GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

DIGEST

NOVEMBER 2023 MEETINGS

PURPOSE

To provide a readout of the November ICH meetings and insight into upcoming meetings and agenda topics.

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

At the community's request and to ensure transparency, the ICH is committed to providing a monthly digest of scheduled meetings, notes, and feedback. This digest is limited to ICH meetings and does not include all constituent concerns or community updates. If you would like to join a workgroup but are not currently on the listserv or receiving the calendar invite, please email ich.info@dc.gov to join the listserv and stay up to date.

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11/02 SINGLE ADULT SYSTEM WORKGROUP

Forum for planning across the Single Adult System (SAS).

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate

Single Adult CAHP Prioritization 6-month Review	• **Context**: TCP CAHP presentation on data from FY23 RRH and PSH matching and prioritization criteria implementation.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	   ○ **RRH-I**: TCP review of RRH match data from February - September 2023.
	      ▪ Individuals referred are waiting an average of 3.5 months to be matched.
	      ▪ Concerns about the reasons for denial and rate of unassignment due to no response, or unlocatable.
	      ▪ Request for broader program data on lease ups, program exits and exit reasons.
	   ○ **Tenant-based PSH**: I-CAHP is meeting the set prioritization targets and matching schedule.
	      ▪ Community concern and questions on gap between match and provider assignment.
	      ▪ Additional questions on the number of people not matched and their eligibility, i.e. chronic status, etc.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to consolidate feedback for TCP review and response before the December workgroup meeting.

Community Partner Concerns/Trends:	• **Context**: Opportunity for constituents, including consumers with lived experience, providers, and advocates, to share key concerns and/or trends across the system.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	   ○ Continued feedback on discrepancies and confusion throughout the housing process.
	   ○ Significant frustration from consumers on the length of time it takes to be housed from the time of match.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to synthesize feedback and incorporate for review under discussion of annual priorities for the SAS WG.

11/07 FRONT DOOR SERVICES WORKGROUP

Forum for planning and coordinating services across the front door, including day/drop-in centers, shelters, and street outreach for all subpopulations.

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate

System Check-in: Community Providers and Constituents	• **Context**: Opportunity for constituents to flag key concerns and updates or trends.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	   ○ Report of an uptick in use of fentanyl "blues" and substance use by youth-specific outreach teams and day centers, specifically:
	      ▪ Young people (aged 15 - 23 yo) near New Hampshire Ave

	- Focus of outreach on basic needs and medical attention due to effects of substance use - open wounds, sepsis, and dissociation. - Difficulty engaging around entering shelter, securing vital documents, long term housing. - o Offer from Street Health in medical outreach support to teams. - o Additional concern from PSH providers on clients in the 23 - 35 age range who are using and at risk of eviction, though reported success, and support from the DBH CRT team. **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to escalate concerns and integrate feedback for follow up with appropriate agencies (DHS and DBH).
Discussion on Annual Priorities	**Context**: Brainstorming exercise on annual priorities for the Front Door Services Workgroup to advance in 2024, informed by roles and responsibilities of ERSO Committee. **Key Concerns Flagged**: - Concern about older adults, individuals with substance use, and access for individuals with English as a second language. - Request for better data on inflow and individuals newly experiencing homelessness, including the inflow of individuals released from jail/prison. - Flag for HMIS visibility and better coordination between providers. - Emphasis on the need for medical-based outreach, specifically outreach trained in basic health needs and health system navigation. - Impact of staff turnover on client engagement and progress through the housing process. - Discussion on the need for more crisis response support and better coordination with ACT or CSW teams to avoid the need for CRT. **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to integrate feedback for the Annual Update and 2024 plans as well as appropriate forums such as Behavioral Health x Homeless Services.

11/08 FAMILY SYSTEM WORKGROUP

Forum for planning and coordinating services across the family system.

