



DEPARTMENT OF
HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS
COUNTY OF MAUI

ALAN M. ARAKAWA
Mayor

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November 3, 2016

Honorable Alan M. Arakawa
Mayor, County of Maui
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

For Transmittal to:

Honorable Chair Stacy Crivello
Housing, Human Services,
and Transportation Committee
Maui County Council
200 South High Street
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793

APPROVED FOR TRANSMITTAL
Alan Arakawa 11/4/16
Mayor Date

Dear Chair Crivello:

SUBJECT: HOMELESSNESS IN MAUI COUNTY (HHT-38)

Thank you for your correspondence of October 25, 2016 regarding the above subject. The questions posed in your letter are listed below in bold and are followed by the Department's responses.

- 1. Provide a list of government and nonprofit agency programs available for the homeless population coping with mental health issues. Identify whether State or Federal funds support the program and the amount of funds provided.**

Nonprofit agency programs

- Ka Hale Pomaika'i – a full-spectrum charitable agency on Molokai meeting the needs of the community by providing a quality substance misuse treatment continuum since 1996. County of Maui supported a pilot project "Co-Occurring Disorder (COD) and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment." (County funding - \$65,000 / no other resources)
- Molokai Community Service Council – Maurice Thompson Drop-in Center – The center's goal is to provide a safe and supportive home-like environment in Kaunakakai for adults with chronic mental illnesses. It also provides a safe and therapeutic alternative to solitary life on the street, and the incidences of hospitalization and criminal behavior have declined significantly among those who participate in the program. (County funding - \$15,000 / State – Department of Health - \$54,020)
- Mental Health Kokua – HOME (outreach) and PSR (Psycho/Social Rehab) programs (County funding - \$95,000 / State –PATH Funds - \$50,000)

Government agency programs

There are Community Mental Health Centers on the islands of Maui, Molokai and Lanai which are under the State of Hawaii, Department of Health. Funding information was not available.

- 2. Explain the need for mental health assessments conducted by service agencies, law enforcement agencies, and medical facilities. Further, explain how the assessments contribute to the services provided to the homeless population.**

Behavioral health problems are common among people who are homeless, and the risk of chronic homelessness increases when substance use or mental problems are present. In January 2014, one in five people experiencing homelessness had a serious mental illness, and a similar percentage had a chronic substance use disorder.

Substantial progress toward recovery and self-sufficiency requires significant engagement efforts amongst mental health providers, law enforcement and medical facilities along with repeated attempts at treatment and housing rehabilitation. People who are homeless or at risk for homelessness and have a substance use or mental disorder are often cut off from social supports and could require a number of services ranging from safe and stable housing, food, and financial assistance to medical care, mental health treatment, child care, education, skills development and other preventive services, employment, screening and early intervention, and recovery support.

Each individual facing homelessness has very specific needs. Therefore, it is necessary to have a coordinated effort of first screening a person, identifying their specific need and then targeting the appropriate recovery resources. It is important that mental health providers participate in a system of care that responds specifically to a wide-range of needs. Comprehensive recovery efforts must include not only housing, but also supportive mental health, substance abuse, medical, occupational and social services.

- 3. Provide a summary of the State's Housing First program and availability of funds to Maui County, including the amount and purpose of the funds.**

Promoting a Housing First approach is one of HUD's policy priorities in the 2016 Continuum of Care (CoC) NOFA. HUD encourages CoCs to use data to measure how quickly Housing First programs move households into permanent housing, remove barriers to accessing housing and services, and adopt a client-centered service method.

Housing First is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life. This approach is guided by the belief that people need basic necessities like food and a place to live before attending to anything less critical, such as getting

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a job, budgeting properly, or attending to substance use issues. Additionally, Housing First is based on the theory that client choice is valuable in housing selection and supportive service participation, and that exercising that choice is likely to make a client more successful in remaining housed and improving their life.

The State has allocated \$1.5 million for Housing First which will be divided among the Bridging the Gap (CoC) which is comprised of Maui County, Kauai County and Hawaii Island County. Funding is estimated to be released directly to service providers by Spring 2017, however it has not yet been determined how funding will be apportioned. Scope of programming has also not been determined and will be provided by the Department of Human Services, Homeless Program Office.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at Ext. 7805.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carol K. Reimann', with a stylized flourish at the end.

CAROL K. REIMANN
Director of Housing and Human Concerns