

THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
GOVERNOR



August 31, 2004

Jamie Hart, Director
Health Systems Research, Inc.
1200 18th Street, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036

Re: Submittal of Oregon's Draft Action Plan to End Homelessness

Dear Ms. Hart:

I appreciate the opportunity provided in November 2003 for an Oregon team to participate in the federally sponsored policy academy on "Improving Access to Mainstream Services for People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness". This experience enabled us to revitalize planning to address homelessness in Oregon and resulted in the completion of the enclosed draft action plan.

We are in the process of establishing a homeless policy council to provide ongoing leadership and accountability for our state's efforts to end homelessness. Please accept the enclosed draft plan in completion of our state's policy academy assignment.

If you have questions or need additional information, you may contact Jodie Jones (503.986.2096 or jodie.jones@hcs.state.or.us) or Vicki Skryha (503.945.9722 or vicki.skryha@state.or.us), co-chairs for the Oregon Homeless Policy Academy Team.

Sincerely,

THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
Governor

c: Gary Weeks, Director, DHS
Bob Repine, Director, OHCS

ACTION PLAN

To End Homelessness in Oregon

Prepared by:

Oregon Homeless Policy Team

following attendance at the

November 2003 Policy Academy

in Denver, Colorado

OREGON HOMELESS POLICY TEAM 2004

VISION

All people in Oregon have the opportunity to be at home in their communities and be physically, emotionally and economically healthy.

MISSION

End homelessness in Oregon.

PARAMETERS

Address **homelessness in general** while targeting

- ⇒ People experiencing **chronic homelessness**
- ⇒ **Families and children** experiencing homelessness
- ⇒ Homeless and runaway **youth**

VALUES

- ✓ We support local **community** efforts that **respectfully empower** individuals and families.
- ✓ **Safe and affordable living situations** are essential to health and well being.
- ✓ Voices of homeless and formerly homeless people are **included** in planning and implementation (“**Nothing about us without us**”).
- ✓ Our varied experience, resources and expertise make us **interdependent**.
- ✓ We work together in harmony to achieve desired **solutions**.
- ✓ We recognize individual and **cultural differences** among people and strive for **competence** in addressing diverse needs.
- ✓ Programs and services are **efficient, effective and evidence-based**.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

STRENGTHS:

History of progressive efforts & policies.
“Infrastructure” largely in place for housing and service delivery.
High level of existing collaboration and willingness to expand collaboration.
Good will across stakeholders to move forward together.

WEAKNESSES:

State budget deficits and economic recession.
Human services and education systems threatened with severe cuts.
Polarities (urban/rural; liberal/conservative).
No formal structure to analyze and address issues at state level.
The public and elected officials lack knowledge/awareness.

OPPORTUNITIES:

Link with other initiatives (hunger, mental health, evidence-based practices).
Pursue new alliances for more comprehensive and inclusive approaches.
Look at data across several systems (vantage points).
Improve data system to better track homelessness.
Use available technical assistance to enhance outcome-producing practices.
Can build upon successes and lessons learned.

THREATS:

Resource constraints.
Stigma of homelessness and people who commonly end up homeless.
Complicated systems and networks.
Federal policy changes and conflicting regulations.
Tendency to proceed with patchwork fixes rather than holistic solutions.

ACTION PLAN

1. USE DATA AND EVIDENCE/OUTCOME BASED MODELS TO FORM STRATEGIES TO END HOMELESSNESS.

- DOCUMENT THE FACE OF HOMELESSNESS.
- IDENTIFY CURRENT SERVICES, RESOURCES AND STRATEGIES.
- SUMMARIZE RESEARCH ON EFFECTIVE MODELS AND PRACTICES.
- DEVELOP AND PROPOSE RECOMMENDATIONS.

2. CONVENE STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNCIL TO LEAD INITIATIVES ON ENDING HOMELESSNESS.

- PREPARE A CONCEPT PAPER FOR THE STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNCIL.
- OBTAIN SUPPORT FROM STATE LEADERS FOR COUNCIL.
- OBTAIN SUPPORT FROM HOMELESS STAKEHOLDER GROUPS.
- CONSISTENT WITH THE GOVERNOR'S DIRECTION, TRANSITION THE WORK OF OHPT TO COUNCIL.

