

Statewide Homeless Council Retreat

Summary of One Section of the Meeting

Tuesday, January 8, 2019

These are excerpts of a complete report of the meeting provided by Good Group Decisions.

Statewide Homeless Council Focus Going Forward

Based on the before-lunch discussion, Craig proposed the following list of top priorities for the group to consider. After the group made some revisions, there was general consensus that this should be the focus for the Statewide Homeless Council going forward. (It even received a few thumbs-up signals from the group!)

A. Serve people who are homeless

1. Manage beds for guests according to best practices
2. Make sure there are enough beds for people who need them
3. Advocate for housing dedicated to people who are homeless
4. Advocate for service and/or treatment in housing and other facilities
5. Be adaptable and responsive – think on our feet
6. Gather information from un-housed
 - Understand their challenges to be addressed
 - HVJ is a good example of how to do this
7. Identify current resources and advocate for new resources
8. Implement strategies already identified in Maine's Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness

B. Prevent homelessness

1. Advocate for housing
 - Call attention to the need - Specific types in specific places - Affordable
 - For people who are homeless and non-homeless dedicated populations
2. Advocate for discharge planning
 - From jails, hospitals, foster care
3. Identify risk factors
 - Help agencies prioritize assistance accordingly
4. Map current system impact
 - How the current system affects and can help address homelessness – internal and external

C. Increase systemic capacity

1. Strengthen the Statewide Homeless Council
 - Engage the Governor's Office to make good appointments

- Increase and widen participation in our work
 - For example: hospital leadership, substance use and prevention, DOC, ME pre-trial, elected officials from each region
 - Be truly advisory to the Governor, DHHS, DOC, and Maine Housing
 - Speak with one voice - so we can affect change
 - Work hard to find our common ground
 - Also recognize that there may be differences of opinion
 - Also, we want all sides to be heard
 - Speak with the receiver in mind - Always articulating benefits and identifying investment resources
2. Communicate across silos
 - And continue to break down silos
 3. Advocate to expand access to all services
 - In all counties
 - Mental health
 - Substance use disorder
 - Opioid Tx
 4. Respond to the Needs and Gap Analysis currently being done by Maine Housing
 - Make sure that it is comprehensive and diverse
 - Look at it systemically – needs and gaps identified in related efforts
 5. Integrate needs and views of the regional councils