**System Updates**

**HUB: Tara Hembree**

Hub coordinators convened in Augusta last week for the first time as a group.  We took the opportunity to review data quality needs, learned about conducting process mapping sessions, and how to address challenges/barriers with a Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle.  You can expect to hear from your hub coordinators in the coming weeks around this work.  The Coordinated Entry Pilot expansion officially kicks off this week and work is underway to prepare for upcoming case conferencing meetings at the end of the month in Hubs 8, 6 and 3. Hub 2 providers will continue to focus on assessments.

We hope to have a full group of hub coordinators in May!!!

Hub 9 – Aroostook, the hub coordinator contract was moved to a new agency last month. Presque Isle Housing Authority is now the agency of hire for the hub coordinator contract and is currently underway in hiring for the position.

Hub 2 – Cumberland, United Way of Southern Maine completed another hiring cycle and made an offer that was accepted last week. The hub 2 coordinator starts on April 11.

Hub 4 – Androscoggin, the Hub Coordinator will return from parental leave on April 21.

The State Strategy Team met and reviewed progress on the action teams for System Improvement, supporting the Veterans Housing Surge, and Racial Equity and Lived Experience work. The Racial Equity team will align with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work underway in the Maine Continuum of Care.  The System Improvement Team continues to work on ways to streamline the housing process and will be informed by hub level process mapping exercises that will be happening soon. Also, a small group created case conferencing protocols that will be vetted by the MCoC Coordinated Entry Committee.  The Veterans Surge team is well on their way led by Dan Hodgkins, Preble Street and Amy Morin, Veterans Administration, subcommittees have been identified and teams are beginning to meet, Data, Landlord Engagement, and Community Relations.  There was also discussion on how the State Strategy Team work will move forward when the Community Solutions contract ends in June, more to be discussed with the council.

**CES: Erin Kelly**

The pilot has officially expanded to hubs 3, 6 and 8 on Monday, April 3rd. Assessments began in hub 2 on the same day.  The hub coordinators for these hubs held meetings last week where anyone could ask any remaining questions. Case conferencing and referrals should begin in hubs 3, 6 and 8 by the end of this month. There should be more specific updates in May, after the expansion has been up and running for a month!

**Housing Updates**

**MSHA Updates: Lauren Bustard**

**Response to NOFA for Long-Term Solutions to Address Homelessness** Thirty seven organizations applied for the funding and after careful consideration 17 entities were included in the final funding announcement. These funds have been distributed across eight of the nine Statewide Homeless Service Hubs.

The proposals that were awarded funding include:

* $4 million to the Center for Regional Prosperity for a new 280-bed shelter in Portland.
* $3.7 million to the Lewiston Housing Authority for a new 25-bed shelter in Lewiston.
* $2 million to Community Housing of Maine for a 12-bed supportive housing project in Portland for pregnant women experiencing homelessness.
* $1.2 million to Healthy Acadia for up to 14 units of permanent housing in Hancock and Washington counties.
* $916,000 to Amistad to create 12 units of permanent housing in Wiscasset.
* $696,000 to the Mid-Maine Shelter in Waterville to create an additional 18 emergency shelter beds.
* $602,000 to the Midcoast Community Alliance in Bath for 4 to 8 permanent supportive housing units for at-risk youth, and a new warming shelter with space for up to 35 people.
* $571,000 to Through These Doors to expand shelter space in Portland to serve up to 20 survivors of domestic violence.
* $555,000 to Homeless Services of Aroostook County to add 9 family shelter beds and provide permanent space for 20 warming shelter beds in Presque Isle.
* $436,000 to York County Shelter Programs for a 20-bed shelter in Sanford.
* $393,000 to South Parish Congregational Church in Augusta for facility upgrades to allow the Augusta warming shelter to continue future winter operations.
* $376,000 to the First Parish Church in Gorham to create new shelter space for four families with up to 16 total people.
* $348,000 to Preble Street to create transitional housing units in Biddeford for up to 12 at-risk youth.
* $145,000 to Greater Portland Peer Services to provide outreach and housing guidance to unsheltered individuals in Portland.
* $100,000 to the Bangor Area Homeless Shelter to add seven new beds in Bangor for individuals in recovery.
* $76,000 to Bridging the Gap in Augusta to create additional day shelter space for people accessing the overnight warming shelter.
* $60,000 to Freeport Community Services to provide housing navigation and stability services to 75 families.

