

Notes
Self Sufficiency Work Group
Monday, July 21, 2008
Shenandoah Community Health Center:

Present: Trina Bartlett, Kathy Boylan, Dale Bradfield, Bonnie McComb, Audrey Morris, Grace Murphy, and Teresa Warnick

Regional Resource Connection: Kathy Boylan reported that the RRC is seeing a huge increase in requests for electric and mortgage assistance and assistance with what to do when they think they are going to lose their homes. DHHR just received an individual from the Commission on Aging. She is not yet trained but she will be helping Kamaal and Alonzo with the RRC and I&R Center.

Jan Callen and Kathy are sitting on the advisory board for the Dollar Energy Program, which will benefit Warming Hands and Hearts. The program provides a match for every dollar for local energy assistance. Salvation Army has committed \$30,000 and City National has committed \$2,500. The money must be in by January, and, as Kathy understands the program, Dollar Energy will pay Allegheny Power directly. The program is trying to use resources that are statewide, so Kathy isn't sure how other fuel sources, such as propane will work. However, the biggest need right now is for electricity. She suggested the possibility of not starting Warming Hands and Hearts until Emergency LIEAP, rather than regular LIEAP, kicks in. That way, Warming Hands and Hearts would be available into the spring when people have high energy bills.

The next RRC meeting is scheduled for this coming Thursday, July 24, at 9:00 AM at the Berkeley County DHHR office.

Morgan County RRC Audrey reported that Morgan County is seeing the same trend as Berkeley and Jefferson with increasingly higher bills. Dorothy hasn't seen a bill less than \$600.00. The Victory Garden program is now focusing on nutrition, and 25 people attended the last class. Attendees were more the senior population rather than the target population. Bonnie McComb from CCAP is going to train the group in the "Stretch Your Dollars" program.

Audrey also noted that the organizations involved in the RRC are looking at a way to make participation in training mandatory for "repeat clients." They are looking at a way to identify "flagged" clients who use all the resources at one agency then move on to the next agency. Instead, they would like to require participation in programs to increase their self sufficiency. She said the group is thinking about developing an MOU.

Kathy stated that an MOU is a good idea, but that she was also talking to an organization that has a tiered program of requirements. For example, a client who has required assistance twice needs to take a budgeting class before getting assistance again. A client who has received assistance three times needs to volunteer, etc. She also suggested

developing multi-disciplinary teams to assist families who are repeatedly depending on community agencies.

Audrey is looking for examples of client/case management plans, and the group suggested either contacting Glenda Helman. Teresa also reported that Friends in Action uses a plan.

The Morgan County RRC meets on the second Tuesday of every month at 9:00 AM.

Christmas Clearinghouse: The Christmas Clearinghouse documents have all been approved and a community meeting/training will be held on August 20 at 2:00 PM at Berkeley County DHHR. Invitations will be developed and sent out, but everyone was encouraged to inform churches or civic groups that the meeting will help them understand what we are trying to do to serve more families. It is not intended to impose different criteria for Christmas giving. Teresa will provide Kathy will a mailing list of churches.

Transportation: Grace will be the temporary chair. The next meeting will be at 11:00 AM July 24 following the RRC meeting. Grace reported that the group really needs to focus on gathering data that shows the need for transportation. She talked to Nic Diehl and Work Force WV may be able to add a question. Kathy suggested having Alonzo and Kamaal ask transportation questions too. She recommended the committee frame those questions to get the exact information needed. The group also discussed having Rick Smith come to a meeting to discuss what his CAP agency can provide.

EITC: Grace said there is nothing new to report about EITC right now. The group did discuss the need to involve other community organizations. Kathy will explore this possibility when she is in Charleston.

HHSC Quarterly Meeting: The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 1. Refreshments will be available at 8:30 with the meeting starting at 9:00 AM at Berkeley County DHHR.

Announcements: Trina reported there is a new policy from the State Department of Education regarding civic engagement. Nonprofits can also go on line and see exactly what students are supposed to be taught and achieve in a variety of social study topics, including financial management. Nonprofits are encouraged to contact the schools and explain how they can help meet a goal and provide opportunities for civic engagement. The information is available at : http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/p2520.4_ne.pdf.

Day of Caring will be September 9. Projects can still be submitted.

The HHSC will once again be developing a document of public policy recommendations. The recommendations will be due to Trina no later than October 31. She is also looking for volunteers to review and make recommendations for a template and executive summary. A community leaders' breakfast for the legislators and community leaders will

be held Wednesday, December 3 at 7:30 at Berkeley County DHHR. Each group will present their recommendations.

Friends in Action currently has eight families and Teresa was seeking recommendations for someone to provide domestic violence training. Recommendations were made.

Marie Galazzi is now with Telamon Corporation.

Next Meeting: The agenda needs to focus on public policy recommendations. The meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 18, at 10:00 AM at Shenandoah Community Health Center.