



**Implementing Group No. 1**  
**Outreach to Homelessness/At-Risk of Homelessness**  
**Summary & Update**  
**August 24, 2012**



*To provide a common frame of reference...*

- ◆ The Commission to End Homelessness (previously Ending Homelessness 2020) provides oversight and accountability for the implementation of the goals and strategies as defined in the County's Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness
- ◆ 4 Implementing Groups were established to work various aspects of the Plan. Homeless prevention is one of the key strategies of Orange County's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness and is one of the four core Implementation Groups, established to execute the 10 year plan. This reports on Implementing Group #1 (Outreach to Homeless/At-Risk of Homeless)
- ◆ The first action of Group #1 was to segment the work into two discreet topics:
  - ❖ The "At-Risk of Homeless" topic is being addressed first and is referred to as "Prevention"
  - ❖ The "Outreach to Homeless" is referred to simply as "Outreach" and will be addressed separately.
- ◆ **The purpose of our prevention efforts is to connect and provide people who are at risk of homelessness with resources that will keep them housed.**



- ◆ To date, our initial steps have addressed:
  - ❖ identifying an inventory of our current activity
  - ❖ identifying and reviewing current scholarship
  - ❖ establishing best practices
  - ❖ establishing a measurement process
  - ❖ defining eligibility – preliminary discussion
  - ❖ defining success
  - ❖ Marketing
  
- ◆ In addition, we will also address the following topics in the coming months:
  - ❖ Resources & funding
  - ❖ Finalize eligibility definition
  - ❖ Plan/Recommendations
  - ❖ Implementation



- ◆ We have briefly surveyed current resources within Orange County in order to get some sense of what are we are currently doing regarding prevention.
- ◆ The survey covers approximately 26 Agencies administering approximately 109 programs ( allowing for differences in program definition from agency to agency) throughout the County.
- ◆ Presumably there will be an opportunity to find ways to both determine where/if there are gaps and move toward more efficient deliver of services to those in need.



- ◆ All activity should have the strict focus of achieving our goal of keeping at-risk households housed. Our prevention programs should include:
  - ❖ Participation in a coordinated entry system
  - ❖ Data collection and performance measurements
  - ❖ Flexible cash assistance
  - ❖ Access to comprehensive services
  - ❖ The ability to decide who needs what help and at what “dosage”
  - ❖ Case management
  - ❖ An emphasis on increasing household income
  - ❖ Staff/client ratio – starting dialogue at 20 -1
  
- ◆ Lack of consistent funding is a significant barrier to planning and managing an effective, long term prevention program



- ◆ Consistency within our programs demands consistency within our eligibility requirements. The eligibility for Orange County prevention programs should include the following:
  - ❖ **Income levels**
    - ◇ below 50% of AMI
    - ◇ Committee was evenly divided between 30% and 50% AMI
  - ❖ **Housing Crisis**
    - ◇ Cannot stay in current location without support
    - ◇ Must have rental agreement
    - ◇ Must have 3 day/pay or quit notice
  - ❖ **Lack of other resources**
    - ◇ Must be able to document crisis/emergency
    - ◇ May be determined by interview with case worker
  
- ◆ This category will need ongoing review for two reasons. First, the committee's split concerning the income levels did not reveal a consensus. Second, we will need to consider the impact of our eligibility requirements if they are contrary to those of HUD. Do we adapt to reflect the national conversation, or do we maintain a program more relevant to the needs of Orange County?



- ◆ There are two critical issues concerning the concept of success in regard to our prevention programs. One that we have consistency in our definition – that we are all speaking the same language, and two, that it can be clearly measured – that what we say is true and provable.
  - ❖ Definition:
    - ◇ One year after the client stopped receiving assistance, they are stably housed in a permanent location, and they have been stably housed for the entire year
    - ◇ Not in a shelter
    - ◇ Not in a motel
    - ◇ Not in a shelter program or any other housing program with a residency time limit
  - ❖ Measurement:
    - ◇ County-wide: data pulled from a database (HMIS), measuring client identifying information, program entry date, dates of service, program exit date
    - ◇ Agency-level: quarterly follow up for one year from the date the client stopped receiving assistance
    - ◇ Success determination is pretty simple: one year later, if the client is still stably housed and if the county database system does not indicate program entry dates for emergency shelter, transitional shelter, or rapid re-housing programs.



- ◆ Given the difficult state of our current economy, the need for homeless prevention assistance has never been greater. One of the great challenges is that the target audience has expanded beyond traditional demographics. In short, we have a situation where many of those in need have no previous experience in seeking assistance and are at a loss on where to begin. In order to effectively prevent the spread of homelessness, we therefore must change our outreach efforts in order to connect with this new demographic.
  
- ◆ Our marketing targets should include:
  - ❖ **Public agencies:** social services, code enforcement departments, police departments, military, and jails
  
  - ❖ **Non-profits:** Boys and Girls clubs, child care centers, senior/community centers, 211, hospitals, community resource centers, homeless service agencies, medical clinics, fair housing, homeowner and neighborhood associations, and the faith-based community
  
  - ❖ **Private sector:** realtors, property management firms, banks, mortgage lenders, landlords, motel owners, and temporary employment agencies
  
  - ❖ **Media:** public television, cable access, newspapers, radio, psa's
  
  - ❖ **Internet:** city and county websites, various social media, Monster, Craig's list, search engine
  
  - ❖ **Schools:** individual public schools, department of education, PTA's, and include private schools
  
  - ❖ **Youth recreation:** Scouts, Indian Princess, little league, AYSO, etc.
  
  - ❖ **Specific actions:** canvass apartment complexes, flyers at discount stores, job fairs, and inserts in utility bills





*In order to complete the “Prevention” portion of Group 1’s scope, the following will be addressed in the next several months:*

- ◆ Refine eligibility
  - ❖ Committee split
  - ❖ Continue dialogue with national standards
  
- ◆ Execute measurement and data collection processes
  - ❖ Centralized entry system
  - ❖ OCP
  
- ◆ Funding strategy
  - ❖ Sources
  - ❖ Collaborative
  
- ◆ Dialectic
  - ❖ Collaborative
  - ❖ Research
  
- ◆ Engage long term strategies



*Outreach to Homeless represents the The second portion of the Group 1 charter.....*

- ◆ This will attempt to identify and reach those people who are not currently connected to services.
- ◆ Group #1 will most likely address this topic at some point in August or September
- ◆ It may be appropriate to consider establishing a separate group to pursue “Outreach” rather than combining with the “Prevention” discussion.
  - ❖ Different issues, needs, resource requirements, and solutions.
- ◆ Standardized intake system can be included in discussion of Outreach.