



# North Carolina Balance of State Continuum of Care

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## NC Balance of State CoC Funding and Performance Subcommittee

### Meeting Minutes 5.15.18

**Subcommittee members attending:** Richard Gary, Melissa McKeown, Talaika Williams

**NCCEH staff attending:** Ehren Dohler, Brian Alexander, Jenn Von Egidy

**Subcommittee members missing:** Destri Leger, Joel Rice, Tiana Terry

Minutes:

#### Review Funding Priorities

FPS went through the 2018 Emergency Solutions grants Funding Priorities document. Staff solicited feedback and comments on each area of the document.

#### Goals

Each member gave feedback that the goals are clear and that a new ESG applicant would find them easy to understand.

#### Priorities

Ehren explained that the ESG office is heading towards funding only Housing-first projects. The ESG Funding Priorities Document includes an appendix with guidance on low-barrier shelter policies.

Ehren explained that in addition to these priorities NCCEH staff is working on a worksheet to help each LPA set its own local priorities, based on these CoC-wide priorities.

- *Ensure everyone in the CoC has access to low barrier shelter and rapid rehousing financial assistance and services. Homelessness prevention should be funded only in limited circumstances.*
  - Conversation
    - Amy Modlin stated that she agrees with the LPA guidance around homelessness prevention programs. She mentioned that HPRP spent a lot of money on prevention that wasn't necessary.
    - Talaika agreed this puts the focus on those who are immediately homeless and that's where the focus should be
    - Melissa added that the guidance encourages more timely exits into housing and will help with that shift.
    - Melissa asked for more clarification around the worksheet and requested that the document reference the worksheet throughout the priorities for more information.

- *The LPA plans to apply for all available funding with applicants most likely to receive funding*
  - Conversation
    - Melissa reiterated that we need to reference the worksheet again here to make sure they know where to find information on compliance issues.
    - Brian mentioned that NCCEH will be hosting an ESG Orientation webinar that will provide more information about the process. NCCEH will also encourage Funding Process Leads to reach out to Kim Crawford at the ESG office about status of the grantees in their Region.
    - Ehren also added that concerns will hopefully be addressed by more NCCEH staff hand-holding the funding process leads more this year. But to Melissa's point, we need to make sure we give more detail about what is going to be looked at and where this information will come from.
    - Amy brought up a concern that advertising too broadly often gets applicants that are not eligible.
    - Ehren responded that we want to be transparent, but a mass email is sufficient. The best way to get qualified applicants is to do active recruitment. He asked if we need to put more detail around that.
    - Brian added that recruitment might not result in an eligible applicant this year, but you can start the conversation around thresholds and getting the applicant ready for the next year.
    - Amy agreed that those who will stick through that process of becoming eligible to apply, they will probably be a good agency we want to apply in the future.
- *The LPA will only fund applicants with high rates of spending.*
  - Conversation
    - Melissa stated that we need to look at the big picture of helping as many people as we can we need to make the move to not fund agencies with a poor history of spending.
    - Ehren stated that ESG will be sending out reports with the agencies tiered. This priority points towards Tier 3 agencies not being eligible.
    - Richard mentioned that some agencies don't spend during most of the year, but then when the competition comes back around, they start to spend a lot. He asked if we should include language that Kim Crawford has sent out about spending evenly throughout the year.
      - Brian clarified that Richard wants to add guidance around spending throughout the year.
      - Mellissa also mentioned that there is a requirement to submit reimbursement monthly.
    - Brian: Tiering is based on percentage of funds spent. In the previous priority, being in good standing is where this might need to be addressed. He mentioned the recommendation to spend 25% in the first quarter, 50% in the second quarter, 75% in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, and 100% in the final quarter.
  - Ehren agreed we could put this information in the previous priority.
- *The LPA will give priority to low-barrier, housing first programs that have integrated best practices, including low-barriers to entry, housing first, and the NC BoS CoC's Written Standards*



- Brian mentioned that the worksheet will define low-barrier shelter.
- Melissa asked if there was a place in the application to give information of low-barrier policies for the review committee to look.
  - Ehren responded that we would want agencies to submit their Policies and Procedures. Ehren stated we should put it in this document that applicants should add this information into their Policies and Procedures.

### **Appendix: Best Practice by Component type**

Ehren stated that these are more guidance rather than law, and there is room for flexibility. Most of this guidance comes from the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

- Priority for Low-barrier, Housing First Emergency Shelters
  - Principle 1: Low-Barriers to Entry
    - Ehren asked if there's any comments on this principle.
    - Richard asked about the 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet "shelter should not require sobriety, income, proof identification, or put in place other barriers to shelter". He wanted to know if the shelter could remove the alcohol being confiscated.
    - Brian stated that shelters can say clients cannot have drugs or alcohol on the property. If they aren't causing problems there is no reason to bar them from shelter. They should be allowed to return the next night with a clean-slate. Staff can ask the client to relinquish the substance for entry into the shelter for that night.
  - Principle 2: Voluntary, housing-focused services
  - Ehren commented that this section is a bit redundant and could be clearer. He asked if others had comments. No comments given.
- Priority for Low-Barrier, Housing First RRH Programs
  - Principle 1: Low-barriers to entry
    - Ehren solicited comments. None given.
  - Principle 2: Active Housing Search Assistance
    - Brian added that in this particular case, we might need to say "creating a landlord list and handing it to the client is not consider housing search in RRH." We might need to be directive here. Ehren agreed.
  - Principle 3: Flexible Financial assistance and Services Package
    - Ehren solicited comments. None given.
  - Principle 4: Client-Driven Housing Stability Services
    - Amy thinks that people struggle with voluntary vs. assertive services. She thinks people feel like it makes case managers feel out of control. For their PSH program it's easier for the program to be more client-driven because there is already a constant in client's services. She recognizes that not all programs have a coordinator for the programs the same way hers does.
    - Ehren stated that programs should have coordinators and maybe it should be recommended that this is available.
    - Amy stated her coordinators aren't clinical, but they are there to prevent situations before they are problems.



