



Memorandum

TO: NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES
AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

FROM: Leslye Corsiglia

SUBJECT: DISCHARGE PLANNING

DATE: February 22, 2011

Approved

Date

3-1-11

COUNCIL DISTRICT: City-Wide

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Neighborhood Services and Education Committee accept this report on discharge planning efforts to prevent homelessness and provide staff with suggestions, ideas and other feedback on alternative approaches to this effort.

OUTCOME

The Committee will understand the discharge planning efforts of the City and Destination:Home for preventing homelessness in Santa Clara County and the potential impacts of the Governor's proposed 2011-12 State Budget on local efforts to address discharge from institutions as a cause of homelessness.

BACKGROUND

In 2007, Mayor Reed and County Supervisor Don Gage jointly chaired the Blue Ribbon Commission on Ending Homelessness and Solving the Affordable Housing Crisis (BRC). The BRC's purpose was to provide countywide leadership for the initiatives contained in the City's and the County's 10-Year Plans to End Homelessness. In 2008, Destination:Home was formed as a partnership between the City, the County, and other public and private agencies to implement the BRC's recommendations. The Housing Department is an active participant in the Destination:Home partnership, and generally follows its lead on policies regarding how and where to prioritize funding and programs.

One of the recommendations identified by the BRC and Destination:Home as a priority is addressing homelessness that results from discharge from institutions, include patients from the hospital system and inmates from local correctional facilities.

ANALYSIS

The 2009 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey provided insight on a number of barriers that chronically homeless persons often face, including: mental and physical health issues; lack of transportation; lack of a support system; a history of domestic violence; a criminal

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record which makes securing employment and housing difficult; and drug and alcohol addiction. These barriers are compounded when an individual is discharged from an institution to the street with few or no resources.

The transition from any institution to independence with little to no resources or support can be a detrimental experience that inevitably leads the individual back to the costly institution that originally discharged them. Meanwhile, many of the same individuals are cycling in and out of our most costly institutions. In the past, County and City departments have worked in silos, with little to no sharing of information or service integration. With limited resources, the discharge planning efforts thus far have worked to develop collaborative county-wide plans from each institutional system with the goal of breaking barriers to accessing resources, making connections through resource and information sharing, collaboration and partnerships, political will, and systems change. The goal is to enhance continuity of care, beginning at admission, that ultimately leads to stability and permanent housing. Coordinating discharge planning efforts by streamlining services from the jail and the hospital to the community and facilitating a healthy re-entry process that reduces the County's recidivism and homeless rates is a priority of Destination:Home.

Prior to 2008, when the Medical Respite Program at EHC LifeBuilders' Boccardo Regional Reception Center opened, hospitals in Santa Clara County faced difficult choices daily: 1) to keep homeless patients in expensive acute care beds while other patients waited for beds; or 2) to discharge homeless patients who lacked safe, clean places to recuperate and faced multiple barriers to getting follow-up care. The Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital System's Valley Healthcare for the Homeless Program (VHHP), which includes Valley Medical Center (VMC) and seven other hospitals, reviewed discharge records and estimated that 60-70 homeless acute care patients per month or 720-840 homeless patients each year need medical respite care. VMC data indicates that homeless patients have prolonged stays (defined as longer than 14 hospital days) in hospitals because of on-going medical needs such as wound care, daily treatment regimens, morbid obesity, dementia and other complex medical, alcohol/substance abuse and mental health issues. As noted in the Attachment, an expansion of this Program is fully funded.

The Santa Clara County Department of Corrections books approximately 65,000 arrestees each year. Their average length of stay is about 110 days, and 80% of the population has a history of drug or alcohol related problems. The estimated cost to incarcerate an inmate for one year is \$42,000, not including medical or mental health expenses. It is estimated that 10% of the general population was homeless prior to arrest and 10% of inmates are discharged into homelessness.

There are several discharge planning initiatives under way or in the planning stages throughout the County. The City, the County and Destination:Home have led these efforts, which are detailed in Attachment A, with the ultimate goal being to change institutional practices and systems with a more targeted approach of integrating services so as to successfully transition homeless inmates and patients from an institutional setting to a stable living environment.

UPCOMING CHALLENGES

The Governor's proposed 2011-12 State Budget could negatively impact local discharge planning efforts in at least three ways:

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- By reducing General Fund support for mental health services, the current level of case management and other services provided by the County Mental Health Department (funded by Proposition 63) could suffer cuts.
- The proposal to shift the State prison inmates with no current or prior serious, violent or sex convictions to local jails will increase the number of inmates housed in and discharged from the County jail system, thereby increasing the number of people facing homelessness upon discharge.
- By reducing the funding for the Emancipated Youth Transitional Housing program, more young adults being discharged from foster care will become homeless.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The Housing Department will utilize the City Manager's Weekly Report to keep the City Council updated on achievements of Destination:Home's discharge planning efforts.

PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST

This report will be posted on the website for the agenda of the Neighborhood Services and Education Committee's March 10, 2011 meeting.

COORDINATION

Preparation of this report was coordinated with the Office of the City Attorney.

CEQA

CEQA: Not a Project, PP10-069(a), Staff Reports that involve no approvals of any City actions.


LESLYE CORSIGLIA
Director of Housing

Attachment

For questions please contact LESLYE CORSIGLIA, DIRECTOR OF HOUSING,
at 408-535-3851.

