# CONTRA COSTA HMIS POLICY COMMITTEE

# MEETING MINUTES

**Welcome & Introductions**

Alvin Reed (Berkeley Food and Housing Project), Bertha Lopez (HUME Center), Cassie Hourlland (H3), Contesa Tate (GRIP), Dana Ewing (H3), DeVonn Powers (Humanity Way), Dora Segura (Catholic Charities of the East Bay), Gabriel Lemus (COH Member), Gayla Shelton (Humanity Way), Janel Fletcher (SHELTER, Inc), Jenny Quijada (Trinity Center), Jamie Klinger (H3), Justin Jarratt (211), Kimberly Thai (H3), Kristina Jackson (H3), Laura Sharples (H3), Michael Fischer (H3), Patrick Oso Okoh (Hope Solutions), Sadiq Nemati (SHELTER Inc.), Sara Marsh (Hope Solutions), Sharon Osterweil (Lifelong Medical), Shelby Ferguson (H3), Tanya Ford-Gains (Hope Solutions), Teri Lundvall (Winter Nights Shelter), Tom Fulton (Northern California Family Center), Tony Ucciferri (COH Member)

**Agency Updates**

- Kristina asked for updates from providers.
- Jenny from Trinity Center announced the evening program just started. They were at the Armory but because the National Guard has been activated, Trinity Center had to leave the Armory. They have put the participants in a hotel for now.
- Teri with Winter Nights announced they will be opening the parking lot program in Pittsburg. There isn't a definite date, but they expect it to open in the next week or two.
- Kim announced H3 has a position open on the RED Team. The RED Team is looking for a part-time data clerk.
- Jenny from Trinity Center announced their young adult program is up and running. Jon Lawrence is running the program and so far, things are going great!

**CES Data Quality Dashboard Review**

- Kristina provided some Coordinated Entry Data Quality Reminders.
- All family members should receive a CES enrollment.
- Only the Head of Household requires a Triage Tool Assessment.
- Only the Head of Household requires a Current Living Situation Assessment.
- VI-SPDAT's are considered a housing needs assessment.
- CES services should be recorded for all clients within the CES enrollment, after you switch back to your home agency.

- These are areas where the RED Team sees a lot of data entry QA issues, so they want to remind everyone.
- If there is a piece of the CES workflow that is confusing or confusion on where your agency or staff fit in to the CES data entry process, please reach out to schedule a one on one conversation with the RED Team.

**New Clarity Features & Updates**

- Kim shared new features including favorite reports, printing directions, screen warnings and client location.
- Kim showed demonstrations of each feature in Clarity.
    - Favorite Reports can be seen in the Report Library. Reports can be added to Favorite Reports by clicking on the star icon next to the report.
    - Printing Directions is for enrollments or referrals. There is an option to print driving directions. Once a client is enrolled there is a print directions button close to the enroll button. If the icon is clicked, directions pop up in a new window.
        - **Q**: Do we request annual updates for facility locations?
        - **A:** No, other than in these meetings.
        - Attendees were asked to make sure facility locations are updated in HMIS so people can utilize this new feature.
    - Client locations can be entered in the location tab. Location information can also be stored within services. Geo-locations can be added to services. This is not mandatory, but agencies can use this feature as needed. Outreach teams may start to use these features.
    - Warnings now appear on the intake screen.
        - Attendee requested to add a warning for whenever Data Not Collected is selected for the HUD required questions.
        - Another attendee agreed this would be a good addition and asked for warnings to appear on any other areas where there is a double question such as income information or DV info, etc.
        - Any feedback or suggestions on additional warning messages can be shared with the RED Team.
    - Newsflash email message was sent on January 4th. It included information on the Date of Birth Update and PSH Unit Availability. Kim provided a demonstration on these updates.
        - *Date of Birth Update:* Attendees were asked to please limit the Client Doesn't Know or Client Refused responses. For the Date of Birth field, please calculate ages by estimating when birth year might be, using 1/1 as the month and day. If clients are unwilling to give their age and date of birth, please use this default information. This helps with data quality and reports.
        - *PSH Unit Availability:* If your agency operates a Permanent Supportive Housing Program, you must report your unit availability as they become available. Kim provided a demonstration on how this is done.
    - If there are any questions or your agency needs a refresher, please contact the RED Team.

