

Employment Task Force 2.0
Michael Barlow Center
2120 W Warren Blvd, Chicago, IL 60612
April 14, 2017, 9:30AM

Attendees: Otha Gaston, Joyce English, Gwen Turner, Carrie Thomas, Consuella Brown, Angela Morrison, Nakia Moore, Chris O'Hara, Alexis Canalos, Bethany Dean, Alan Placek, Nancy Phillips, Lorraine Chavez, Jeremy Miller, Lynne Cunningham, Siri Hibbler, Margaret Smith

- I. **Welcome and Introductions:** Attendees introduced themselves while answering the question: What keeps you motivated? Present attendees expressed that they were kept motivated by the sun, the promise of summer, being more active, and baseball season. Carrie also explained that she has received new motivation from the new policy director that was recently hired at CJC, Lorraine Chavez.
- II. **Approval of March 2017 Minutes:** The group reviewed the March 2017 Task Force Minutes. Angela brought up one necessary change: when discussing the Workforce Development Training for Housing Providers, the minutes reflected Angela's comment on feedback on the training as her own feedback, rather than general feedback received from trainees. Pending this feedback, Gwen moved to approve the minutes. Carrie seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved, conditional to the above change.
- III. **Check-in on Destination: Jobs & Workforce Training Update:** Carrie provided a progress report on Destination: Jobs. She began by explaining that the main strategies have been addressing the employment questions at assessment, applying new information across systems, trying to create more formal cross-system relationships, and institutionalizing in policy and practice.

Accomplishments thus far have included employment questions on the Coordinated Entry assessment, providing input on Career Connect Housing Data; providing input on the PIT Count and adding questions related to employment, meeting with Cook Workforce Partnership and DFSS leadership, Employment/Workforce training through the Learning Center, having representation from the Partnership now sitting on the Taskforce (Michelle), providing WIOA recommendations, and forming the Employment Navigator idea.

At this point Consuella asked about the time frame of the project. Carrie explained that there will be another year (3-year total), and the Connections Projects are informing each other continuously. The project will continue to maintain relationships with other cities in the workforce world. Nancy further explained the relationships between the cities: Houston and Seattle are ahead of us so we can learn from them, but we're on the cusp of some important accomplishments, so other cities are looking to us in other ways. It positions us in a place among leaders but also in a place where other cities who are just getting started can look to us as an example of how to move forward. Nancy also brought up the webinar on integrating employment with Coordinated Entry: there were 500 registrants for that webinar, and there was very positive feedback. There are clear milestones that have occurred.

Carrie also talked about the Workforce Training for Housing Providers. There were 22 attend from 17 organizations, and 14 attendees attended both days. (There was also a snowstorm on the second day

which accounted for fewer shows.) 80% reviewed the training as Excellent on feedback surveys. The highlights of the training, according to the feedback surveys, were that it was interactive, there were a wide variety of resources provided, and there were relevant presentations by the panelists. Areas for improvement that were indicated were that the title of the training was misleading for some, some wanted more specific partnership instruction, and some wanted more information on working with specific populations. Carrie suggested that these last two could both work as potential ideas for additional trainings.

Consuella thanked CJC for the training, saying that the energy in the room was fantastic. Angela added that the panel was very effective, and the experience of the panelists was practical and great to hear about. Bethany said that it was good to get so many practical resources, and it felt like it was a good use of her time. The flash drive with all the resources was a very practical take-away.

Carrie followed up Bethany's comment by saying that once you put together the resources, you realize how disparate the resources are in the workforce world, which makes it very difficult to bring everything together, and you wonder if information is updated, etc. The process of collating this information yielded ideas for ways to package information that we should be thinking more about.

There was some conversation centering on the idea of more trainings around motivational interviewing, workforce development partnership building, and workforce material with specific populations. Consuella voiced the idea of potentially moving the trainings to different physical locations as a development opportunity to the staff at those locations. Alexis agreed with this, adding that being present at a physical location helps to build familiarity. Alan agreed, saying that you can see and understand an awful lot when you physically visit a space. **Carrie proposed that in May or June meeting could talk more about what's next for trainings. Destination: Jobs will need help on this from the Task Force.**

IV. Employment Navigation Function: Overview/Recommendations (Carrie): Carrie provided an update on the Employment Navigation Function aspect of Destination: Jobs. It is in two parts.

Part 1 is part of the Coordinated Entry "roll out." The CE roll out will be occurring from April through August. The Skilled Assessors for youth are being trained right now and will begin matching later this month. Questions related to employment have been added to the CE Assessment:

Would you like to increase income through work?

-If yes, would you like to be connected to employment services?

--Yes within 2-3 weeks

--Yes within 2-3 months

Also, if participants are in college, there will be a question about wanting to be connected to employment.

Carrie explained that she was running into a problem, which was that there wasn't a solution to the Yes answer. Part 1 of the Navigator function provides a temporary response to Yes, which is a CJC phone # that the individual can call to receive information on workforce development resources tailored to their unique situation (housing model, location, etc). CJC is also working with HMIS to see if they can receive HMIS reports on numbers of "yes" answers, perhaps monthly.

