

HPRP Tucson and Pima County Design Group Meeting Notes July 21, 2009



Attendance: Margaret Kish, Jodie Barnes, Linda Kot, Mary Beth Landis Jantzen, Pat De Vito, Leslie Carlson, Terri Patt-Smith, Ron Koenig, Anthony Young, Rosalva A. Bullock, La'Tresa Jester, Charles Monroe, Norma MacKenzie, and Bea Gallivan

Introductions

Leslie Carlson welcomed everyone and the participants introduced themselves.

RFQ's for Providers

The City of Tucson and Pima County are going to contract with service providers who will provide HPRP services. Design Group members were asked: which would make more sense for hypothetical applicants -- if the City and County were to prepare multiple RFQs for the services, or one RFQ that has component parts, and applicants could submit proposals for the components that they have the expertise to provide? The HPRP services will include:

- Resource Specialist
- Resource Specialist – serving rural areas
- Contract Specialist
- Housing quality services: rent reasonableness, inspections, etc.

After discussion there was consensus that it would be simpler to have an all-in-one application process. The following suggestions were made about the RFQ:

- Agencies should be told that they should only apply for what they have the expertise to do.
- Applicants should be encouraged to tell their stories, i.e., their expertise and experience to do the functions that they are bidding for.
- Perhaps include resumes of experienced staff who would do the work
- Maybe ask agencies to indicate how they can contribute to outreach and marketing about HPRP services.
- What kinds of partnerships and collaborations that the agency can bring to the table

Ron Koenig stated that he attended a meeting with Procurement who said there could be one RFP (from both the City and County).

The timeline for HPRP planning and service contracts is as follows:

July 28 – Presentation to additional stakeholders to get additional suggestions

August 4 – Final discussion of program model including suggestions from July 28; also discuss marketing and outreach

August 11 – Design Group will meet if necessary

During August – City and County will prepare and release the RFQ

September 30 – deadline for all contracts to be in place.

Design Group members made additional suggestions for topics to be discussed at the August 4 Design Group meeting.

- Marketing and outreach;
- Partnerships and collaborations;
- Legal Aid needs to be a part of the process to prevent eviction and help with other issues that may have led to non-payment in the first place. Sometimes landlord payments are arranged, but the client get evicted anyway;

How do we measure success for HPRP as a system?

Leslie noted that the Design Group had previously discussed how to define success for HPRP in terms of individual client outcomes. She asked the group to define success for the HPRP program as a whole. Design group members identified the following indicators of success:

- A healthy percentage of those served will stay housed (e.g., for at least six months).
- Referrals to mainstream services will be appropriate and effective.
- HPRP will serve as an opportunity to create new collaborations and partnerships.
- HPRP will result in a new paradigm of effective problem-solving and accountability.
- We will need to have an ongoing group for oversight and to review evaluation data.
- HPRP will have good evaluation data and will use it to plan for sustainability.
- Providers will commit to sending key people to serve on the HPRP oversight/advisory group.
- The HPRP oversight/advisory group will be able to sustain the program design at the end of the initial three years.
- Best practices will be documented and sustained.
- HPRP will be used to foster a community-based organization leadership model that can help to influence policy and funding.
- HPRP should be willing and able to shift and adapt as necessary, and help the contracted agencies improve if there are problems.
- Include consumer input to improve service quality.

Allocation of Resources

Leslie distributed updated charts showing the tasks to be carried out by the HPRP Contract Specialist and the HPRP Resource Specialist. The revised charts reflected discussion from the July 14 Design Group meeting.

Leslie distributed three handouts for the resources discussion: 1) Stair-step chart that Margaret created; 2) an overview of the HPRP budget; and 3) a summary of HPRP budgets from a sample of other cities.

It was clarified that the Relocation and Stabilization line in the HPRP budget is for the costs of contractual services, i.e., Resource and Contract Specialists, and other contracted services. The HMIS/Data/Web site line includes the web site contractor, HMIS consultant, and local evaluation costs. The web site contractor has already been identified -- it will be the same

contractor who developed the Pima County Housing Search web site. We use the existing HMIS consultant that already provides HMIS training and TA for Pima County providers. The budget line, "Financial Assistance" are the funds that we will have for client assistance for eviction prevention and re-housing. This totals \$2,080,739.

After discussion, the group decided on the following recommendations.

- We should identify any "low-hanging fruit" – kinds of clients and needs that are obvious choices for HPRP assistance, e.g., clients who could get VASH housing but need funds for deposits. Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers have also been awarded to the City.
- Pay up to two months back rent for a client. When there is more than that, the client will usually have been evicted already.
- Maximum time to receive HPRP services: 12 months. Clients could receive HPRP services, exit, and then, if necessary, re-enter the program for additional services for up to 12 months in total.
- Maximum emergency assistance: \$8,000. This might slide by family size.
- After the first three months, the client should contribute a portion of their income for rent. The group decided against using a 30% model for this and decided instead to recommend a sliding scale.
- At the 3-month check the RS should assess how the client is doing and determine if it will be worthwhile to continue to invest resources.

The group estimated that HPRP will be able to assist approximately 400 individuals. Perhaps more people than that can be served for homelessness prevention through additional CSBG money provided by Emergency Services Network (ESN). Leslie will get more information from Norma Gallegos.

Some prevention clients might be over-housed. If so, should HPRP provide rent assistance for the full rent? HPRP could use a payment standard for their family size. The family could pay the difference if they were over-housed and did not wish to move. However, they might have a lease that they can't break. Legal Aid could help with landlord negotiations.

Design Group members discussed how many contractual positions would be possible, based on the budget. It was agreed that the Resource and Contract Specialists should be paid in accordance with the expertise we are seeking, and at rates that will discourage turnover. It was agreed to recommend about \$54,000 to cover salary and all other agency costs for the positions. This would enable the project to have two Contract Specialists and three Resource Specialists. One of the Resource Specialists would serve rural areas.

Planning for the expanded Design Group meeting on July 28, 2009

Leslie will send the names of all those who were invited to attend the meeting.

Leslie will create a PowerPoint presentation and present information about HPRP and the program design that has been drafted to date. Leslie asked the group to identify what kinds of input that especially wanted to get from this meeting.

- Suggestions for effective coordination with other resources;
- Feedback on the plans to provide 3 Resource Specialists (one to serve rural areas) and 2 Contract Specialists;
- Feedback about the time (12 months) and financial assistance (\$8,000) caps;
- Feedback on the estimates shown in Margaret's stair-step chart.