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate
System Check-in: DHS and Family CAHP Updates	**Context**: Opportunity for constituents to flag key concerns and updates or trends. **Key Concerns Flagged**: **ERAP**: Question on how the additional funding approved by City Council will be integrated into current ERAP scheduling. **Rent Reasonableness:** Continued challenges on rent reasonableness, specifically requests for support to landlords to submit comps, and options to determine rent reasonableness earlier in the process. **Next Steps Identified**: ICH integrate feedback and follow up through appropriate forums and agencies.
Discussion on Annual Priorities	**Context**: Brainstorming exercise on annual priorities for the Family System Workgroup to advance.

	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	o Better tracking of extreme medical vulnerability and SMI/SUD amongst families in FRSP to inform PSH needs.
	o Question on availability of ADA housing stock.
	o Understanding of PSH availability relative to demand.
	o Request for additional DC Flex and Career MAP resources for alternative exit pathways from FRSP.
	• **Next Steps Identified:** ICH to integrate feedback for Annual Update and 2024 workplans.

11/08 PROPOSED HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

Proposed forum for planning for coordinating and integrating health care services within the homeless services system.

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate
System Check-In	• **Context**: Opportunity for constituents to flag key concerns and updates or trends. • **Key Concerns Flagged**: Interest and questions on the new DC Stabilization Center (DCSC). • **Next Steps Identified**: ICH follow up on potential to schedule tours and presentation from the DCSC.

Prioritizing Ongoing COVID Concerns	• **Context**: Review of feedback received at the 10/17 Full Council meeting and approach to advancing on priorities.
	 • **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	     o Feedback that facility planning, and isolation protocols is top of mind.
	     o Questions on availability of vaccines and safety for individuals with chronic health conditions.
	     o Emphasis on access to testing and prevention measures - masks, hand sanitizer, etc.
	     o Question on if shelters are tracking positive cases and/or symptoms to reduce transmission and/or to inform shelter densities shifts as needed.
	 • **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to integrate feedback and follow up with DC Health and DHS to address and implement.

1115 Medicaid Waiver Renewal Opportunity	• **Context**: DHCF reviewed the survey with members to ensure feedback on programs, populations, and priorities potential to be covered under the 1115 Waiver. Responses are due by 11/27 and results will be reviewed in the proposed CMTE meeting. • **Key Concerns Flagged**: N/A • **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to distribute survey to the listserv and flag for follow up on results in next meeting.

11/09 SHELTER SOLUTIONS WORKGROUP

Planning forum responsible for shelter-related issues including shelter conditions and operations.

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate
System Check-In	**Context**: Opportunity for constituents to flag key concerns and updates or trends. **Key Concerns Flagged**: - Concerns from consumers on individuals having to queue up outside in cold weather, rain while waiting for overflow sites to open. Recommendation for options to line up inside, have outside awnings, tents. - Recommendation to share hypothermia resources with ANCs to distribute to hyper local groups. **Next Steps Identified**: ICH will continue to monitor this issue.
Unusual Incident Report (UIR) Quarterly Report	**Context**: DHS review of UIR data from Q4 of FY23 from across the homeless services system including shelter, TH and PSH programs. **Key Concerns Flagged**: - Request for data breakout of single adult shelters to review under Shelter Solutions WG. - Question on how data will be used to create change. - Request for data on client grievances tracked separate from UIRs. **Next Steps Identified**:
Addressing Fiscal Constraints	**Context**: Discussion on capacity, service and infrastructure needed to sustain 24/7 shelter and shelter system transformation overall. **Key Concerns Flagged**: - Recommendation for 24/7 shelters to onboard programs including partnerships with school and volunteer organizations to provide art therapy, physical therapy, hair care, etc. in addition to traditional case management services and housing support. - Concerns on staffing and building infrastructure to support 24/7 shelter long term. **Next Steps Identified**: Flag for additional discussion in the December WG meeting.

11/15 RACIAL EQUITY & INCLUSION WORKGROUP

Forum for advancing racial equity across the homeless services continuum informed by objectives outlined in Homeward DC 2.0.

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate
System Check-in	**Context**: Opportunity for constituents to flag key concerns and updates or trends. **Key Concerns Flagged**: - Concerns on the length of time the voucher process is taking, including the public housing waitlist. - Concern about number of people who pass away while matched to housing.