CJC receives HMIS reports on "yes" answers.

There was also a general caveat given to the group that this is meant to be a temporary, pilot-style project that will inform a more permanent process that integrates workforce development with

coordinated entry in the future. This is the first step that will allow us to collect the information necessary for developing that process.

Alan brought up the idea of inquiring into what 311 call center is telling people who want to be connected to workforce services. Nancy emphasized the importance of people leaving the system with both a housing and workforce intervention.

Carrie also said that she and Angela met with Stephanie Sideman to get an update on CE. They found out that in the skilled assessor trainings, there was possibly a miscommunication about the CJC number in the training: the training may have communicated that CJC would call people. **There was a suggestion to make a short video to play during the training about the CJC phone number.**

The Part 2 of Employment Navigation is a navigator position that would be matched with a housing model and geographical region. The navigator should be employed by a workforce organization, but should spend majority of time out and building relationships with housing organizations – this would be a resource, connecting, and coordinating person, not someone with “caseload.”

The next steps are a conversation with DFSS and the Cook Workforce Partnership, and putting together a grant.

Carrie stated that Lake County has a navigator with their RRH program, and the position is funded with a Disability Initiative Grant from the state. The navigator’s job is to be a resource person for the system. Grant ended, but it continued to be covered through WIOA funding. Carrie said that the Cook Workforce Partnership is interested in doing something like this.

Carrie said that Jennifer Serrano at Lake County explained that you can’t expect people to come into our system, we have to go there. The Resource Manager’s job is to bring all the people together and decide who does what.

Bethany asked if this would include/take into consideration benefits support. Nancy explained that there are three potential “streams” into which a person could be placed for income generation: SOAR, Supported Employment, and Mainstream Workforce. Margaret took the opportunity to explain that there are currently the beginnings of a coordinated SOAR initiative within the CoC – in May the CoC will be receiving TA from the SOAR TA Center, which will jumpstart the process to start providing SOAR services in a much more coordinated way to homeless/at risk individuals needing public disability benefits.

V. Structure of RRH & Data Overview (Margaret): Margaret provided a basic overview of Rapid Re-Housing as a housing model. RRH is a housing program, the purpose of which is to rapidly re-house individuals and families who are experiencing literal homelessness. RRH is a housing model that is gaining traction nationally. HUD is emphasizing it in its national competition due to its efficacy and inexpensiveness. There are 3 core components to RRH: housing location, rental assistance (short to medium term), and case management. In order to be considered RRH, a program must have all three core components available. However, it is not necessary that a single agency perform all three services, or that a household utilize them all. Generally, RRH operates on a “progressive engagement” model. It is meant to be individualized to the particular household’s needs.

A RRH program’s structure is often defined by its funding stream. In Chicago, we have RRH coming from several different funding streams: ESG (Emergency Solutions Grant) and CoC (Continuum of Care)

are two of them. There are also RRH programs receiving SSVF funding within our CoC. The ESG program structure is a maximum of 8 months of rental assistance, with a decreasing subsidy: 100% for the first 3 months, 70% for the 4th-6th months, and 50% for the last 2 months. CoC RRH structures vary but have a maximum of 2 years rental assistance.

ESG RRH partners have stated that they could use more support with employment resources, and are interested in thinking about ways in which RRH partners could best be supported or partner with workforce development services. Generally the RRH programs do not have capacity to thoroughly provide employment services. Some programs have employment programs within their overarching organizations, but even in those cases (as Nancy brought up), referrals and hand-offs can be ad-hoc and impromptu since the programs generally do not have a structured partnership.

Margaret provided demographics data for both ESG and CoC RRH programs in the CoC. She also provided a data visualization of the differences in exit income and family size among households that exited to a permanent destination vs non-permanent destination, for both CoC and ESG RRH.

VI. Lessons Learned from RRH Partnership with Center for Changing Lives (Alexis): At the end of 2015, the Center for Changing Lives partnered with La Casa Norte for the RRH Veterans Expansion project.

CCL found RRH to be good place to partner because the length of time has training opportunities, and there is case management, which allows further and deeper touchpoints.

Areas for increased efficacy of partnership mentioned by Alexis were early attachment of employment services and sequencing, mindset shifts (how do we amp up intensity towards end of program & shift with workforce), getting employment in early and often (thinking of workforce development as program matching), referrals need to be turned into warm hand off, and an emphasis on training programs where appropriate. Nancy also mentioned the importance of shared outcomes – when someone gets a job all the parties benefit.

VI. Other Announcements

Alexis provided a flyer for the CCL's computer support training program, Nancy announced that there is a new cohort for transitional jobs, Alan announced that DFSS had released an RFP for the Senior Community Service Employment Program; and Carrie stated that Stephanie Sideman and Renee Crolus had offered to come to the next meeting.

VII. Adjournment