

**Coordinated Entry Committee Minutes  
November 14, 2017**

**Present:** Heather Eddy-Region 1; Wyatt Schroeder-Region 3; Susan Thurm-Region 5; Justine Murphy-PATH; Brian Dale-HUD; Brady Ellis-IHFA; Lisa Steele-IHFA; Dana Wiemiller-IHFA; Jennifer Otto-IHFA

**Not Present:** Steve Bonnar-Region 2; Leanne Trappen-Region 4; Bill Campbell-Region 6; Heidi Smith-DHS; Ann Fitzsimmons-VA; Pam Thompson-Kootenai Health

**Guests Present:** BJ Stensland-Region 5; Misty McEwan-SCCAP; Ginny Acevedo-Bannock Youth Foundation; Mary Kirn-DHW

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**OPENING REMARKS**

Dana welcomed all meeting participants, including several guests. Dana confirmed the CoC Operating guidelines which state meetings are open to the public; however, voting members of the committee are those selected by the Regional Coalitions.

Dana stated the goals for the meeting were to:

- Provide a brief recap the VI-SPDAT discussion from the 10/27 meeting
- Discuss prioritization options and confirm an implementation plan
- Confirm the status of committee action items

**FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:**

1. Minutes from the meeting on 10/27/17 were reviewed and approved.
  - a. A motion to approve the minutes was submitted by Wyatt and seconded by Heather. The minutes were approved by a unanimous vote.
2. Fair Housing Update
  - a. Brady said there is nothing new to report since the 10/27 meeting. He reiterated the 10/27 update, indicating representatives from the HUD special needs and fair housing offices and USICH conducted a listening session with Intermountain Fair Housing. Federal staff is currently reviewing all comments and will provide a response; however, there is still no confirmed timeline.
  - b. Wyatt indicated the Boise CoC is also waiting for input from HUD on prioritization.

## **NEW ITEMS:**

### 1. Summary of VI-SPDAT Review and Discussion

- a. Dana provided a brief summary of the discussion from the 10/27 meeting. She indicated the committee had specific comments on 13 of the 27 questions: Seven of the 13 comments were related to the wording of questions, not the intent of the question. The committee agreed two questions would be relevant for youth populations. Up to four questions were considered objectionable and the committee agreed they should be removed.
- b. She indicated most of the comments submitted by Intermountain Fair Housing Council (IFHC) were related to inquiring about the nature and extent of a disability and that the committee agreed many of these concerns were resulting from assumptions made by IFHC.
- c. Brady said the committee met the goal of engaging in a detailed discussion on each of the questions. He said his perception was the committee agreed that IFHC made broad assumptions on several questions and, as a result, the committee was not as concerned about IFHC's comments. He said this should allow the committee to focus on prioritization in general, rather than the VI-SPDAT specifically.

### 2. Implementation Options

- a. Dana outlined three implementation options, providing positives, negatives, and implementation considerations for each option:
  - i. Use the VI-SPDAT, either as a short- or long-term prioritization tool
    1. Positive: existing tool; widely used around the country; provides a potential "safety net" against a lawsuit; objective, with simple yes/no questions; already set up in HMIS. Negatives: not trauma-informed; unacceptable for some providers; may result in forfeiture of funds by some providers. Implementation considerations: training; potential for no access point in some regions; need for an alternative process for region(s) that will not use the VI-SPDAT.
  - ii. Use the Vulnerability Assessment Tool (VAT) or another existing tool
    1. Positive: existing tool; the VAT has been tested for validity and reliability; VAT is highly rated; training resources available with VAT. Negatives: Subjective; may require specific certifications/education; approximate fee of \$3,000. Implementation considerations: VAT training not available until spring/early summer; potential implementation delay; need to revise and build HMIS system.
  - iii. Use a CoC-developed tool
    1. Positive: provider acceptance. Negatives: Not tested for validity and reliability; removes potential safety net of existing tool; potentially at higher risk of challenge or lawsuit. Implementation considerations: Must develop and finalize questions and scoring; legal review; IHCC Board approval; revise and build HMIS system.
- b. Dana encouraged the committee to make a decision on a path forward since time is running out before the January 23 HUD deadline.
- c. Brady encouraged everyone to share their comments so the committee can make informed decisions and move forward.