	- o Discussion on quality of PSH case management and recommendation to involve clients more directly in the process. **Next Steps Identified**: ICH integrate feedback for appropriate forums.
Review of System Operations x Annual Update	**Context**: Recap and close out of system operations review including difference between subpopulation needs and resources. **Key Concerns Flagged**: - o Interest in exploring cash assistance and guaranteed income programming. - o Flag that inclement weather during the summer is dangerous for the unsheltered population. - o Discussion on scope of the systems review including disparity between individuals and families as well as the experience of homelessness compared to the experience of the District as a whole. **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to integrate feedback and delegate next steps to appropriate forums for action and follow up.
Establishing Priorities & Projects for Next Year	**Context**: Discussion to advance on outstanding priorities for the REI WG including Developing an REI Assessment Tool, Advancing Housing as a Human Right and Opportunities for Regional Collaboration. **Key Concerns Flagged**: Most of the discussion centered on developing an REI assessment tool. - o Feedback to assess current and proposed policies, processes, and programs. - o Emphasis on assessment and understanding of client experience and grievances. - o Discussion to leverage existing REI tools and customize for system needs. **Next Steps Identified**: ICH integrate feedback for the Annual Update and the next REI WG meeting.

11/15 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH X HOMELESS SERVICES

Proposed workgroup forum for advancing care coordination with the behavioral health system of care.

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate
Hypothermia Check-In	**Context**: Review of hypothermia season updates, including operational changes for the Thanksgiving holiday. **Key Concerns Flagged**: - o Recommendation to send simple messaging to outreach team and agencies to ensure clients are aware. - o Feedback that flyers and email updates are helpful so agencies can easily disseminate and post on social media. - o Updates on Narcan training and discussion on harm reduction training needs across system and overflow sites. - o Questions on FD-12 process and updates on MPD/DBH Co-response teams. **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to consolidate feedback and propose agenda for the next meeting.

Systemwide Check-Ins	• **Context**: Check-in on systemwide updates including Stabilization Center, 1115 Medicaid Waiver Renewal and Opioid Response & Overdose Prevention.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	o Request for information on the new Stabilization Center and interest in scheduling tours for service providers. Question on if/how referrals from homeless services are tracked.
	o Brief review of public emergency declaration on opioids and juvenile crime. Concerns from providers on substance use in family shelters and PSH.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: ICH integrate feedback and support with request for tours of the DCSC.

11/16 VETERANS NOW WORKGROUP

Forum for advancing strategies to reduce Veteran homelessness.

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate
System Check In	• **Context**: Feedback and updates from the community on hiring, trends, concerns.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	o SSVF providers are now mostly fully staffed. As SSVF providers staff up, caseload slots are quickly filling up emphasizing demand.
	o Update from VA on calendar year regional goal to house 394 Veterans, and they are currently at 318. This is across all programming (SSVF, VASH, GPD).
	• **Next Steps Identified**: Monitor progress on VA goals and SSVF utilization/demand in the coming months.
Flex Fund	• **Context**: The Flex Fund (run by HCS) has been open for roughly 30 days and has seen 30 applicants so far. Community discussion on challenges and approach to certain case scenarios including requests for high amounts, Veterans in need of additional case management.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	o Discussion to leverage other programs (Project Reconnect, ERAP, SSVF Shallow Subsidy) to cover large sum requests over the target limit per household of $5k. HCS has seen ~5 requests of $10 - $27k demonstrating changes in the landscape as rental arrears compound.
	o Recommendation for TCP HMIS review of self-referrals to confirm any current program enrollment, additional point of contact, and experience of homelessness.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: Track monthly updates from HCS as to what trends they are seeing. ICH to support HCS with connection to Project Reconnect. TCP to follow up on HCS visibility in HMIS.

11/20 HOUSING SOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

Forum for advancing strategies to reduce Veteran homelessness.

