



Shelter Monitoring Committee

Quarterly Report to Board of Supervisors and the Mayor's Office

June 4, 2008

Executive Summary

Shelter Site Visits

The Shelter Monitoring Committee ["Committee"] conducted 16 site visits in the last quarter and visited approximately 60% of sites in operation from January 1 to March 31, 2008. The Committee noted a lack of access to hygiene products, inoperable facilities, including toilets, as well as exceptional case management services at some sites.

Policy and Legislative Reports of the Shelter Monitoring Committee

Shelter Enrichment Report

At the request of Mayor Newsom, the Local Homeless Coordinating Board (LHCB) and the Committee began a community process to get feedback on the medical respite and supportive service model proposed. Five community meetings and five on-site shelter meetings were held over a six week period in March and April of 2008 to gather recommendations on medical services, supportive services, and access to the City & County of San Francisco shelter system. The Shelter Enrichment Report co-drafted by Committee staff details the community suggestions for improvement.

Information Requests

The Committee submitted 3 requests for information to the Human Services Agency and the Department of Public Health. These requests focused on the closure of Busters' Place and additional resources for clients, specifically women, with the opening of the male-only 150 Otis Drop In Center. The information provided by the City departments allows the Committee to respond to client's request with accurate information.

Membership

There are currently two vacancies on the Committee to be filled at the July 2008 Local Homeless Coordinating Board meeting.

**Shelter Monitoring Committee Quarterly Report
June 4, 2008**

Mission Statement of the Shelter Monitoring Committee

The Shelter Monitoring Committee is an independent vehicle charged with documenting the conditions of shelters and resource centers to improve the health, safety, and treatment of residents, clients, staff, and the homeless community. The Committee's mission is to undertake this work recognizing individual human rights and promoting a universal standard of care for shelters and resource centers in the City and County of San Francisco.

Site Inspections

The inspection teams conducted 16 visits from January 1 to March 31, 2008. The majority of the site visits were unannounced.

The site visits noted a marked improvement over previous quarters in hygiene conditions, both in the bathroom facilities as well as the living areas. Compared to previous inspections, a majority of sites had access to toilet paper, soap, and paper towels / hand dryers. Exceptions to this include Buster's Place and Ella Hill Hutch where unhygienic bathroom conditions, as well as a lack of paper towels and clean toilet paper were noted. Furthermore, site inspections noted no inoperable bathroom

Shelter and Resource Centers	Number of Visits
Bethel AME	1
Buster's Place	3
Compass Family Center	1
Ella Hill Hutch	1
Hamilton Family Shelter	1
Hospitality House	1
Lark Inn	1
Mission Neighborhood Resource Center	1
Multi Service Center – South	2
Providence	1
Santa Ana	1
Santa Marta/Santa Maria	1
Tenderloin Health	1
Total Number of Visits	16

facilities. The majority of complaints from clients concerned: access to linens, availability of transportation services, and the quality of case management at the site. In particular, poor access to appropriate linens, including sheets, pillowcases, and towels, were noted during the March 25, 2008 site inspection at Multi Service Center – South (MSC South), as well as during the March 25, 2008 site inspection of Ella Hill Hutch. A lack of appropriate transportation was often noted at sites including: a complete lack of transportation options at Buster's Place, problems with the availability and frequency of the MAP van at Tenderloin Health, and a lack of tokens at Santa Maria and Santa Marta shelters. On February 11, 2008 five clients contacted at Tenderloin Health noted that they were not involved at case management at the site. Complaints from clients regarding the quality of case management were noted during the March 25, 2008 inspection at MSC South. On the contrary, reports of exceptional case management services were received from clients at the Lark Inn shelter. Finally, a lack of an appropriate staff to client ratio was noted at Providence Shelter (with a ratio of 42:1), Ella Hill Hutch, and MSC South. These sites were also noted as having long lines of people waiting to enter the shelter upon time of inspection.

Policy and Legislative Reports of the Shelter Monitoring Committee

Standard of Care

The Board of Supervisors passed the Standards of Care (SOC) legislation and Mayor Newsom approved the legislation on March 28, 2008. Beginning on April 28, 2008, the Committee began taking SOC complaints.

Working with the Department of Public Health and the Human Services Agency, the Committee developed a training module for shelter directors and staff to review the SOC and provide an overview of the SOC complaint process. Committee staff has presented thus far before three shelter sites. The Committee, DPH, and HSA are working to ensure each site receives training before June 30, 2008.

