



Thursday, December 14th, 2023 | 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

Hybrid Meeting

Physical –UWDC Community Room: 1314 Teasley Lane, Denton, TX 76205

Virtual – Zoom Video Conference Link Attached in Email

Agenda:

I.	Welcome	Chair/Co-chair	3 min.
II.	August Meeting Minutes	Chair/Co-chair	3 min.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VOTE – Approval of Meeting Minutes 		
III.	Strategic Plan Update	Olivia Williams & Megan Ball	45 min.
IV.	Find Help	Alexandra Reed	5 min.
V.	Workgroup Updates		10 min.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Denton County Homeless Coalition • Data • Healthcare • Diversion • Cross Care Collaborative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terry Widmer Elena Shehan TBD Isabel Rodriguez Megan Ball Michelle Conner 	
VI.	Backbone Support Update	UWDC	10 min.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denton County Behavioral Health Leadership Team Update • Denton County Workforce Success Leadership Team Update 		
VII.	Public Comment	Chair/Co-chair	5 min.
VIII.	New Business	Chair/Co-chair	5 min.
IX.	Adjourn	Chair/Co-chair	2 min.

Next Meeting Date:

Thursday, February 8th, 2024 | 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. | Hybrid Meeting

Physical – United Way of Denton County, 1314 Teasley Lane Denton TX 76205

Virtual – Zoom Video Conference Link Attached in Email





Denton County Homelessness Leadership Team

8:00 am Thursday, October 12th, 2023

Hybrid Meeting

HRSA Peer Support by Dhruvodi Mukherjee

Olivia Mata-Williams introduced guest speaker Dhruvodi Mukherjee, Ph.D., LCSW-S, an associate professor in the University of North Texas social work department. Dr. Dhru discussed a \$1.8 million federal grant that the UNT social work department, rehabilitation counseling department, and addiction studies program received last year from the Human Resources and Services Administration in the Department of Health and Human Services. Grantees plan to use the funds over the next three years to establish a standardized pathway for community health workers. Dr. Dhru explained that a community health worker can serve as a bridge between primary care and behavioral health. A community health worker certification, apprenticeship, and continuing education program will be created at UNT in partnership with the UNT Health Science Center, MHMR, Workforce Solutions of North Texas, and the DFW Association of Community Health Workers. Dr. Dhru expressed that this is a unique opportunity for UNT to train students, community members, and those with lived experience without the need for them to take out student loans. Individuals applying for the initial certification can expect a six-week online training that will be covered by the grant in addition to a \$4,000 stipend for support. Participants that choose to complete the apprenticeship after receiving their certification will receive an additional \$7,500 stipend for support. Even if you do not consider your organization to be healthcare oriented, Dr. Dhru stated that he views everything through a healthcare lens and encouraged individuals to reach out to him if they would like to explore and map out how a community health worker might look at their organization.

Find Help by Alexandra Reed

Alexandra Reed discussed Find Help Denton County, a platform that will serve as an up-to-date online resource directory for Denton County through the Find Help Social Care Network. The purpose of the platform is to establish easier and quicker communication for referrals between Denton County nonprofits. Organizations can access the platform for free, create as many user logins as needed, and access user data and analytics. If the organization is already listed on the platform, it can be claimed, plan program updates, and maintain accurate program information. If there are no resources listed in the directory for a specific need and know that there are existing services to meet the need, please reach out to Alex or her team. Any local, state, and national resources that could be beneficial to residents of Denton County are able to be listed on the platform. Find Help is HITRUST certified and HIPAA compliant, so if an agency does not have the IT infrastructure to accept inbound referrals in a secure manner, that service is free to them when they sign up on Find Help. The Find Help Denton County platform is set to launch county wide mid-November.

Texas Homeless Network Conference Takeaways by Olivia Mata-Williams

Olivia Mata-Williams and Leia Atkinson attended the annual THN conference and gave a presentation on collective onboarding to improve systems change on the frontline. The goal of their presentation was to help organizations, new staff, and new interns be more aware of how to piece together all the information that they



receive during the onboarding process. Olivia stated that the key takeaways from the conference were focusing on the inclusion of persons with lived experience, increasing outreach and volunteerism, The Other Ones Foundation workforce first model, landlord engagement, creative storage solutions, and advocacy. There was a conference session on the sequential intercept model that covered topics overlapping with the work of the Cross Care Collaborative workgroup, showing that HLT is on the same track as the state.

