

## **Hampden County Individual Services Meeting Minutes – March 28, 2023**

*Tanja Alessi, CSO/FOH, Farida Bature, WMNEH, Maria Chambers, BHN, Lynn Conway, Elliot CHS, Kim Fontaine, Elliot CHS, H John Fisher, Wanda Garcia, Catholic Charities, Monique Gondek-Ashe, Janice Humason, CSO/FOH, Mark Jachym, Springfield CTC, Colleen Keaveney, Kim Lee, MiraVista BHC, Jay Levy, Elliot CHS, Jenifer Lucca, Samaritan Inn, Jeffrey' Mac, Daimarie Marquez, Catholic Charities, Marilyn Martinez, Catholic Charities, Bryant McMillan, Anna Mitkevicius, Kimberly Ryan, CSO/FOH, Veteran Housing Coordinator, Jessica Sastre, CHD, Edgar Vaskanyan, CSO/FOH, Kathy West, Elliot CHS, Chris Zabik, DMH, Brianna Zimmerman, Stavros,*

### **Shelter/Housing Updates**

**CSO/FOH:** They are at maximum capacity and all shelter beds are full.

**Hadley Econo-Lodge Update:** Pamela reported that the Hadley Zoning Board denied Valley CDC's permit to convert the Econolodge to 50 affordable and deeply affordable units (25 set aside for people exiting homelessness). They denied the permit without allowing public comment. Valley CDC is looking into next possible steps and community members are also exploring how to push further (possible Town Meeting vote to change the zoning by-laws). If people know people who live in Hadley who may want to get involved to support the project, please contact Pamela at [pschwartz@westernmasshousingfirst.org](mailto:pschwartz@westernmasshousingfirst.org).

**Samaritan Inn:** While the DHCD shelter contract is not renewed, the shelter is pursuing other funding options and is confident it will continue full service.

**Holyoke – Center for Human Development:** their 46 units of low-threshold housing are awaiting a certificate of occupancy which will hopefully be provided in the next couple of weeks. Move-ins will happen immediately thereafter.

**Low Threshold Housing (LTH) Discussion:** We took time to review the LTH programs in the region and how to access them.

### **Clinical and Support Options (CSO) Program .**

Currently the program houses 115 individuals across Springfield (50), Northampton (32) and Greenfield (33) . They are organized by "teams" for each area to allow for more focused attention on the individuals served. There is currently a wait list; individuals will continue to be assessed and added to the wait list.

Eligibility Criteria (per DPH): Experiencing

1. substance use disorder or at-risk of overdoses
2. Someone at risk of acquiring HIV or living with HIV
3. Someone at risk of sexual exploitation

And

Individuals experiencing homelessness defined as:

in a place not meant for human habitation or living in a shelter (or at a hospital but in emergency shelter prior to hospital stay).

Referral Process:

The referral form is [here](#). Or email [lthsreferrals@csoinc.org](mailto:lthsreferrals@csoinc.org).

**Mental Health Association (MHA):** Thanks to MHA for their detailed summary [HERE](#) of their low-threshold housing resources (via multiple funding sources), which includes program type, # of units and eligibility criteria. Contact Marva Douglas at [mdouglas@mhainc.org](mailto:mdouglas@mhainc.org). Click [HERE](#) for more details.

**Center for Human Development (CHD):** 46 LTH units in Holyoke. Very close to opening. For email referrals, contact [Iconnolly@chd.org](mailto:Iconnolly@chd.org). See Referral Form [HERE](#).

**Network Legislative Priorities Update:** Pamela reviewed the Network's [Legislative Priorities](#) with the Committee. It's top 9 priorities include:

- Bill of Rights for People Experiencing Homelessness
- Access to Counsel
- Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act
- Local Option for Affordable Housing
- Real Estate Transfer Fee
- Local Option for Rent Stabilization
- Foreclosure Prevention Program
- Access to ID
- Emergency Assistance Omnibus
- Supportive Housing Subsidy Pool Program

**Network's FY24 Budget Priorities:** The Network is pleased to provide its FY24 budget priorities [HERE](#). These priorities will be the basis for the Network's advocacy in the upcoming House and Senate budget processes (final budget for FY24 –from 7/1/23 –6/30/24 –will be signed into law by 7/10). Please stay connected to the advocacy process by subscribing to our [Network blog](#).

**Mass Health Redetermination:** Eligibility redetermination begins April 1. Please see the important information and tools to assist individuals [HERE](#)

**Equal Access Rule Training:** The Network in collaboration with the two COC'S are having a webinar on April 5 on the Equal Access Rule for the LGBTQ. To learn more, please go [HERE](#)

**Network Annual Gathering:** May 12! Please see the [Annual Gathering Invitation HERE](#)

Next Meeting: **April 25 at 1pm**