DISCHARGE PLANNING EFFORTS

FOCUS	PROGRAM	DESCRIPTION	PARTNERS	OUTCOMES & RESULTS
Discharge from Medical Institutions	The Santa Clara County Medical Respite Program	Since October 2008, the Santa Clara County Medical Respite Program has provided temporary housing, medical care and supportive services to homeless adults discharged from hospitals. The 15-bed program provides routine follow-up medical monitoring, case management and intensive care coordination to assure that patients leaving the program have safe place to recover. This project consists of a walk-in primary care clinic with two exam rooms where an interdisciplinary team provides and coordinates comprehensive health services, including screening and assessment; treatment of injuries and illnesses; health education; mental health services; and case management to connect patients with benefits and community services.	The Medical Respite Program involves EHC LifeBuilders (shelter provider), The Santa Clara Valley Health and Hospital System's Valley Healthcare for the Homeless Program (clinical and social work services provider), the Hospital Council of Northern and Central California, and eight local hospitals.	Since December 2010, the Program has provided medical care to more than 215 discharged homeless patients, freed up over 785 days in hospital beds, and saved over \$2 million to the hospital systems. Fifty percent of the patients come from Valley Medical Center, and 95% of the patients who complete their stay in the Program enter permanent or transitional housing. The Program very probably contributed to the 24% reduction in the deaths of homeless individuals who died on the streets of Santa Clara County from 2009 to 2010.
Discharge from Medical Institutions	The Santa Clara County Medical Respite Program Expansion	The Santa Clara County Medical Respite Program expansion project will renovate the Medical Respite Center to increase the number of available beds from 15 to 20 and double the number of medical exam/case management rooms from two to four. The facility improvements will improve access to health care services for chronically homeless adults with complex medical conditions and related psychosocial problems.	The Medical Respite Program expansion project involves the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (grant funding in the amount of \$471,240), City of San Jose Housing Department (grantee), the County Of Santa Clara (funding in the amount of \$250,000), and EHC LifeBuilders (grantee)	This \$721,240 construction expansion project will be completed by August 31, 2011.

Discharge from Correctional Institutions	Pre-Release Discharge Agreement	The Pre-Release Agreement will allow first-time applicants to receive Social Security benefits upon discharge from the local jail. Qualified inmates in custody health and custody mental health (hospitals within the jail), many who are homeless, will have the opportunity to begin gathering the documentation needed to apply for supplemental security income and social security disability income benefits. This will speed up a process in which it usually takes 180 – 365 days to receive benefits to as little as 75 days. This pre-release agreement will allow discharged inmates to access financial resources for housing and treatment services upon their release. Those with Social Security benefits automatically receive MediCal to continue with health care.	The Pre-Release Discharge Agreement involves Destination: Home, Social Security Administration (SSA), the County Sheriff's Office, County Custody Mental Health (hospital in the jail), and Santa Clara Health and Hospital System.	The goal is to reduce recidivism by providing access to resources soon after release. The program design has been completed and implementation is anticipated within 30 to 60 days.
Discharge from Correctional Institutions	Innovation 6	Innovation 6 will increase access to services and improve outcomes for newly released County Jail and Juvenile Hall inmates with mental health needs. The collaborative program addresses organizational deficits that research has identified are barriers to effective service delivery. The program will remove systemic barriers to increase access to services for newly released County inmates. In conjunction with other service providers, the Santa Clara County Mental Health Department (MHD) will provide support for the development of an infrastructure for faith-based organizations to coordinate their efforts and reach out to inmates through discharge planning.	Innovation 6 involves the Santa Clara County Mental Health Department, the County Sheriff and Department of Corrections, Destination: Home, City of San Jose Housing Department, the County Department of Drug and Alcohol Dependency Services, faith organizations, and the system of care service providers.	The program is in the development stage and will begin in March 2011.
Discharge from Correctional Institutions	Skills to Succeed Re-Entry Project	Skills to Succeed, a two-year pilot re-entry project, will provide 50 incarcerated and/or recently released women with case management, green job training, and pre-apprenticeships that lead to formal apprenticeships and employment.	Skills to Succeed involves the U.S. Department of Justice (grant funding in the amount of \$400,000), the City of San Jose Housing Department (grantee), and the Santa Clara County Office of Women's Policy (sub-grantee).	This \$400,000 program will begin enrolling the first group of women in March 2011.

Discharge from Correctional Institutions	Elmwood Jail In-Reach Pilot Project	This innovative pilot project provided service connections to Elmwood inmates who would discharge into homelessness. Twice a week for four weeks, staff volunteered their time to go to Elmwood and provide needs assessments, case management and resources to incarcerated men and women.	The In-Reach Project included Destination: Home, Department of Corrections/ Custody Mental Health (hospital in the jail), the Mental Health and Drug Treatment Court (Judge Manley), the Santa Clara County Mental Health Department and multiple homeless service providers.	176 inmates that participated in this pilot project in the summer of 2010. Fifty-three inmates received services before and after the pilot, and 19 inmates received services after the pilot that had not received services before. The pilot project created more awareness in the Corrections Department about homeless services and resources, and contributed to their more active participation in developing an organized discharge plan. An employment services provider began facilitating quarterly classes for the inmates, which is continuing.
Discharge for At-Risk Youth	Project Hope Green Cadre	Project Hope Green Cadre is a one year program that provides employment services and job training to 75 at-risk adult youth ages 18 to 24 who are low-income and have barriers accessing employment or post-secondary education. Through the provision of one-on-one case management, green jobs training, and employment assistance in concert with supportive services from local service providers Project Hope Green Cadre will foster the ability of participating individuals to become self-sufficient, receive training opportunities in the green industry, and become employed or enrolled in post-secondary education.	Project Hope Green Cadre involves the U.S. Department of Labor (funder), the City of San Jose Housing Department (grantee and funder), and the City of San Jose Office of Economic Development's local Workforce Investment Board's work2future (sub-grantee).	This \$230,000 project was implemented in January 2011; twenty at-risk youth have been enrolled to date.