



North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care

bos@ncceh.org

919.755.4393

www.ncceh.org/BoS

NC Balance of State CoC Funding and Performance Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

04.25.2019

Subcommittee members in attendance: Cindy Hathcock, Melissa McKeown, Joel Rice

NCCEH staff attending: Ehren Dohler, Bagé Shade

Minutes:

Subcommittee started the meeting with setting the tone to debrief and discussion about ESG Competition 2018. The conversation was designed to gather feedback from Regions on their experiences to inform the discussion on how we want to shift the ESG funding priorities for this year.

Joel stated last year was challenging for his regions. Not a lot of vendors or providers that have capacity. Ran into the same provider applying each year. One of the things he tried to do was increase participation and membership at the RC level to get more people at the table so they'll apply for the funds. That creates its own challenge if they are a new agency and they see the process as overwhelming. Goal this year is to be more competitive and get more agencies on board to apply for ESG funds.

Ehren mentioned if we're setting priorities around a specific agency to apply, that limits other agencies to apply. We want to choose the best program, but if there's only one RRH program applying, it makes that challenging. Also, if you set the bar on performance too high, it might deter new agencies from applying because they're concerned they will not meet those thresholds. Noted the need to balance coverage with expectations of agencies. Agencies are not applying because of expectations of being on the right side of the funder.

Joel: if the message is that ESG office is supportive and will bring TA., but in the past, the message has been, "this is the bar, and you have to meet these thresholds to be eligible." We need a consumer-friendly message to attract agencies and encourage variety of applicants.

Cindy noted she's one of those new agencies who are looking to apply. Decided to pull out last minute last year, but they didn't think they had enough behind them to go forward. Saw agencies that applied, but got their money pulled away because of low-barrier issues. Having new shelters built that are low-barrier, but under construction. Using hotels right now to serve their clients or use churches who offer space. They purchased a building that is being remodeled for families. They are housing families in transitional housing currently.

Ehren noted that any priorities we set around low-barrier shelters need to have a promise of support behind it and possibly even guidance on balancing coverage and high performance. Noted importance to

send the message that agencies are working to move towards low-barrier work, but that it doesn't have to be perfect right now. Noted that we need to work with agencies to see what part of their current operations work well with the ESG program and working to improve on access.

Cindy noted that in Alexander county, they're seeing new families (first time homeless) each day. How do they align their programs to match funding opportunities?

Joel referenced a desire to focus on TA-people in their region want to spend a day going over eligibility for services. Would like to see experts to spend time with new agencies who have basic questions about how they align with the eligible services under the funding opportunities. Joel is going to try and set up a time (half day possibly) to look at the nuts and bolts of the funding to see how their program fits into ESG funding. Have a lot of mom and pop agencies doing a lot of great work and trying to encourage them to apply and not feel left out or intimidated.

Melissa noted that she likes idea of looking at programs first to see how they fit into the ESG funding. Feedback she got was that the ES shelters don't feel like they have capacity to do low barrier work. One of the things that happened in their local competition is that if your agency receives a lot of funding and you try to offer TA, it is not as well received, so suggest Balance of State or someone else come in for that.

Ehren reminded the committee that the priorities last year tried to predict and align with ESG priorities, and that didn't work well because we're not in the ESG room to make the funding decisions. We tried to recommend funding of agencies that would most likely be funded by the ESG office, but we didn't have a rubric to ensure that alignment. We actually lost funding in regions. It would be best that we use our priorities to reflect the CoC's priorities purely and allow the ESG office to make their decisions as they will. We want to put forth the best applications based on our priorities

Joel described issues with not accessing prevention dollars. People are misinterpreting rules about funding.

Ehren asked about where street outreach falls into this situation because it seems to be a neglected component. Noted that the tension is where we both want shelters to participate in the CoC, but people are not able to get into their shelters. This creates a gap, but street outreach is not utilized, so it leaves space for assuming or worrying that creaming for clients is occurring.

Joel asked how agencies will pay for everything that is required of street outreach, and he also felt like training would be needed to explain and help agencies understand what tasks are involved in executing street outreach. Noted that it would be a helpful resource available especially since they have knowledge of people living unsheltered in their community.

Bagé noted that street outreach is a component with hidden benefits. Noted the importance of knowing how flexible the program funding is under ESG, and that the funding allows for payment of street outreach-specific program operation needs such as transportation and physical and mental health care, for example.

Melissa suggested targeting street outreach in counties that lack shelter, but also having street outreach services available in other counties because they have found that people living unsheltered will not go to the shelters.



Priorities update suggestions:

- For ES-Melissa, suggested taking out the term, “low-barrier,” but adding the note about ESG office encouraging people to shift to low barrier and offering tips to learn more about how to do that.
- Joel suggested using language that the “shelter is accessible to anyone who is homeless.” And not turning anyone away.
- Subcommittee suggested re-wording priorities to show access, and Ehren recommended breaking them out into Access, Financial Assistance, and Move-on.
- Melissa suggested separating prevention and rapid rehousing since the definitions are separate and specific.

Ehren described the CoC’s approach to prevention funds which allows space for agencies to use the money quickly because the definition of at-risk includes a wide range of people and suggested that we look at doing this differently so we can target the most vulnerable at-risk. Subcommittee decided to keep this on the agenda for a next meeting.

Bagé can draft some ideas on funding priorities based on conversation today for subcommittee to look at ahead of next month’s meeting.

Next meeting: May 23, 2019 11 AM