3. IMPROVE CROSS SYSTEM PLANNING AND POLICIES TO END HOMELESSNESS.

- INTEGRATE STRATEGIES TO END HOMELESSNESS INTO OTHER RELEVANT PLANNING.
- BETTER COORDINATE THE AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES AND HOUSING TO PREVENT AND END HOMELESSNESS.
- IMPROVE CONTINUITY AND SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS AT GREATEST RISK OF BECOMING HOMELESS.

4. USE OREGON'S SERVICES EFFICIENTLY, EFFECTIVELY AND SYNERGISTICALLY TO END HOMELESSNESS.

- EXPAND KNOWLEDGE OF SERVICES AVAILABLE TO HOMELESS PERSONS.
- ANALYZE KEY STATE SERVICES TO IDENTIFY BARRIERS.
- INCREASE COLLABORATION TO COORDINATE EFFECTIVE RESOURCE UTILIZATION.
- STREAMLINE PROCESSES FOR ACCESSING BENEFITS AND SERVICES.
- EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICE SYSTEM IN ACCOUNTABLE MANNER.

5. USE OREGON'S HOUSING RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY, EFFECTIVELY AND SYNERGISTICALLY TO END HOMELESSNESS.

- EXPAND INFORMATION-SHARING AND COORDINATION AMONG PROVIDERS.
- IDENTIFY GAPS IN ACCESS TO INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS.
- IMPLEMENT BEST PRACTICES AND MODELS TO MAXIMIZE USE OF HOUSING RESOURCES.
- DEVELOP ADDITIONAL HOUSING AFFORDABLE TO PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.

OREGON HOMELESS POLICY TEAM ACTION PLAN (DRAFT - June 1, 2004)

STRATEGY 1: USE DATA AND EVIDENCE/OUTCOME BASED MODELS TO FORM STRATEGIES TO END HOMELESSNESS

Initiatives	Tasks	Lead Agency/ies	Product(s) and Outcome(s)	Completion Date
1.1 - DOCUMENT THE FACE OF HOMELESSNESS.	<i>1.1.1 - Identify sources and synthesize data relevant to current homelessness including Homeless & Runaway Youth Task Force; One Night Shelter Count; Department of Human Services (OMHAS, OMAP and CAF); Department of Education; Veterans Administration; Continuum of Care plans.</i>	DHS and OHCS	Product: Report (Part I) depicting the characteristics and demographics of homeless persons. Outcome: Increased understanding of homelessness and baseline prevalence established.	December 2004
	<i>1.1.2 - Compare Oregon data with national and regional statistics.</i>			
	<i>1.1.3 - Incorporate non-traditional data sources to inform analysis of homelessness (e.g. Hunger Task Force; State Parks and Recreation; Department of Corrections release data; Migrant Worker data).</i>			
	<i>1.1.4 - Utilize focus groups, vignettes and client viewpoints to complete picture.</i>			
1.2 - IDENTIFY CURRENT SERVICES, RESOURCES, AND STRATEGIES FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS.	<i>1.2.1 - Document federal mainstream and targeted resources available to address homelessness.</i>	DHS and OHCS	Product: Report (Part II) describing available services and resources. Outcome: Understanding of available services and baseline service level established.	December 2004
	<i>1.2.2 - Delineate state and local practices and resources available to address homelessness.</i>			
	<i>1.2.3 - Describe how these resources are currently used for homeless populations and establish "baseline".</i>			
	<i>1.2.4 - Summarize and analyze these findings.</i>			
1.3 - SUMMARIZE RESEARCH ON EFFECTIVE MODELS AND PRACTICES.	<i>1.3.1 - Collect available research and promising practice models from homeless academy and technical assistance sources.</i>	DHS and OHCS	Product: Report (Part III) describing effective practices. Outcome: Understanding of best practices and service improvement direction established.	December 2004
	<i>1.3.2 - Analyze models and select those applicable to target populations: Chronically Homeless (CH), Families with Children (FC), Homeless Youth (HY), and Other Homeless (OH).</i>			
	<i>1.3.3 - Identify models with potential for implementation.</i>			
	<i>1.3.4 - Summarize and report these findings.</i>			
1.4 - DEVELOP AND PROPOSE RECOMMENDATIONS.	<i>1.4.1 - Highlight Oregon's strengths, model programs and exemplary efforts.</i>	Oregon ICH (proposed)	Product: Report (Part IV) describing recommendations for improved services and reduced homelessness. Outcome: Clear mandate for service system change to reduce homelessness.	April 2005
	<i>1.4.2 - Identify gaps among needs, current approaches and identified best practices.</i>			
	<i>1.4.3 - Delineate opportunities and constraints that will impact the ability to implement these efforts and make progress.</i>			
	<i>1.4.4 - Formulate and distribute recommendations.</i>			