- Brian mentioned that RRH happens so quick that you can't wait a month to have a housing stability plan. Maybe we need to be more specific about what the difference between RRH and PSH. A check-in is not the same as actively helping them connect to housing, employment, etc. We may need to be more directive about what assertive services are and how the client gets to direct how those services are applied to them.
    - Melissa stated we should add that case managers will link clients to external services, e.g. behavioral health
- Priority for Effective street Outreach Programs
 

These were taken from the recently passed Street Outreach Written Standards.

  - Principle 1: Filling Gaps
    - Melissa stated that she thinks that SO is valuable in areas where there is shelter also. She asked if we could change the wording from "should" to "aim"
    - Brian stated that the purpose is to get shelters to lower barriers
    - Ehren and Brian agreed that we could change this because there are areas in BoS where having both shelter and SO works well.
  - Principle 2: Targeting People with High Barriers
    - Ehren solicited comments. None given.
  - Principle 3: Rapid Connection to Emergency Services and Permanent Housing
    - Ehren solicited comments. None given.
  - Principle 4: Agency Experience
    - Ehren stated that NCCEH staff wanted to give guidance on who should be given these funds.
- Priority for Effective Homelessness Prevention Programs
  - Principle 1: Preventing Returns to Homelessness
  - Principle 2: Targeting
    - Ehren solicited feedback. FPS members stated they think both principles are good.

## Timeline

- Present at the June 5<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting for review of the ESG Funding Priorities document.
- Approval at July 10<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee Meeting
- The ESG Application will likely be released early-August.
- LPAs would have the month of July to create their local funding priorities
- Ehren will make sure Joel and Destri see this document to be sure they don't have additional comments.
- Another meeting will be set for FPS to approve the final draft to be presented for approval in the July 10<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee.

## Setting local priorities

- The ESG Funding Priorities Worksheet will identify local priorities where LPAs have flexibility.
- LPAs would complete the worksheet and vote on the local priorities.
- LPAs would submit the worksheet to NCCEH.



## Local funding worksheet framework

- *Ensure everyone in the CoC has access to low barrier shelter and rapid rehousing financial assistance and services. Homelessness prevention should be funded only in limited circumstances.*
  - LPA tasks:
    - Identify counties that need ES/SO using unsheltered counts and current ES barriers.
    - Identify counties that need RRH.
    - Worksheet gives option for HP funding only if ES and RRH needs are met. Requires justification.
- *The LPA plans to apply for all available funding with applicants most likely to receive funding*
  - No additional flexibility
- *The LPA will only fund applicants with high rates of spending.*
  - LPA tasks:
    - Identify steps that agencies in Tier 3 in 2018 (but not in 2017) must take to be funded.
    - Identify in what circumstances an LPA may reduce funding due to low spending
- *The LPA will give priority to low-barrier, housing first programs that have integrated best practices, including low-barriers to entry, housing first, and the NC BoS CoC's Written Standards*
  - LPA tasks:
    - Identify what steps agencies must take to be funded if they have not yet fully implemented best practices
- Ehren solicited feedback on the framework for the worksheet
  - Amy stated it was a little hard to picture, but it makes pretty good sense.

## Local funding priorities oversight/approval

- Options:
  - 1. Simply collect funding priorities, no approval/oversight.
  - 2. NCCEH staff make non-binding suggestions as needed.
  - 3. FPS reviews funding priorities for approval, Steering Committee ultimately approves funding priorities
  - Other ideas?
- Conversation
  - Brian stated that ESG office requested more CoC oversight of the application process. Option 2 or 3 could fulfill this.
  - Melissa stated it worries her that the timeline may be too tight for the FPS to review funding priorities and have steering committee approve.
  - Talaika stated she thought option 1 seemed the most realistic with the timeline.
  - Brian asked if FPS thought it would seem pointless to collect funding priorities without giving any feedback.
  - Amy stated she liked option 2, but that puts more on the staff. Ehren agreed that we would need to keep it simple.
  - Melissa stated that we could keep it simple now, but provide more detailed feedback on the whole process afterwards.



**Next Steps:**

- Worksheet: should we have another call to review the worksheet or should we review a document for edits electronically with track changes. FPS all agreed that we should provide edits electronically. Ehren will disseminate the worksheet within a week with a turn-around deadline of June 5th.
- Next meeting: To vote on recommendations to move forward to the Steering Committee for approval. Length of this meeting will be dependent on changes needed. We may also review the changes to the worksheet at this time. Ehren will send an email to get the next date scheduled.

