**Southwest Regional Homeless Coalition**

**April 1, 2015**

**In attendance: Andrew Romines, Smoky Mountain LME/MCO; Judith Alvarado, Reach of Clay County; Monica Sieffert, Reach of Cherokee County; Christan Burgess, Reach of Haywood County; John Curtis, IOD INC; Kristi Case, Analenisgi Behavioral Health/CIHA; Kyler Robbins, Meridian Behavioral Health; Christina Smith, Jackson Neighbors in Need; Karla Allen, Jackson Neighbors in Need; Jeremy Parton, Haywood Pathways Center; Matt Gaunt, Hawthorn Heights; Ashley Freeman, Reach of Macon County; Brittany Quartaroro, Reach of Macon County.**

The group voted unanimously to change the name of the Regional Committee back to Southwest Regional Homeless Coalition, from the Smoky Mountain Regional Homeless Coalition. There was confusion in the community thinking that this group was run specifically by Smoky Mountain LME/MCO, rather than a regional coalition of stakeholders.

Ashley informed the group that she has gathered the Point in Time (PIT) Count data, and submitted that to the Balance of State. She reported only some minor issues, such as wrong email addresses.

The group discussed the Coordinated Assessment (CA) process, and the VI-SPDAT. There were some questions: 1) Can a person with a higher score (such as Shelter Plus Care) go into a lower service (such as Rapid Re-Housing)? Answer: No. 2) When should my agency do a VI-SPDAT, day 1 or day 15? Answer: If you are a facility based shelter, day 15. If you are a motel based voucher shelter, or if the person is unsheltered and cannot go into shelter, day 1. Andrew notes that it seems that scores are higher now than they were prior to implementation on January 1, when he was doing sample scores of people entering programs. Discussion that clients are learning what the tool is for, and possibly answering questions untruthfully to get the best score to get into programs. Andrew requested a spreadsheet from each agency that does the VI-SPDAT to detail: the date the VI-SPDAT was done, the client’s initials, and the score. He wants these from January 1 forward, with a due date prior to the next meeting. The group discussed possibly evaluating the scoring scale, to look at lowering the thresholds to meet the community needs. Andrew also noted that there is an appeals process if someone is not satisfied with their score, rather than what happened recently, with someone going from agency to agency trying to get a better score. Andrew stated that there is a conference call meeting tomorrow to discuss the final CA plan with the Balance of State. There is now a training video on VI-SPDAT that Andrew will show at the next meeting.

It was discussed that Section 8 in Haywood and Jackson Counties (Mountain Projects) is still using the homeless preference, so that resources is more readily available right now. Andrew noted that there may be some restoration of funds from the previous sequestration cuts to those programs.

Mountain Projects was not in attendance, so there was no update on Rapid Re-Housing funds, and how much may be left for that program currently.

The Balance of State needed representation for the Scorecard Committee, and Andrew has volunteered for that committee.

On 3/30/15, Andrew and Cheryl went to the Balance of State Regional Lead and Alternate meeting in Raleigh. He stated that we will be required to update and manage our own webpage. The link will be provided on the NCCEH site, but we will need to update the PIT and Housing Inventory, minutes, and general information. We need a website manager by 4/30/15. Kyler volunteered.

We discussed the HMIS transition from CHIN to MCAH as administrator, effective 5/1/15. There is a training session on 4/21/15 in Asheville, and Andrew will send that notification to the group. Those that use the system are strongly encouraged to attend. With this system, there will no longer be an “opt out” option, all clients will be entered. They will, however, have choices in how their data is shared within the system.

Andrew also discussed the Balance of State’s thoughts on restructuring Regional Committees. They discussed natural boundaries, including areas with no participation, how to bring efficiencies to that system, MCO service areas, congressional districts, bed availability, leave things the same, or come up with something better. There is a workgroup forming, and Andrew volunteered to participate. There was much discussion around the table that getting any larger than we already are would be difficult for the face to face networking and community partnerships that we have as a result of this group meeting regularly.

Agency Updates:

* Reach of Clay County: 4 women, 4 children regularly, and 2 additional children on the weekends
* Reach of Cherokee County: 3 women, 2 children
* Reach of Haywood County: 5 women, 5 children regularly, and 4 additional children on the weekends
* Jackson Neighbors in Need: 2 adults, closed for the season, but continuing to shelter these two since they are almost in permanent housing. They are still awaiting formal announcement from the Jackson County Commissioners if they will be able to use the old Rescue Squad building for shelter.
* Reach of Macon County: 3 women, 2 children. 2 of those women have been approved for SPC.
* Haywood Pathways Center shelter: 18 men, 7 women. Current capacity around 50. Approximately 10 of their guests are working.
* Hawthorne Heights: 4 in shelter, 1 is a runaway youth, the other 3 are Juvenile Justice referrals. They are currently getting technical assistance and training on how to work with human trafficking. They are now part of the Children’s Hope Alliance, as a result of a merger between Barium Springs and Grandfather Home.
* Smoky Mountain LME/MCO: 42 in SPC currently, with 6 who have been issued vouchers
* It was reported that New Life Women’s Center is temporarily closed.
* It was discussed that there is another homeless resource potentially: The Father’s House in Franklin, Lowell Monteith is the contact at 828-371-3334. Andrew will reach out to Lowell.
* The Seedcorn Coalition is a group working in Cherokee to develop homeless housing for homeless veterans who are Enrolled Members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Kristi will find out more, and invite them to attend the meeting.

**The next Southwest Regional Homeless Coalition meeting will be on Wednesday, May 6, 2015 at 10AM, and the Smoky Mountain LME/MCO office located at 44 Bonnie Lane, Sylva, NC 28779.**