OREGON HOMELESS POLICY TEAM ACTION PLAN (DRAFT - June 1, 2004)

STRATEGY 2: CONVENE STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNCIL TO LEAD AGENCY INITIATIVES ON ENDING HOMELESSNESS

Initiatives	Tasks	Lead Agency/ies	Product(s) and Outcome(s)	Completion Date
2.1 - PREPARE A CONCEPT PAPER FOR THE STATEWIDE HOMELESS COUNCIL.	2.1.1 - Draft concept paper to include a description, rationale and examples of other state councils.	DHS and OHCS	Product: Concept Paper. Outcome: Creation of leadership infrastructure to address homelessness.	May 2004
	2.1.2 - Share draft paper with OHPT; obtain feedback.			
	2.1.3 - Finalize paper for presentation to state leaders.			
2.2 - OBTAIN SUPPORT FROM STATE LEADERS FOR COUNCIL.	2.2.1 - Present concept to DHS and OHCS directors to engender support and refine.	Governor and Agency Heads	Product: Decision by Oregon leaders to Implement Interagency Council on Homelessness. Outcome: Commitment of State leaders to end homelessness in Oregon.	December 2004
	2.2.2 - Present refined concept to heads of DHS, OHCS, Corrections, Oregon Youth Authority, Commission for Children and Families, Employment/OCC-WIA, and the Department of Education to obtain broader support and further refine (as needed).			
	2.2.3 - Present concept to Governor to obtain final direction on formation of Council.			
	2.2.4 - As directed by Governor, implement Oregon Interagency Council on Homelessness.			
2.3 - OBTAIN SUPPORT FROM HOMELESS STAKEHOLDER GROUPS.	2.3.1 - Work through OHPT to share council concept with other stakeholders and obtain feedback.	OHPT	Product: Letters, and other evidence, of support. Outcome: Commitment of community partners to end homelessness in Oregon.	December 2004
	2.3.2 - Work with advocacy groups, local homeless planning groups and other stakeholders to insure statewide council structure will complement local efforts to end homelessness.			
2.4 - CONSISTENT WITH THE GOVERNOR'S DIRECTION, TRANSITION THE WORK OF OHPT TO COUNCIL.	2.4.1 - Transition Leadership and orient new members (as needed).	Oregon ICH (proposed)	Product: Functional interagency council on homelessness. Outcome: Infrastructure in place to lead end to homelessness in Oregon.	April 2005
	2.4.2 - Assemble standing committees and appoint chairs.			
	2.4.3 - Convene Oregon Interagency Council on Homelessness.			

OREGON HOMELESS POLICY TEAM ACTION PLAN (DRAFT - June 1, 2004)