Due to a lack of additional staffing, the Committee has struggled to respond to each SOC complaint and has identified the need to have the additional legislated staff added as soon as possible. The Committee's sole staff is dividing time between staffing Committee meetings, drafting reports, meeting with clients, and conducting site visits. The Committee has directed the staff to focus all energy on responding to SOC complaints, including following up with clients to ensure they are satisfied with site responses.

Committee Members are promoting the Standards of Care during site visits and are working with sites to address areas of concerns, including access to 8 hours of sleep and staff treatment of clients. Utilizing a SOC site form, Committee Members are able to review all 31 Standards, which pertain to the site, during a visit, through observation and interaction with clients and staff. The SOC site inspection report provides the site with a tool to SOC areas that require additional technical assistance, i.e. staff training, or resources, i.e., additional funding for supplies.

The Committee will continue to report back to the Mayor's Office and the Board of Supervisors on the implementation of the Standards of Care.

Shelter Enrichment Process

The Shelter Enrichment process began on February 14, 2008, when Mayor Newsom held a press conference announcing his interest in transforming the two largest City owned emergency shelters, Next Door and Multi Service Center South (MSC), through expanding the medical respite program and placement of on-site supportive services, similar to the one-stop model of Project Homeless Connect. The Local Homeless Coordinating Board (LHCB) and the Committee began a community process to get feedback on the medical respite and supportive service model proposed. Five community meetings and five on-site shelter meetings were held over a six week period to gather recommendations on medical services, supportive services, and access to the City & County of San Francisco shelter system.

On May 12, 2008, the Committee forwarded the final report, drafted by Committee and LHCB staff, to Mayor Newsom and the Board of Supervisors, including a cover letter which highlighted the Committee's suggested principles for any shelter redesign process, including:

- *Do not reduce the number of sleeping units in the emergency shelter system for both single adults and families*
- *Increase medical services for homeless shelter residents, however do not replace general access sleeping units with medical respite beds*

- *Increase services for homeless people and make the on-site services accessible to all people, not just those staying at the shelter the services are located*
- *The current way shelter sleeping units are accessed needs to change [clients stated on multiple occasions that they had to wait in line 5-8 hours a day to access a one-day reservation]*
- *Solutions must be client focused and the only way to create client focused and guided solutions is to get client input*
- *All recommendations should be alignment with Continuum of Care Five Year Strategic Plan and the Shelter Standards of Care*

As highlighted in the Standards of Care section of this report [yes, it will be after the 30th], an ongoing issue brought forward to the Committee is the lack of access to 7-day reservations in the shelter system. The Committee has directed its staff to work in partnership with the LHCB to conduct quarterly visits at resource centers and shelters to track how many clients are “turned away” without a reservation. Turn-aways tracking would be based on the following criteria:

1. A turn-away is defined as an individual attempting to make a reservation at any time during the day or night and not being able to access a sleeping unit at that time.
2. Types of turn-away are classified in two ways, a) an individual is unable to make a reservation at X time as there no sleeping units available in the system and b) an individual is unable to make a reservation at X time as the shelter they are requesting does not have an available sleeping unit [personal choice].
3. The tracking mechanism would note whether the turn-away was based on personal choice or the availability of a sleeping unit. The mechanism would be used at the site throughout the day, note if the individual was unable to make the reservation based on availability, and at what time a sleeping unit was made available within CHANGES.
4. Clients should have the option to fill out a survey documenting the time they were turned away, which shelter they could not access, and the reason.

The Committee has directed its staff to complete one tracking session before August 1, 2008.

Local Homeless Coordinating Board

Committee Members and/or staff continue to attend monthly meetings of the Local Homeless Coordinating Board. Committee staff works with LHCB staff to identify policy and area overlaps, including the Shelter Enrichment process.

Information Requests

The Committee issued three Information Requests from January 1 to March 31, 2008. The information requested of and provided by the Human Services Agency and Department of Public Health focused on the closure of Buster’s Place and alternate resources for clients, particularly women. This new format of requesting information from City departments allows the Committee to get information in a more timely fashion. That information is then provided to all Committee Members who are better able to field questions and provide correct information when conducting site visits.

Membership

There are currently two vacancies on the Committee. Both seats are Local Homeless Coordinating Board appointments. The LHCB is reviewing applications and will make appointments at its July 2008 meeting.

Committee Members received a confidentially overview by Deputy City Attorney Jennifer Williams at its May 2008 Committee Meeting.