

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness and Housing

FROM: HomeBase

RE: Multi-Service Centers

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### **Multi-Service Center Agency Provider Panel**

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### **Background**

Since 1987, the Regional Steering Committee (RSC) has gathered homeless service providers and advocates in various contexts to examine how community-based services such as soup kitchens, education and employment programs, primary care clinics, mental health and substance addiction treatment, and benefits assistance programs are effective in meeting the multiple needs of homeless individuals and families. In the past decade, the focus on addressing homelessness has been on housing access, stability, and retention. Thus, services are generally framed in relationship to housing. For example, at the July 20<sup>th</sup> meeting in 2007, RSC discussed "What Every Community Should Have in its Response System" which focused on the various services that were needed to keep people successfully housed. In this era of "Housing First" RSC members have asked that we further examine service packages and facility designs that effectively delivery integrated services linked to housing.

### **Multi-Service Centers: An Integrated System of Care Linked to Housing**

As communities are implementing more integrated systems of care, they are developing a support system that is well-coordinated, cost-effective, and directly linked to multiple services and various types of housing. These types of Multi-Service Centers (MSC's) form a convenient and accessible "one stop" service hub for homeless individuals. MSC's serve as a centralized connector for people who are homeless, the community, agency services, public institutions, and permanent housing. Many have been re-characterized as Housing

Resource Centers or Basic Housing Assistance Centers. Neighborhood-based MSC's model of integrated services has been identified as a key strategy for offering the comprehensive support to homeless families and chronic homeless individuals needed to ensure a successful transition to stabilized housing.

### **Common Characteristics of Multi-Service Centers**

In the past several months, HomeBase has been researching various models of MSC's around the region as well as in other parts of the country. After closely profiling over 30 different MSC's, common characteristics that contribute towards successful program outcomes emerged, as well as the benefits and challenges associated with operating these kinds of facilities:

#### Common Design Elements

- A comprehensive continuum of services offered in one facility or multiple facilities clustered together
- Services offered by a Single Agency with multiple programs **or** by Multiple Agencies working together
- Coordinated case management
- Public agencies and non-profit services working together in a more formalized way than just a referral system
- Located near public transit or part of a common entry point into city and county services
- Computerized tracking and information sharing, so that all programs or agencies in the facility have access to a common database of client information
- Linked to on-site housing (emergency, transitional and permanent), so that people can be quickly placed and easily access services
- Supports people in many or all aspects of housing, providing services to prevent homelessness, to rapidly re-house, and to help people maintain their housing

#### Benefits:

- Eliminates service duplication by encouraging partnerships between programs or agencies offering different services rather than each agency trying to develop its own continuum
- Improves communication and coordination about the same clients
- Coordination across services helps clients to stabilize more quickly
- Easier to track outcomes since they are tracked jointly by all agencies in the facility
- Clients can access a full range of services through one intake that links them with all the services they need
- Offers a consistent quality of care as services located in one facility develop a common culture and system of values

#### Challenges:

- Determining a unified service delivery model amongst different programs and agencies

- Having different types of housing in one facility that includes different criteria and thresholds for residents
- Creating strategic partnerships with service providers and public agencies
- Gaining support to build a service hub from the surrounding neighborhood
- Having consensus on management and operational structures, client tracking, and case management
- Sustaining on-going operational funding for all services

## **Commonly Used Design Models**

### **MSC Design Model 1: One Building with Co-Located Services**

These types of MSC's can be operated by a single agency that is running multiple programs or can bring together multiple agencies to offer a package of services linked to housing. Facilities that operate a comprehensive continuum of services in one building often have services on the first few floors and various types of housing on upper floors. Community partners may come in to offer other on-site services as needed.

#### Design Elements

- A comprehensive continuum of services offered in one facility
- A single agency with multiple programs or multiple agencies working together in one building
- Centralized intake or reception
- Coordinated case management
- Public social services agencies and non-profit services in one facility
- Computerized tracking and information sharing so that all programs or agencies in the facility have access to a common database of client information
- Single story or multiple story building with services that remain easily accessible in an environment that is welcoming and open
- Services share the overhead cost of operating one building

#### Examples

- St. Anthony Foundation, 150 Golden Gate Ave, San Francisco
- PATHMall, Los Angeles, CA
- N Street Village, Washington, DC
- GRIP, Richmond, CA
- EHC Lifebuilders One Stop Homeless Prevention Center, Milpitas, CA
- Maxine Lewis Center, San Luis Obispo, CA

### **MSC Design Model 2: Services Campus**

The Services Campus brings together multiple services and housing with an emphasis on integration and collaboration. The campus can include a collaboration of faith-based, non-profit, government, private, and community organizations or one agency operating program-specific buildings connected through a common design, courtyard, outdoor

spaces, or walkways.