Workgroup Updates

Housing:

Olivia Mata-Williams stated that the housing workgroup is seeing an increase in active participation for weekly case conferencing. All workgroups have been feeling the squeeze of impact from funding while still desiring to find ways to increase the tool belts of clients. There are differing entities continuing to provide resources to the community, so it is important to focus on effectively connecting case managers and clients to the services that are available.

Denton County Homeless Coalition:

Elena Shehan shared that DCHC's previous two meetings have had the primary focus of drilling down a strategic plan to present to the leadership team. Four strategic focuses have been identified at this time, being the PIT Count, advocacy, fundraising, and connection. DCHC hosted a panel discussion with Dr. Jones and others who have lived experience that is available to view on Facebook. There will be one more panel discussion held in 2023 and two more held in 2024. A networking event was held during which buttons were created to be sold to fundraise for the Barriers Fund. The coalition is brainstorming ideas for future networking and community event opportunities. Elena stated that nominations are open for service provider awards. Two individuals will be awarded through a nomination process, receiving a monetary award, plaque, and community recognition. Winners will be posted on the DCHC website and announced at the next HLT meeting.

Data Workgroup:

Olivia Mata-Williams provided updates on the August 2023 numbers from the Denton County Homelessness Data Dashboard. Despite the housing intervention need numbers not having moved significantly this year, there is still a need and demand for permanent supportive housing. Funding amounts from the federal government are going down, so there will continue to be a challenge with immediate assessment rental assistance programs. No significant jumps have been tracked over previous months regarding the number of Denton County individuals and families experiencing homelessness. PIT Count data has shown that Denton County's senior population faces an increased risk of homelessness. When considering funding and grant opportunities for this population, preventative solutions should be addressed in addition to solutions for seniors currently experiencing homelessness. Olivia discussed the importance of maintaining awareness of advocacy pieces that can benefit the development of affordable and attainable housing across the board. Data regarding students experiencing homelessness is updated twice a year with information from TEA, with the next update expected soon. Olivia stated that August showed a dip in inflows, individuals who are actively engaging in the system by seeking services. It was explained that the peaks and valleys reflected on the housing placements section of the dashboard are typically due to funding increasing and decreasing at different times. Sharon and Amanda from the housing navigation team set a goal of housing 50 people and by the end of September, 51 people had been housed.

Healthcare:



Isabel Rodriguez informed the group that the healthcare workgroup had looked at the results of two surveys that they did. The first survey was to providers about what services are available in the community. The second survey was a frontline worker survey about their knowledge about where to refer individuals for specific needs. The workgroup used the results of the two surveys to outline specific goals for the workgroup, to increase awareness of and access to the healthcare services available to the unhoused population. The workgroup is looking to make a toolkit for health care workers, utilize the Denton County Find Help platform, identify grassroots efforts, raising awareness efforts for mental health and healthcare workers, and create an advocacy plan.

Diversions:

Megan Ball shared that the diversion workgroup has paused meeting due to finalizing the training component on diversion. As of right now, approximately five agencies have been met with to complete the training. The group is now in the phase of implementing diversion skills and collecting data within the HMIS system. Megan hopes that the group will have a diversion presentation to share by the springtime. Ongoing conversations are being held in regard to increasing funding.

Cross Care Collaborative:

Shanan Spencer gave updates on behalf of Michelle Conner. The group has been making progress in mapping out what the current response system looks like between law enforcement, homelessness service providers, and behavioral health providers. The group aims to improve communication between hospitals and the jail system when individuals are leaving those systems and reentering the community. The group will be looking at creating agreements between those organizations, better planning around release and discharge, and what plans and follow up looks like to decrease the rates of recidivism.

Strategic Planning:

Olivia-Mata Williams provided updates, stating that the group is going to review the workgroup goals that have been set and collected.