STRATEGY 3: IMPROVE CROSS SYSTEM PLANNING AND POLICIES TO END HOMELESSNESS IN OREGON				
Initiatives	Tasks	Lead Agency/ies	Product(s) and Outcome(s)	Completion Date
3.1 - INTEGRATE STRATEGIES TO END HOMELESSNESS INTO OTHER RELEVANT PLANNING.	<i>3.1.1 - Identify existing state and local planning efforts and access points.</i>	Oregon ICH (proposed)	Product: Biannual report on strategies integrated with other planning processes. Outcome: Streamlined response to ending homelessness.	Biannually, April 2005-2013
	<i>3.1.2 - Target specific action steps for strategic impact on other planning efforts.</i>			
	<i>3.1.3 - Work to coordinate or combine planning and processes where feasible.</i>			
3.2 - BETTER COORDINATE THE AVAILABILITY OF SERVICES AND HOUSING TO PREVENT AND END HOMELESSNESS.	<i>3.2.1 - Analyze barriers and key problem areas.</i>	As assigned by Oregon ICH	Product: Biannual report summarizing analysis and documenting specific actions to improve coordination. Outcome: Improved coordination among housing and service providers.	Biannually, January 2005-2013
	<i>3.2.2 - Identify successful program models and strengths to build upon.</i>			
	<i>3.2.3 - Develop and prioritize action steps that address key problem areas, build on successful approaches and are feasible within available resources.</i>			
3.3 - IMPROVE CONTINUITY OF SUPPORT FOR INDIVIDUALS AT GREATEST RISK OF BECOMING HOMELESS.	<i>3.3.1 - Identify at risk populations such as people leaving correctional facilities, the unemployed and working poor, youth aging out of foster care, disabled veterans, other disabled individuals (especially those with mental illness and substance abuse histories).</i>	As assigned by Oregon ICH	Product: Biannual report documenting reduction of homelessness among at risk groups. Outcome: Reduction in homelessness by 10% of baseline total per year.	Biannually, January 2005-2013
	<i>3.3.2 - Pinpoint gaps in services or responses that are likely to result in or exacerbate homelessness.</i>			
	<i>3.3.3 - Propose effective solutions and best practices.</i>			
	<i>3.3.4 - Prioritize and implement the solutions and best practices.</i>			

OREGON HOMELESS POLICY TEAM ACTION PLAN (DRAFT - June 1, 2004)

STRATEGY 4: USE OREGON'S SERVICES EFFICIENTLY, EFFECTIVELY AND SYNERGISTICALLY TO END HOMELESSNESS.

Initiatives	Tasks	Lead Agency/ies	Product(s) and Outcome(s)	Completion Date
4.1 - EXPAND KNOWLEDGE OF SERVICES AVAILABLE TO HOMELESS PERSONS.	<i>4.1.1 - Catalogue and summarize contents of existing databases (e.g. First Step, 211, Oregon Helps, Housing Connections).</i>	As assigned by Oregon ICH	Product: Pocket directory of resource databases and information. Outcome: Expanded prevalence and use of information resources.	January 2005
	<i>4.1.2 - Publicize availability of databases to service providers of homeless and "at risk" populations.</i>			
	<i>4.1.3 - Improve information-sharing among agencies providing different resources to the same homeless and at risk populations.</i>			
	<i>4.1.4 - Expand access to resource information in formats accessible to homeless people (e.g. phone hotlines and helplines, homeless newspapers).</i>			
4.2 - ANALYZE KEY STATE SERVICES TO IDENTIFY BARRIERS.	<i>4.2.1 - Analyze representative "real" case examples and use focus groups to reveal barriers and gaps.</i>	As assigned by Oregon ICH	Product: Report on removing barriers to services for homeless people. Outcome: Reduced homelessness as a result of increased access to services.	December 2004
	<i>4.2.2 - Identify ways homeless and mainstream services can be better integrated.</i>			
	<i>4.2.3 - Use the new Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and other data systems to identify barriers and track trends.</i>			
	<i>4.2.4 - Analyze geographic differences in barriers..</i>			
	<i>4.2.5 - Synthesize findings into report with recommendations.</i>			
4.3 - INCREASE COLLABORATION TO COORDINATE EFFECTIVE RESOURCE UTILIZATION.	<i>4.3.1 - Target areas to improve collaboration based on barrier analysis (4.2).</i>	As assigned by Oregon ICH	Product: Resource materials and training on collaboration techniques. Outcome: Reduced homelessness as a result of increased collaboration and service coordination.	By January 2005 and ongoing
	<i>4.3.2 - Arrange technical assistance on effective models of collaboration and exemplary practices in use in Oregon.</i>			
	<i>4.3.3 - Promote cross-agency relationships among service providers and sponsor inter-disciplinary training.</i>			
	<i>4.3.4 - Use Oregon ICH task groups to collaborate on solutions to jurisdictional issues.</i>			
4.4 - STREAMLINE PROCESSES FOR ACCESSING BENEFITS AND SERVICES.	<i>4.4.1 - Identify nationally recognized best practices that build on Oregon's existing strengths and exemplary practices.</i>	As assigned by Oregon ICH	Product: TA, resource materials and training for line staff. Outcome: Reduced homelessness through improved access to benefits and services.	By April 2005 and ongoing
	<i>4.4.2 - Target streamlining efforts based on barrier analysis (4.2).</i>			
	<i>4.4.3 - Promote use of internet-based tools (e.g. Oregon Helps, Housing Connections) and other state-of-the-art technology.</i>			
	<i>4.4.4 - Train line staff on effective resource linkages.</i>			
4.5 - EXPAND AND IMPROVE SERVICE SYSTEM IN ACCOUNTABLE MANNER.	<i>4.5.1 - Inventory resources to include existing state resources, grants and technical assistance.</i>	As assigned by Oregon ICH	Product: Biannual report on service priorities, efforts and results to end homelessness. Outcome: More responsive and accessible services.	Biannually, January 2005 - 2013
	<i>4.5.2 - Use Strategy 1 report and barrier analysis (4.2) to prioritize service expansion and change efforts.</i>			
	<i>4.5.3 - Use a logic model to form requests and measure results.</i>			
	<i>4.5.4 - Report priorities, efforts and results.</i>			