#### Design Elements

- Multiple services offered in program specific buildings that are close together
- Single Agency with multiple programs or Multiple Agencies working together
- Housing is located in the same campus and may include emergency, transitional, permanent supportive or permanent housing
- Design can be multi-story with services below and housing on upper levels or can be services in one building and housing in separate buildings on same parcel of land
- Common architectural design that creates a connection between the services and fits in with surrounding neighborhood

#### Examples

- Good Samaritan Services, Santa Maria, CA
- Maricopa Human Services Campus, Phoenix, AZ
- Yolo Wayfarer Center, Woodland, CA
- Quinn Cottages, Sacramento, CA
- Anka Behavioral Health, Inc., Concord, CA

#### **MSC Design Model 3: Co-Located Services and Housing in Same Building or Campus, and Offering Services or Businesses for the Broader Community**

- An effective approach to rebuilding the lives of homeless men and women offers multiple services within the same building or campus and also includes businesses and common spaces that serve the wider community. The inclusion of services and businesses used by the broader community leads to greater integration within a community for clients and engages community members in the process of stabilizing a neighborhood. The business can include social enterprise models that provide transitional job training for clients and produce revenue for the agency. The MSC can also offer the use of common spaces to community members and organizations.

#### Design Features

- Includes restaurants, services such as child care centers, and retail businesses for broader community
- Includes social enterprise businesses that meet needs of broader community while generating income for homeless services and housing programs and providing employment and training opportunities
- Contains space for add-on community activity such as performance, art, or conference space

### Examples

Los Angeles Men's Project (LAMP), Los Angeles, CA

N Street Village, Washington DC

Delancey Street, San Francisco, CA

Community Vocational Enterprises, San Francisco, CA

### **MSC Design Option #4: Scattered Site Services and Housing**

An agency may also operate various programs in an urban setting that are connected through the agency's mission and vision. The agency connects its clients to a variety of housing options and support services that are scattered throughout a community through a common intake process and coordinated case management. The services are less isolated in a discrete service hub and are better integrated throughout the community.

### Design Features

- One agency operates multiple programs in various sites around a community
- Centralizes intake or different intake points at each facility
- Housing also scattered throughout the community, within walking distance or easy public transit access to services
- Housing and services are integrated with broader community

### Examples

- EHC Lifebuilders One Stop Homeless Prevention Center, Milpitas, CA
- Good Samaritan Services, Santa Maria, CA
- St. Anthony Foundation, San Francisco, CA
- Anka Behavioral Health Inc., Concord, CA

### Key Questions:

Where do the service providers we have here today fit in these models?

What are the various benefits and challenges of each model?

What did the neighborhood look like before and after implementation of the MSC?

How do different agencies find a unified delivery model?

How is the management and operational style decided?

What strategies are effective in bringing services together or creating strategic partnerships

## **Services and Housing**

These are the various types of integrated services that are most commonly offered in conjunction with housing:

- Case Management
- Alcohol and drug treatment
- Employment services
- Social enterprises
- Vocational training
- Free meals and food pantry
- Benefits Assistance
- Transportation assistance
- Health services
- Mental health services
- Eye care
- Dental care
- Domestic violence services
- Legal Services
- Criminal justice re-entry support
- Housing Resource Center (offers housing assistance, including move-in costs, resolving of bad credit and eviction histories)
- Showers, messages, clothing

### Key Questions:

What services should be provided, how and by what agencies?

What are the physical space requirements for the various services?

Should the services be targeted for people with low incomes or serve a broader population?

How do you create strategic partnerships between non-profits and public agencies?

What are the various models of housing that should be included? (Emergency, transitional, supportive, permanent supportive?)

What services are needed to help people to stay housed?

Should services be offered onsite, offsite, or through home visits?

What assets and resources do service providers possess in reshaping the “service” role in permanent housing?

### **Funding and Sustainability**

To build an MSC, support must come from many different resources. A helpful approach is to initially identify a core partner with significant resources that may “anchor” the project. An agency already offering services may want to partner with another public or private organization in the community offering housing or wanting to build housing. Looking for funding, an agency should identify a core function for which resources are steadily available.

One of the biggest issues being faced by community-based MSC’s is obtaining on-going operations funding to support sustainability. Often, MSC’s get a great deal of initial support through community partners and one-time grants. However, maintaining this funding on an on-going basis for all services can be extremely challenging. Depending on the services that are offered, funding availability can vary from program to program, making it difficult to evenly sustain all the services that are being offered.

#### Key Questions:

What kinds of funding sources are being utilized?

What are the benefits and challenges of mixing public and private funding?

How have MSC’s helped improve the community?

How can public and private stakeholders be engaged to help increase capacity for providing services?

### **Mobilizing Community Will**

Community resistance is often mobilized to prevent the opening or expansion of many types of health and social service facilities for vulnerable populations. There are various ways in which an MSC can try to better integrate itself within a community. One of the most effective ways an MSC can integrate itself within a community is by enhancing the neighborhood--trying to aesthetically fit into the surrounding area as well as by making

the area safer and healthier for residents.

**Key Questions:**

How does the MSC integrate itself within its community?

What kinds of challenges are faced when trying to build or expand an MSC?

How does an MSC educate the surrounding community about its mission and goals and engage neighbors and community groups in its mission?

**Questions for Discussion:**

Would you like RSC to bring more focus to one of the MSC's or related topics we touched on today?

What forum would you like to see offer more information regarding these topics?

What topics did you find useful and what areas would you like to know more about?

*If you would like further information or resources regarding these topics, please contact Cynthia Nagendra, HomeBase Staff Attorney, at [Cynthia@homebaseecc.org](mailto:Cynthia@homebaseecc.org) or (415) 788-7961, x 310.*