Backbone Support Updates

Denton County Behavioral Health Leadership Team:

Shanan Spencer reported that the substance use workgroup held their first Recovery in the Park event on September 16th with 20 to 25 service providers/vendors in attendance. The event was designed to be family friendly, and the workgroup received feedback from attendees stating that they appreciated the opportunity to involve their children. The team is looking to make improvements from feedback received to make this an annual event. A meeting will be held in approximately a week with Solutions of North Texas and Texas Health Resources to discuss implementing a non-medical detox solution. This solution would be for alcohol only and only women will be eligible starting off. If the program is implemented, it would last about two weeks and be no-cost for the person going in for the detox. The program will be considered a social detox, with most of the staff being individuals who have been through the program that can provide understanding and support. Texas Health Resources will be involved in the conversation to be a medical partner. The team had a listening session with Representative Stuckey's office to advocate for crisis stabilization units in Denton County. Additionally, the team is looking at what they can do to increase behavioral health workforce. In July, the team established the Veterans Clinical Counseling program that provides free counseling services to veterans, regardless of their discharge status, as well as to their dependents and surviving spouses. The team will be meeting with Our Daily



Bread to see if they could provide program services at the shelter and have spread information regarding the program to both Lewisville and Denton ISD. Shanan shared that the program may become mobile. The team has been working to partner with Denton County Public Health to launch a county wide Credible Mind platform that would be of no cost to those utilizing the services.

Denton County Workforce Success Leadership Team:

Shelby Redondo stated that Workforce Solutions of Central Texas reached out last month to share that they created a new list of target occupations using new methodology. The team has since researched employers in Denton County that match up with the newly outlined target occupations and pay at an ALICE survival rate or higher. Additionally, the team looked at education pathways in Denton County that could get an individual to a target occupation. The childcare workgroup submitted a childcare subsidy capacity building grant with Communities Foundation. Due to the metric the team wants to meet, the grant focuses on Denton. The grant would assist in the building of capacity in existing centers that already accept subsidies. The economic mobility workgroup is looking to create a tracking system for workforce referrals. The current referral system has some communication and miscommunication barriers, so the new tracking system would help nonprofits who are sending in referrals as well as the workforce staff that is communicating with the clients. Shelby shared that Teddy Yan is looking for volunteers for the upcoming Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, providing free tax preparation for ALICE families and can reach out to Teddy for further information.

Public Comment

No Comments.

New Business

Gary Henderson shared that the United Way of Denton County board of directors has invited Metrocrest Services to apply as a partner agency. The pandemic and emergency rental assistance during the time showed that Denton is number one, Lewisville is number two, and Carrollton is number three in terms of households that are needing help and falling below survival in Denton County. Approximately 60% of Carrollton's residents fall into the Denton County population area. The City of Denton has a public comment period happening right now for a housing grant. Information will be sent to Olivia Mata-Williams for anyone interested in providing public comment on the proposed grant application. The proposed grant application can be read online through October 26th, after which it will be submitted to apply for ten million dollars towards affordable housing. The City of Lewisville has a backbone support grant that will open on October 16th for backbone support agencies in Denton County. There is \$47,500 available for backbone support and further information regarding application is available on the City of Lewisville website. Shelby Redondo shared that early voting starts October 23rd and there are 14 different propositions aside from each city's bonds. On United Way of Denton County's website, there is a proposition summary guide that explains each proposition in non-legislative terms. The city approved the budget for the ambassador program and is currently in contract negotiations with a plan for the program to start on January 1st. The ambassador program is a hospitality cleaning program that will be working with the police to create a space where people feel more comfortable enjoying downtown.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:26 am. Next meeting is **Thursday, December 14th, 2023.**

DCHLT Workgroup Reports

DCHLT HOUSING WORKGROUP | CHAIR: TERRY WIDMER

OCT -Nov 2023

The DCHLT Housing Workgroup has convened 9 times between October and November 2023 for Case Conferencing. During each case conferencing meeting, members discussed clients that each agency is actively working with, including client strengths, barriers, and housing-focused actionable next steps, as well as received updates on available homelessness prevention funding and programming in Denton County. Workgroup members are provided an opportunity to report clients who have gained housing during each meeting to maintain quality community wide data, as well as receive training and guidance on how to document a client's "housed" status in HMIS.