- i. Wyatt asked the status of the access point in Region 3 and the other regions.
  - 1. Dana indicated Salvation Army/Nampa has agreed to serve as an access point in Region 3. St. Vincent de Paul in Region 1 has been using the VI-SPDAT with no issues since July. Salvation Army and Sojourner's Alliance in Region 2 had previously agreed to serve as access points but backed out due to VI-SPDAT concerns. They have not indicated any change in position. SCCAP has been approached to be an access point in Region 4 but has indicated they will not use the VI-SPDAT. Region 5 does not have a confirmed access point. CLUB, Inc. has agreed to serve as the access point for Region 6.
    - a. Brian said Salvation Army staff from Lewiston and Nampa are in communication.
    - b. Misty said if the committee and IFHC both have concerns about three questions - 13, 24 & 26 – and questions can't be modified, then the VI-SPDAT wouldn't be a viable tool. She said the SCCAP Executive Director won't allow the agency to be exposed to a fair housing complaint. She said there are no other concerns about serving as an access point.
    - c. BJ said Aid for Friends has the capacity and would be willing to serve as an access point, but is concerned about using the VI-SPDAT and the risk of a fair housing complaint.
  - 2. Dana said access points are still outstanding in Regions 2 and 4 due to the VI-SPDAT and fair housing concerns and not due to funding and/or capacity concerns by providers.
- d. Brady asked regions to indicate where they stand on each of the implementation options.
  - i. Susan asked if VAT "train the trainer" could be done in advance of the full training.
    - 1. Dana indicated it could not. She also indicated that the script/questions for the VAT has not been reviewed so the committee can't determine if it is trauma-informed or may also present fair housing concerns. DESC has not made the script/questions available for review. Dana said she would follow-up with DESC to see if the committee can review the script/questions prior to agreeing to use the tool.
  - ii. BJ asked where implementation stands if we're still waiting for clarifications from HUD.
    - 1. Brady indicated implementation still needs to move forward. He said some communities, including Boise, are prioritizing solely based on length of time homeless.
    - 2. Wyatt indicated many communities are not prioritizing exactly as intended by HUD, which is by both length of time homeless and severity of service need. He said many communities are prioritizing based only on severity of service need and using the VI-SPDAT score. He said Boise is using the VI-SPDAT as a triage tool and not using the score to prioritize. He said this may be a good option

- for the Balance of State CoC. He recommended prioritizing by length of time homeless and using the VI-SPDAT to understand service needs and guide a client discussion about different housing and support options, rather than using the VI-SPDAT for prioritization.
3. Brady said the prioritization and fair housing issue seems to be limited to Idaho; however, it appears HUD may release national information and/or guidance on this issue but have not indicated a timeframe for release.
  4. Brady asked if using the VI-SPDAT in this manner would alleviate provider fair housing concerns.
    - a. BJ said no...because IFHC will likely not make a distinction on how the VI-SPDAT is being used.
    - b. Wyatt said he believes IFHC's issue is about prioritization in general, not the VI-SPDAT specifically.
    - c. Brady said this approach is defensible and a good solution because housing would be provided based on length of time homeless and not on information obtained from the VI-SPDAT or another prioritization tool.
- iii. Brady asked if the regions would be okay with the approach as outlined by Wyatt.
1. Region 1 - Heather said yes, although they are okay with the VI-SPDAT and have concerns about the education/certifications that may be required for the VAT.
  2. Region 2 – Not present.
  3. Region 3 – Approach is currently in use.
  4. Region 4 – Misty is okay with the approach, but won't use the VI-SPDAT.
  5. Region 5 – Susan agrees with Misty. Ginny is okay with the VI-SPDAT and acknowledged that risks are often necessary to move forward. She is concerned about making any decision to use the VAT when the committee has not seen the questions/script and it has not been vetted.
  6. Region 6 – Mary expressed concerns about the time it would take to develop a locally-developed tool. She also expressed concerns about not having seen the questions/script for the VAT. She also does not like the VI-SPDAT – specifically the way several questions are worded. She asked if it's necessary to have a prioritization tool.
    - a. Brady indicated there has to be a prioritization "process."
    - b. Dana shared that Bill doesn't like the VI-SPDAT, but would use it if necessary for implementation while alternatives are being evaluated.
- iv. Brady said he believes IFHC is also in a holding pattern and is waiting to see what is released by HUD. He said he believes the approach recommended by Wyatt is the best option under the circumstances. He recommended discussing this option with Bill, Steve and Leanne prior to the next committee meeting.

- v. Jennifer asked Misty if she would also reject the VAT if IFHC has issues with that tool as well.
    - 1. Misty said yes...SCCAP does not want to be exposed to a potential fair housing complaint.
  - e. Dana said she would follow-up with DESC on some questions and speak with other committee members to receive their input in advance of the next meeting on 11/28. She stressed that a final decision must be made at the next meeting.
3. Meeting adjourned.