacquetta Bullock, Daphne Drew, Aundry Freeman, Cecelia Colson, TJ Reynolds-Emwanta, Tracy Miller

Introductions and Updates

- Emily Carmody, NCCEH, Raleigh- SOAR Training September 12-13th in Winston-Salem, Thank you for your continuing patience with our website update
- Charlene Powell, ECBH MCO- Waiting on an approval this week
- Joyce Allen, Alliance of Disability Advocates, Raleigh- appeals process with 1 case and starting a new case
- Nitiki Kilgore, Pisgah Legal, Henderson County- Waiting on 3 decisions
- Jacquetta Bullock, New Direction Ministries, Henderson, NC- SOAR case approved under QPC process
- Daphne Drew, ECBH MCO- 1 case in appeals, 1 case that was just submitted
- Aundry Freeman, Cecelia Colson, Pisgah Legal Services, Asheville- 3 approvals this month
- TJ Reynolds-Emwanta, Centerpoint Human Services MCO- 1 official approval came, got another Presumptive Decision yesterday

Updates from the National Alliance to End Homelessness Conference for SOAR Caseworkers

Trends in Homelessness and Homeless Services

- Focus on Permanent Housing-
 - Creating more access to permanent housing
 - Targeting resources towards permanent housing
 - Federal emphasis on getting people into permanent housing as soon as possible
 - HUD is communicating this to all CoCs through a series of messages
 - USICH is also emphasizing permanent housing in their messaging and work
 - Not necessarily new money for permanent housing but using existing funding for activities
 - ESG (Emergency Solutions Grant)- grant now funds rapid rehousing programs
 - HUD CoC Funding- CoC's can now reallocate resources to permanent housing programs, new process
- Targeting Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for Chronically Homeless
 - Different types of permanent housing
 - Rapid Rehousing- short term rental assistance and short term services
 - Permanent Supportive Housing- long term rental assistance and long term, intensive services
 - Across the country, PSH is being developed but the number of Chronically Homeless is not decreasing at the same rate
 - Only 45% of these units are targeted at the chronically homeless population

- Want to make sure that this big package of subsidies and services are being used for those who are most in need
 - Tools for Targeting:
 - Vulnerability Index to score, rank and order individuals for access to housing
 - Communities have also looked at length of stay and target long shelter stayers
 - SOAR and Targeting
 - Most vulnerable who have been in the system for a long time will most likely be good SOAR candidates
 - SOAR caseworkers can connect these targeted individuals to benefits and help the community transition them to permanent supportive housing programs
 - SOAR caseworkers may also want to prioritize and target their cases as well to line up with the community's needs
- Data, data, data
 - Communities are using data to help with targeting, finding gaps in who is being served by the system, and looking at how people move through our system
 - What are the barriers to getting into housing?
 - Who is stuck in our shelter system?
 - Setting outcomes and goals to provide energy around housing
 - Housing 100 people in 100 days
 - Setting a take-down number
 - How many people do we have to house per week to end chronic homelessness/veteran's homelessness by 2015?
 - Making the task as concrete as possible
 - Setting Outcomes for SOAR in 2013
 - Tracking our progress on those goals
 - Provides a different energy around achieving our goals in meeting the need for SOAR in NC
- Development of Coordinated Assessment in communities
 - HUD is requiring all CoCs to develop and implement a Coordinated Assessment system
 - Coordinated "front door" to the homeless service system
 - Creating an access point that anyone in crisis can contact, have a brief assessment, and be connected to best program based on their needs
 - SOAR and Coordinated Assessment
 - Can provide a great way for SOAR caseworkers to see who is accessing the system and what the need is for SOAR in the community
 - Coordinated Assessment can also be a great place for SOAR caseworkers to work together to target those most in need in their communities
 - Make sure you are involved in the Coordinated Assessment conversations in your community and stay active in your CoC/Regional Committee meetings

Healthcare Reform Updates

- As a reminder, NC is not expanding their Medicaid program right now
- Federal Benefits Exchange-
 - Marketplace to purchase insurance for individuals/families
 - Compare coverage and costs of benefits
 - Purchase their own insurance
 - Open enrollment for 2014 coverage is October 1, 2013- March 1, 2014
 - Assistance
 - Tax credits available for people who purchase insurance
 - Subsidies available for people who earn 138-400% of the Federal Poverty Line
 - Some individuals in the system could qualify for the Benefits Exchange
 - Staff at homeless service providers could also be eligible for the credits and subsidies on the Benefits Exchange
 - Every region will have Navigators to help people access and use the Benefits Exchange
 - Healthcare.gov is a federal site that provides answers, phone number there as well to call with questions
 - Individuals can apply for Medicaid through the Benefits Exchange but will still need to qualify for Medicaid by being a child, young mother, or aged, blind and disabled
- Federal indigent care resources will begin to shrink in 2014 as the Medicaid Expansion takes effect in other states
 - Hospitals and communities will begin to feel this increased pressure about how to pay for services
 - SOAR can be seen as a tool to help with getting people connected to insurance

SOAR Updates

- Online Training
 - National program is in the process of developing an online training for SOAR caseworkers
 - This training would be in lieu of the two-day SOAR caseworker training
 - Currently in a pilot phase and gathering feedback about curriculum
 - Differences between the online training and the in person training
 - Online training is reading a number of modules and responding to questions
 - You also complete and submit an application and Medical Summary Report throughout the online training
 - States can still do in person trainings
 - NCCHE will continue to offer in person trainings through 2014 when our contract for providing those trainings ends
 - May reduce number of trainings but not sure at this point
 - Each state is allowed to develop criteria that people have to complete in order to submit SOAR applications

- We may require a one day training to review SOAR and the NC SOAR process in order
 - We are in the beginning stages of developing this process in NC and will keep you posted on developments
- Emily is due to have a baby on February 18th
 - NCCEH is in the process of developing a plan for her maternity leave
 - We will keep everyone posted as to what the plan is to get assistance and technical support

Next SOAR Dialogue Call: Thursday, September 19th at 10 AM

You can register for the call by visiting NCCEH's website: <http://www.ncceh.org/events/681/>