

**HPRP Advisory Group
Meeting and Conference Call
April 28, 2009 at 10:00 A.M. – DCA**

Present at DCA:

Kay Bernier	Travelers Aid of Metro Atlanta
Dennis Bowman	Nicholas House
Rev. James Milner	Community Concerns
James Milner, II	Community Concerns
Elizabeth Omilami	Martin Luther King Jr. Poor People's Church of Love, dba Hosea Feed the Hungry
Katheryn Preston	Georgia Coalition to End Homelessness
Ashley Roesler	Rockdale County Emergency Relief Fund
Amber Scott	Atlanta Regional Commission on Homelessness
Don Watt	DCA
John Bassett	DCA
Jacalyn Baker	DCA
Tracy Hipp	DCA
Lindsey Stillman	DCA
Lisa Weston	DCA
Bonnie Woods	DCA

Via Conference Call:

Martha Boyce	Carroll County Emergency Shelter
Carolyn Bridges	Center for Family Resources
Harriett Felts	Golden Rule
James Dickens	Action Ministries
Elizabeth Alcantara	Homeless Resource Network
Yvonne Forbes	Covenant House Georgia
Mary Harrison	CSRA Economic Opportunity Authority
Kim Jenkins	Open Door Community House
Jane Massey	Massey Consulting
Arlene Mutchler	Comprehensive AIDS Resource Encounter
Angeline N'donyi	Goodwill Industries of Middle Georgia
Rev. Andy Peabody	Ministries United for Service and Training (MUST)
Capt. Pam Perry	Salvation Army – Waycross
Jimmie Samuel	Macon-Bibb County EOC
Jennifer Shearin	Dalton-Whitfield County CDC
Alison Spiers	Athens Area Homeless Shelter
Larry Starr	C.A.R.E. Services of Pickens County
Lynda Suarez	CSRA Economic Opportunity Authority
Beth Vann	Decatur Cooperative Ministry
Randy Weldon	Southwest Georgia Community Action Council

HPRP Overview:

\$1.5B has been allocated nationwide for homeless prevention and rapid rehousing. \$33M has been allocated for Georgia, with \$14M going to 11 entitlements and just over \$19M going to DCA for the Balance of State. These are outcome-oriented programs leading to housing stability of participants. Funds must be used for those families and individuals that can “predict” will be stably housed at the end of the program. If housing stability at the end of assistance cannot be reasonably predicted for families and individuals (due to inadequate income, etc.), those persons should be referred to other programs. Assistance is for a maximum of 18 months, and participants must be self-sufficient at the end of that time. Participants must be re-certified at least every three months.

Eligible activities under HPRP include short term (up to 3 months) or medium term (4 – 18 months), needs-based assistance for rent, utilities, deposits, moving assistance, and vouchers (up to 30 days). All assistance is payable to vendors/third parties, and the client must be on the lease. Services include case management, outreach, housing search, legal services, and credit repair. Some money is available to assist with data collection and HMIS. DCA will share money allocated for administration (5% of allocation) with subrecipients. Subrecipients could use budget for and use some of their grant for HMIS costs, such as Pathways fees, training or inputting information into Pathways.

Eligible participants must be at or below 50% of area median income (AMI). AMI rates are published on the HUD HPRP page as well as on the DCA website. The required test for homeless prevention assistance is “Would this individual or family be homeless *but for this assistance?*” Other optional risk factors include, but are not limited to persons/families being within 2 weeks from eviction or institutional discharge; living in condemned or highly overcrowded housing; significant loss of income or increase in utility costs (cost burdened – paying more than 50% of income for housing); disabilities, trauma, health crisis; history of homelessness, youth, or foster care history; poverty, medical debt, or credit problems. Homeless criteria is the same as ESG and other Continuum of Care programs, except HPRP will include persons who are leaving institutions having been there for less than 180 days and were homeless at entry and for those timing out of transitional housing. While individuals leaving institutions may be accepted into HPRP programs, discharge programs may not be created with HPRP money. Families and individuals would not be eligible for HPRP programs if short or medium term assistance will not lead to housing stability.

DCA’s Likely Timeline:

5/18/2009	Submission of Substantial Amendment to HUD
5/20/2009	Application materials for HPRP available
7/1/2009	Applications for HPRP funds due to DCA
8/1/2009	HPRP Awards
8/31/2009	2-year contracts with subrecipients in place
8/31/2010	50% of HPRP funds expended (Re-allocations as necessary)

8/31/2011 100% of HPRP funds expended
(Re-allocations as necessary)
2/28/2012 All funds expended (HUD drop-dead date)

Administrative Requirements/Challenges for Providers:

- Cash flow
- Must be outcome-driven
- Collaboration with mainstream providers, not just homeless agencies
- Collaboration with other providers to prevent duplication
- Monthly reporting
- Constant oversight

Administrative Requirements/Challenges for DCA:

- Identifying state subgrantees – reaching out to others to cover the whole State
- Project scale
- Reasonable distribution of resources
- HMIS
- Develop and administer implementation processes
- Oversight/monitoring capacity/training capacity
- Underperforming State subgrantees/monitoring issues
- Consolidating reports

Comments, Questions and Answers, and Other Discussion:

- Eligible activities include storage.
- Eligible activities for prevention include arrearages, but the total amount of assistance may not exceed 18 months. For instance, a family could qualify for 3 months of rental arrears and up to 15 months of other assistance.
- Is there a limit on salary for paying staff? That is unknown at this time; we hope to have further guidance on that from HUD.
- It is unknown at this time how money will be allocated between direct financial assistance and services.
- Will persons in subsidized housing be eligible? They *may* be eligible for utility assistance if their utility arrears threaten their Section 8 vouchers. Agencies are invited to submit suggestions to DCA regarding a reasonable policy regarding subsidized housing.
- Can people who are living in hotels/motels be assisted? Yes, if they meet the “best for this assistance they would be homeless” test and if they are within two weeks of eviction, they could be eligible for prevention assistance.
- DCA is probably looking at 2 year awards with stipulations around performance, including spending, meeting requirements, and outcomes. A key issue regarding performance is reporting. DCA must report to HUD within 10 days after the end of each quarter, and the information we report must come from subrecipients. Failure to report in a timely manner may affect allocation or cause reallocation of funds.

- Agencies may need to have a “ramp up” period, and it may be difficult for them to spend 50% of funds within the first year. It was suggested that DCA may want/need to adjust that 50% expenditure requirement.
- Another concern regarding the 2 year contract was that some individuals would need the full 18 months of assistance and case management. If the contract ended in 24 months, some people would be left out because there would not be enough time to stabilize and track their housing stability. It would seem that most of an agency’s HPRP caseload would have to “come in” during that first year.
- Subgrantees must not hoard money. It must be spent within the time period required.
- It will be important to establish criteria to ascertain who will be likely to be successful/housing stable at the end of the program.
- One agency’s service model allows families to stay up to 24 months. They would probably “lock in” their clients early because their program is goal-centered. It was reiterated that this program is for permanent housing and the goal is that persons served will remain in that housing after the program ends.
- HUD will be offering a lot of technical assistance. Some best practices providers in rapid rehousing and homeless prevention will be invited to discuss their programs and practices.
- How does the HPRP program match up with DCA’s rapid rehousing program through ESG? It should match up very well because information/requirements for it was pulled from HUD resources.
- Will HPRP clients have to be entered into HMIS? Clients always have the option of not participating in HMIS. Their data, services, etc. will have to be tracked on paper. It was suggested that it will be difficult to track persons who may be receiving HPRP money from more than one agency if they are not in HMIS, and that persons served with the HPRP money are not “their normal homeless clients,” and may be more wary of HMIS, possible stigma, etc. Some possible ways to deal with duplication and HMIS would include strong wording on forms that consumers must disclose other assistance they are receiving and that a failure to disclose that information would have severe consequences, including dismissal from the program. Other suggestions included a website to list names and addresses of individuals served, separate confidentiality forms and releases, or having Pathways retool their HMIS consent form, and having regular provider meetings where agencies with releases could share information.
- The intent of DCA is to cover every county in the Balance of State, and not entitlement jurisdictions, at this time. Lisa Weston of DCA is helping to put data together regarding unemployment, poverty rates, fair market rent, household income, and other variables to help DCA allocate money in the Balance of State.
- How we will help potential consumers find out where to go for HPRP assistance? Information will be posted on the website as to which agencies have HPRP money and what areas they cover. A strong web-based presence is required by the State and Federal governments for this program. It will be important for grantees, DFACS, the Department of Labor, and others to have access to this information to make referrals to consumers.
- Do you envision agencies running programs they design or will programs be narrowed or require some uniformity? We anticipate having defined processes, probably including forms.

- DCA expects that we will probably have to pick one best agency in a defined areas, instead of many agencies working in the same area. This will help with possible overlap.
- It was noted that if agencies receive HPRP funds from more than one entitlement, those funds must be accounted for separately and cannot be co-mingled.
- It was suggested that providers may wish to collaborate on their application.
- DCA may include questions on the application on how potential subrecipients will handle cash flow. We anticipate bringing in help to provide a quick turn-around time for reimbursement, provided there are no problems with reimbursement requests.
- Possible training tracks would include credit counseling and repair, HQS, employment, SOAR, etc. The Georgia Coalition to End Homelessness is doing supportive housing training around the State using the case management training from the Corporation for Supportive Housing.
- DCA will publish our Substantial Amendment to the Consolidated Plan on or about April 30 and will be seeking input. Please contribute thoughts and suggestions.
- Will outcomes and risk factors be set up in Pathways? Pathways will release enhancements shortly. We may ask agencies to focus on certain barriers listed in the Barriers to Housing Stability Assessment in Pathways. It is unknown at this time if the self-sufficiency matrix will be added, but Pathways will be adding the ability to track services.
- Will HOPWA clients be eligible for HPRP funds? There is no exclusion for individuals receiving other forms of assistance as long as that assistance is not duplicated. For instance, an individual could not receive housing assistance from HPRP and HOPWA.
- An important requirement of ARRA, which authorized the HPRP program, is that all conversations about HPRP must start with “Are you a registered lobbyist?” If the answer is yes, you must cut off the conversation and require that all further communication be in writing. All communications from and to registered lobbyists will be posted on the DCA website.
- How will perform HQS inspections? We expect subrecipients to perform HQS inspections as they will have money available for housing placement; DCA will not. DCA may provide HQS training.
- DCA wants to make sure all areas of the State are covered and assisted with this money. Will potential grantees “jump” territories and cover counties and areas they do not normally cover? At least 3 agencies stated that they would be prepared to do so.