Attendance	• XX Participants, XX Organizations
Topics	**Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate**
System Updates	• **Context**: Brief updates from DHS on adopting rent reasonableness for non-DCHA programs and DHCD on the submission of the PRO Housing application. • **Key Concerns Flagged**: Questions from attendees on income range and how regional jurisdictions will receive and manage funds if awarded since the application was submitted through MWCOG. • **Next Steps Identified**: DHCD to share award updates with the Housing Solutions Committee when available.

Rent Reasonableness	• **Context**: Background and updates from DC Housing Authority (DCHA) related to rent reasonableness.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	   ○ Question on availability of ADA and wheelchair accessible units.
	   ○ Request for clarity on the programs and process for DCHA programs including public housing and voucher waitlists.
	   ○ Impact on client rapport and engagement, including risk of losing application fees or paying multiple fees for multiple units, starting process over again if landlords do not meet the adjustment.
	• **Next Steps Identified**:

Annual Updates	• **Context**: ICH status report on Annual Update and confirmation of annual priorities under the Housing Solutions Committee.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	   ○ The group agreed to review the question of available units and type under demand and supply priority categories, specifically units for larger family sizes and ADA.
	   ○ Questions on affordability standards and recertification processes.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: ICH integrate feedback for annual priorities and invited participants to the Strategic Planning Committees and Executive Committee meetings in December and January for progress on the Annual Update.

11/20 JOINT SHY YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD & CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT WORKGROUP

Forum for developing and advancing priorities of young adults with lived experience.

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate
Member Check-In	• **Context**: Opportunity for YAB and CEWG members to flag key concerns and updates regardless of the planned meeting agenda topics. • **Key Concerns Flagged**: Reminder request from YAB and CEWG members on tracking follow ups for concerns and progress from previous meetings including

	specific shelter conditions and seasonal planning. • **Next Steps Identified**: ICH integrate and provide status updates during next YAB & CEWG meetings.

Housing Navigation Tool	• **Context**: YAB & CEWG review of DHS draft Housing Navigation Tool used to screen for Project Reconnect referrals.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	    o Question on plan for training partner organizations such as DOC on the housing navigation tool.
	    o Question on how navigation tool and Project Reconnect will intersect with the CAHP process and referrals to RRH.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: DHS to integrate feedback for the draft tool and provide status updates on implementation in ICH Front Door Services WG.

Peer Case Management Institute	• **Context**: DHS updates on program design of the Peer Case Management Institute and plan for implementation.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	    o Discussion on how to ensure individuals are mission driven and able to navigate difficult situations in case management.
	    o Feedback that individuals currently employed full time can likely not enroll.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: DHS to integrate feedback for future planning and share updates with ICH when the application process is open.

11/21 YOUTH COMMITTEE

Forum for planning for Young Adults aged 18-24. Formerly the monthly Youth CAHP Policy Workgroup, the ICH has consolidated the quarterly Youth Committee to the monthly ICH Youth CAHP Policy WG meeting slot.

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate

Systemwide Check-in	• **Context**: Opportunity for agency updates from TCP and DHS, as well as key concerns or trends top of mind from consumers, service providers and advocates.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	    o Concern about messaging on shelter availability. Report that some service locations are posting inaccurate information or have out of date flyers.
	    o Question on best way to flag critical cases for hypothermia outreach.
	    o Lack of clarity on DHS PSH eligibility and how cases are reviewed in Youth CAHP meetings.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to distribute hypothermia season resource guide to Youth CMTE and integrate questions for follow up.

CAHP Prioritization 6-Month Review	• **Context**: Follow up on data review and recommendations on CAHP process changes following implementation of FY23 criteria.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	    o Recommendation on improvements to the BNL pre check form, process, and consistency with the I-CAHP system.
	    o Discussion on BNL pre check messaging and language to use regarding

| | room and shared locations for client preference. |
| | • **Next Steps Identified**: ICH, DHS and TCP Finalize decisions in January Youth CMTE. |

11/28 STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Forum for tracking progress on strategic planning initiatives.