OREGON HOMELESS POLICY TEAM ACTION PLAN (DRAFT - June 1, 2004)

STRATEGY 5: USE OREGON'S HOUSING RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY, EFFECTIVELY AND SYNERGISTICALLY TO END HOMELESSNESS.

Initiatives	Tasks	Lead Agency/ies	Product(s) and Outcome(s)	Completion Date
5.1 - EXPAND INFORMATION SHARING AND COORDINATION AMONG PROVIDERS.	<i>5.1.1 - Develop accessible index of available low-income housing stock.</i>	As assigned by Oregon ICH	Product: Housing resource indices. Outcome: Expanded use of information resources and improved coordination.	January 2005
	<i>5.1.2 - Develop index of available housing assistance and development resources.</i>			
	<i>5.1.3 - Improve information-sharing among agencies operating low-income housing, providing housing assistance and developing housing.</i>			
	<i>5.1.4 - Use databases (e.g. HMIS) and internet-based tools (e.g. Housing Connections) to facilitate access to information and coordination.</i>			
5.2 - IDENTIFY GAPS IN ACCESS TO INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS.	<i>5.2.1 - Increase providers' resources for presenting housing options to clients.</i>	As assigned by Oregon ICH	Product: Resource guide. Outcome: Reduced homelessness as a result of improved access to information.	January 2005
	<i>5.2.2 - Increase clients' knowledge of available providers and resources.</i>			
	<i>5.2.3 - Expand information delivery systems such as interactive web sites, pamphlets, directories, public service announcements.</i>			
5.3 - IMPLEMENT BEST PRACTICES AND MODELS TO MAXIMIZE USE OF HOUSING RESOURCES.	<i>5.3.1 - Identify best practices and models for implementation as identified in Strategy 1 report.</i>	As assigned by Oregon ICH	Product: Best practice implementation plan. Outcome: Improved utilization of existing housing resources.	By January 2005 and ongoing
	<i>5.3.2 - Identify resources to implement best practices.</i>			
	<i>5.3.3 - Craft appropriate implementation plan with appropriate partners.</i>			
5.4 - DEVELOP ADDITIONAL HOUSING AFFORDABLE TO PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS.	<i>5.4.1 - Evaluate regulatory issues.</i>	As assigned by Oregon ICH	Product: TA, resource materials and housing development training. Outcome: Reduced homelessness through increase low-income housing stock.	By April 2005 and ongoing
	<i>5.4.2 - Work toward removing regulatory barriers.</i>			
	<i>5.4.3 - Set housing production goals and track development progress.</i>			
	<i>5.4.4 - Provide training and technical assistance on low-income housing development techniques.</i>			