**Group Discussion- "Prior Living Situation" Field**

- This is being brought to this group because there is increased interest in measuring the total number of unsheltered in the community.
- This field is worded as type of residence on the standard intake screen. Options include place not meant for habitation, emergency shelter, staying with family, etc.
- Do we want to ask this question of children in addition to the head of household?
  - Pros: Gain a better understanding of the true unsheltered count in the community.
  - Cons: Have to update the intakes and train staff.

Discussion:

- **Q:** Are you talking about minor children or any children in general?
  - **A:** Minor children includes anyone in the household.
- **Q:** Are they typically not with the parents?
  - **A:** That is what we are trying to find out.
- **Comment:** It is important to track this because we've seen situations where someone is trying to reunite with their child, and this can be useful to know if the child is living with them or not.
- **Comment:** This is an interesting question in the context of HMIS since they really struggle or this system seems to really struggle with being able to hold families with complexities. In the past, when there have been children born while living in PSH, agencies have been instructed to enroll them as chronically homeless, even though they are living with the family when they are born as PSH. This has to do with the APR result for showing how many people are chronically homeless. We can track this and have gotten pushback from tracking in the past so there may be competing interests going on.
- **Comment**: Kids 10-15 are usually able to live with other relatives. Usually young kids are with the parents and teenagers are on their own or possibly with the parents. Kids in that middle age range are able to find another family member or friend or somewhere where they can stay. They don't technically meet the definition of unsheltered homelessness, but this misses out on the complexity of families who had to be broken up because of homelessness. Is there a way to capture this?
- Good question to ask when they first enroll to get a better understanding of where they are coming from. Sounds like the group is in favor of adding the question. Will discuss more in depth at the next meeting.
- **Comment:** It's not a problem to track this. We get the data when we are doing an intake with someone. The problem comes up when we run other reports and people are looking for certain kinds of outcomes. In the past on the intake we have had a section that isn't there now that asked if more children or other household members would be joining. Sounds like it is something that H3 is trying to be more precise with unsheltered folks. Agencies can accommodate that question. Question of how many chronically homeless people are we serving will be adjusted. We can explain this at Rank and Review.

**PIT/HIC Announcements**

- Jamie Klinger provided a few updates to the PIT.

- H3 requested an exemption for the full unsheltered PIT Count for 2021 that was approved by HUD on 1/11/21. This is a safety precaution due to the changes in COVID-19 rates in the general population to protect staff and clients.
- Data from last year's PIT data, Service Data, Dispatch data and encampment data will help supplement data that would be identified through the unsheltered PIT count.
- Additional information will be provided at the COH meeting on January 21$^{st}$.
- There will still be a sheltered count. Attendees were asked to please have intake and exit data entered into HMIS by February 5$^{th}$ and submit the monthly enrollment reports to Tammy by February 10$^{th}$.
- The RED Team will run the report for the sheltered PIT the week after February 10$^{th}$.
- The Housing Inventory Count (HIC) applies to shelter, transitional housing, RRH and PSH. This looks at how many beds and how they are being utilized. All intakes, exits and move in dates should be entered by February 5$^{th}$. Please submit monthly enrollment reports to Tammy by February 10$^{th}$.
- Kim provided a demonstration on the HIC data entry Google sheet.
- The RED Team will be scheduling one on one conversations with each agency the week of February 25$^{th}$ to go over their HIC inventory numbers. Please let the RED Team know who the most appropriate person is to get information.
- **Q**: Does HIC include programs without HUD funds?
  - **A:** Yes, it does include all programs who have beds whether or not they are receiving HUD funding.

**LSA Reminders**

- The RED Team is in the process of cleaning up the report to HUD. This report is done annually and measures how households are moving through the homeless system and highlights outcome disparities.
- Attendees were reminded of common errors including:
  - There should not be overlapping program enrollments within the same project type.
  - Same day exits for warming centers or exit dates are not 1 day after the last bed night.
  - Low utilization rates due to inaccurate bed inventory. Please notify the HMIS Team when there is a change in bed or unit inventory.

**DV Data & HMIS**

- Attendees were reminded that the RED Team is migrating all data for providers that are DV providers. Any provider that may receive DV funding are required to use database that is outside of HMIS.
- Attendees may hear from Homebase or the RED Team if they are identified as one of these providers.

**Questions**

- No Questions

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, February 16$^{th}$ from 3:00-4:00pm