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate

HMIS Visibility	• **Context**: TCP update on implementation on HMIS visibility and workflow changes implemented at the start of FY24.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	   o Discussion on target or aim for ROI coverage in the system to support housing coordination.
	   o Feedback that providers need the ROI translated in other languages to support engagement.
	   o Need to understand implementation from frontline staff at shelters.
	   o Flag that integrating the updated HMIS Roi into the CAHP VI-SPDAT workflow is still underway and could help in reaching people who primarily interact with day centers and outreach.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to incorporate reminder for the ROI across meeting forums.

HUD CoC NOFO Updates	• **Context**: Update on HUD CoC NOFO as well as review of reflections from the HUD CoC NOFO Ranking Committee.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	   o Concern from providers that establishing reasonable service costs by program types and subpopulations is challenging due to variations in organizational size, program size, and other factors.
	   o Flag that services covered under DBH's Core Service Agencies Community Support are being restructured.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to integrate feedback and follow up with DBH.

DHS Staff Suitability Screening	• **Context**: DHS update on adjustments to the staff suitability screening policy included in provider contracts.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	   o Concern about removal of criminal background checks as well as identity theft and security.
	   o Request for details on changes by staff category and examples of challenges providers are facing in the hiring process and how the updates address the challenges.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: Add to agenda for 12/12 ICH Executive Committee Meeting.

ICH Annual Update	• **Context**: ICH review of the scope, context, approach, and timeline of the ICH Annual Update. • **Key Concerns Flagged**:

	o Clarification that the REI analysis grounds the Annual Update since it analyzes the same KPI data and highlights disparities in the system, essential to address in the Annual Update. o Question on the best way to provide feedback following the meeting. • **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to distribute instructions for submitting additional feedback in advance of 12/12 ICH Executive Committee Meeting.

11/29 ERSO COMMITTEE

Planning forum responsible for developing and evaluating the implementation of the Winter Plan and coordinating shelter-related topics.

Topics	Highlights, including context, key concerns, and next steps as appropriate

Constituent Concerns	• **Context**: Opportunity for constituents to flag key concerns, and any system barriers and trends.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	  o Follow up on consumer request for hypothermia alert announcements at DCPL and DPR locations. DCPL confirmed some sites have started to make announcements and distribute comfort items.
	  o Flag for coordination with DOC on discharge issues, specifically transportation requests for individuals released during non-business hours.
	  o Concern about individuals' wellbeing during extreme weather and coordination with DBH.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: ICH to integrate feedback and work with DHS, DCPL, UPO to address concerns. ICH will also follow-up with DOC and the Ready Center.

Hypothermia Check-In	• **Context:** DHS updates on hypothermia season including operational shifts and shelter capacity.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged:**
	  o Flag from UPO that accessibility at shelters is a challenge and that trying to find locations with availability and that meet the needs such as lower bunk beds, accessible bathrooms, etc. is difficult. UPO would like to see more options available and designated space for individuals for special needs.
	  o Clarification on the threshold for how alerts are called and activation of warming buses.
	• **Next Steps Identified:** ICH integrate feedback and work with DHS to follow up.

Cold Weather Emergency Planning	• **Context**: Discussion of parameters for deploying warming buses when a cold weather alert is activated and potential locations for this season.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	  o Specific location recommendations: K street, State Dept, Starburst Plaza, Eastern Market, Good Hope Road, Columbia Heights and Georgia Ave between New Hampshire and Missouri Ave.
	  o Flag that Southeast Library will be closing soon for renovations and the interim location will not be the same size.
	• **Next Steps Identified**: DHS to integrate feedback for planning purposes. ICH Front

	Door Services WG will continue to monitor hot spot locations and adjustments.

Aston & PEP-V	• **Context:** DHS shared updates on the status of PEP-V demobilization and the opening of the Aston.
	• **Key Concerns Flagged**:
	    ○ Highlighting success of the PEP-V as a program.
	    ○ Concern on difficulty to advance in housing process for PEP-V clients who will move to congregate shelter.
	    ○ Questions on availability of bridge housing and medical respite to accommodate the needs.
	• **Next Steps Identified:** Integrate lessons learned from PEP-V into development of non-congregate shelter.