**Housing Problem Solving (Diversion and Rapid Exit)** The Housing Problem Solving initiative has launched, with many providers attending an overview training in the past couple weeks. At the start of this month and continuing through spring and summer, practitioners will engage in small group skills training cohorts to learn the skills necessary to conduct effective Housing Problem Solving conversations with people in housing crises. There is still limited availability for this training if other agencies are interested.

**MCOC Updates**

**MCoC Board: Cullen Ryan**

The MCoC Board met on 4/6. It welcomed and ratified Jess Falero and Wes Phinney as new members, and ratified renewing members as approved by the MCoC. Shelter capacity has increased in Portland yet the number of people outside is growing due to the influx of asylum seekers.

Bangor is reducing its numbers in encampments and having success moving people into housing and shelters.

Shelter Plus Care will have a temporary freeze as it is fully subscribed, in part due to the success of people receiving housing in Bangor.  People are encouraged to apply for other rental assistance resources in the interim.

Shelters are mostly full with two overflowing.

Hotel placements have significantly diminished – down to 52 placements in Portland which will keep being brought down until the last hotel closes in the next month.

Generally, there were lower housing placements in March of 2023 than in March of 2022, but looking more closely, it is apparent data lands later than our report out dates, making for underreporting.  The Board decided to have monthly reports cover the month before last for a balance between timing and accuracy.  We will be a month later in our examination, but will be examining more accurate housing placement data.

The Board approved a pilot for a regional HMIS Administration, which HUD had requested we do.  If this works well, the MCoC may decide to roll this out in the other regions.  This vote will be ratified by the MCoC.

After hearing that the Monitoring Committee thinks it would be bettered by HUD Technical Assistance, the Board voted to recommend to the MCoC that the Monitoring Committee apply for and receive HUD Technical Assistance.

The Board spent time discussing a the best strategy for helping people with HIV/AIDS to receive all available support from DHHS and landed on a series of resource informational updates at Council and Continuum meetings.

**Maine Continuum of Care (MCoC): Vickey Merrill** The 3/16 MCoC meeting featured Big Thinking Topic discussions on the nomination process for open seats and expiring terms for the CoC Board of Directors.  This came from a lengthy discussion at the CoC Board Meeting, in which it was decided to put forth the full slate of Board Members with expiring terms up for renewal along with nominations for other open seats received.  The MCoC voted to support all expiring Board Terms for all Board Members wishing to renew (which was all but one) along with two new Board Members:  Jess Falero and Wes Phinney.  The second Big Think Topic revolved around the MCoC Scholarship Fund for people with Lived Experience, which also stemmed from lengthy discussion at the CoC Board, which tasked a subcommittee with developing recommendations to the full MCoC. The MCoC unanimously approved the subcommittee’s recommended processes and parameters for the MCoC Scholarship Fund for people with Lived Experience.  There was also discussion regarding potentially establishing a CoC Emergency Response Committee.  The MCoC voted to have a group convene to brainstorm what this Committee would look like, its tasks, membership, goals, etc.  More information to follow at a future meeting.  The MCoC received an after action review of the 2023 unsheltered Point in Time (PIT) count and will set aside time quarterly to discuss the PIT at the June, September, and December meetings.  There were regular standing updates on the CoC Board, Coordinated Entry, the Hubs, the Youth Action Board (YAB), and other committee updates as applicable.  The next meeting on Thursday, 4/20, will highlight the Resource Committee, what it’s tasked with accomplishing, and why it’s important not only to CoC-funded projects but also the larger homeless services system in hopes of generating increased interest in committee membership