

General Assembly Meeting

Date and Time

Thursday, May 19th, 2016, from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm

Location

Manchester Community Resource Center, 434 Lake Ave, 4th floor, Manchester, NH 03103

Attendees

April Purinton	Ashley Kitchell	Cathy Kuhn	Cheryl Hunt	Cindy Thomas
Dan Ward	David Harris	Debbie Wheeler	Dick Webster	Erin Kelly
Holly Bilodeau	Julie Darling	Keith Howard	Kelly Riley	Kevin Kintner
Lauren Collins	Lynne Lorentson	Mary Sliney	Matthew Bouchie	Mikaela Gerry
Nicole Clark	Richard Doyle	Sheila Richard		

12:00 Meeting begins

Summer Planning

- I. Leadership recently met to discuss summer planning.
 - a. The MCoC general assembly will meet in June and September, but not in July or August.
 - b. Once general assembly starts up again in September, we will meet at a new time. Reminders will be sent out in advance. We will continue to meet at the Community Resource Center.
 - c. Subcommittees will continue to meet over the summer, unless otherwise canceled by committee chairs.
- II. We are looking for topics and speakers for the future general assembly meetings. Some possible topics that were mentioned during the meeting included: bed bugs, new training opportunities, and emergency response teams.

Safe Families for Children

- I. Cindy Thomas presented for her organization, Bethany Christian Services, specifically presenting on the Safe Families for Children program.
- II. This program uses suitable families to take in and foster children and pregnant women, when in need of help. These families become “friends” of the family in crisis, helping them connect with services and model behaviors needed to succeed.
 - a. While a child is in the care of one of these families, they have open communication with their parents.
 - b. New Hampshire has a 30 day guardianship law which allows children to stay in the homes of a non-guardian for only 30 days or less; if after this period of time, they still require housing, they are connected to a new foster family. Pregnant adult women are allowed to stay as long as they need on a case by case basis, though there is generally the goal of a 60 day or less stay.
 - c. Pregnancy counseling is also offered.
 - d. Host families are mandatory reporters of child abuse.
- III. Host families:

- a. Are trained, fingerprinted, and must submit to a background check. Any close family friends that will have one on one contact with the child will also have a background check performed on them.
 - b. Need at least 3 references, one of which must be a pastor.
 - c. Must be Christian, though the children and families they serve can be of any religious background. Host families are put through classes teaching acceptance and respect for differing religious beliefs.
 - d. Must have some form of liability insurance.
 - e. Will sometimes host entire families, not just the children.
- IV. To apply to this program, case workers can reach out first, but the family would then have to meet with representatives from the organization. Social workers are allowed to attend these meetings with the permission of the family in crisis.

Participant Story and Discussion

- I. Kevin Kintner shared the story of one individual “Daniel” who represents some of the most serious needs of the population served. Daniel has severe health problems; despite these, the local hospital discharged him onto the streets in scrubs after being told that he was inappropriate for New Horizons.
- II. This story highlights the need to have hospitals at the table when discussing homeless individuals.
- III. Matt Bouchie shared some information on Community Care teams which have worked successfully in the Seacoast area and down in Connecticut. These teams partner homeless and other social service agencies with hospitals in order to identify those who are in need of help. After 6 ER visits, a person will be flagged as an individual who might need more help; they will then be contacted by outreach and social workers.
- IV. Leadership has recently reached out to the Public Health Department and is considering working in collaboration with them on the Neighborhood Health Improvement Strategy (NHIS). We will be focusing on economic wellbeing and supportive living environment. These sections would lend themselves well to situations like Daniel’s.
- V. This discuss will continue into next month’s meeting.

1:00 Meeting Concludes

Minutes Prepared By

Nicole Clark

Manchester Continuum of Care Coordinator, VISTA