Housing Workgroup will continue to meet Mondays from 3-4 PM with a hybrid option either in person at United Way of Denton County or virtually via Zoom.

- 1st Monday – Veteran CC
- 2nd Monday – General CC
- 3rd Monday – Veteran CC
- 4th Monday – General CC
- 5th Monday – Families CC

SHORT-TERM ACTION ITEMS

- Create a facilitation group that includes agency staff and input to discuss effectiveness of case conferencing, problem solving, and other needs.
- Barriers Fund access and funding availability routinely updated. City of Denton is funding is open and of the first \$40,000, the remaining balance is \$10,431.60. There have been 31 approved applications YTD from October 1 to current. *City of Lewisville funding has been expended.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Dedicated increased time to agency collaboration on a program level & transparency.
- Housing Navigation worked on restructuring the process flow and created a housing expectations matrix one pager (draft attached)

CONCERNS

- Facilitation structure to be addressed to measure the effectiveness of clients being housed
- Client reporting and knowledge is inconsistent and

NEXT MEETING DATES

December: 4th, 11th, 18th

January: 8th, 22nd, 29th (*January 1st and 15th are observed holidays)

DCHLT Workgroup Reports

DENTON COUNTY HOMELESS COALITION | CHAIR: ELENA SHEHAN

OCT-NOV 2023

The Denton County Homeless Coalition met twice from October 2023 to November 2023. The following was discussed:

- October: Strategic goals drafted for the DCHLT Strategic Planning Committee to review
- Service Provider Awardees: (direct service) Sharon Lee, United Way of Denton County and (community) Elissa Polley, Giving Grace
- November: Point in Time Count planning committee created and meeting schedule established

SHORT-TERM ACTION ITEMS

- PIT planning committee to set up Amazon wishlist for bags (<https://a.co/63nGvOJ>)
- PIT planning committee is building representatives across agencies

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Hosted an inaugural Trivia night during Hunger & Homelessness Awareness week. Raising an estimated \$250 from donations, button sales, and team sales.
- Dr. Jones heading the Panel Discussion Initiatives upcoming discussion: *Volunteering to Help our Unhoused Neighbors* on November 9th at 11 am on Zoom.

CONCERNS

Agencies continue to report an increase in housing assistance requests while local shelters remain at capacity (both in Denton and in the broader DFW area).

NEXT MEETING DATES

January 17th @ United Way of Denton County to assemble PIT bag donations (11 am- 1 pm)

February 28th (Lewisville; Next Steps)

DCHLT Workgroup Reports

DCHLT DATA WORKGROUP | CHAIR: STEPHEN COFFEY

OCT-NOV 2023

The data dashboard has been updated with data up to September 2023. As of September 2023, there are currently 511 households actively experiencing homelessness on our Housing Priority List. The 511 total number for September breaks down into:

- 48 families
- 475 individuals
- 17 fleeing domestic violence
- 30 Veteran households
- 175 households experiencing chronic homelessness

No changes in reporting for ISDs

Denton County school districts' data was updated in February 2023. The two largest school districts reported the following:

- Denton ISD: 587 students (increase from October 22; 347)
- Lewisville ISD: 1,024 students (increase from October 22; 820)

Housing intervention prioritization breakdown:

- Diversion Services: Households (8.1%)
- Rapid Rehousing Intervention: Households (50.6%)
- Permanent Supportive Housing Intervention: Households (41.2%)

Short-term action items

- Homelessness Data Management System job requisition posted

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CONCERNS

DCHLT Workgroup Reports

DCHLT HEALTHCARE WORKGROUP | CHAIR: ISABEL RODRIGUEZ

OCT-NOV 2023

This group is currently in the knowledge-gathering phase, identifying gaps in the current healthcare system as it relates to the unhoused population and determining what can be done on a local level to address these gaps. The systemic goals of this group are to reduce emergency room visits for acute needs, increase funding for primary care and community health services targeted at this population, identify options for patients experiencing homelessness at discharge, and increase the unhoused population's awareness of healthcare services, measured by repeatedly administered knowledge survey.

Short-term action items

- Assess goals and priorities for the next 12 months
- Utilize Find Help as a quick toolkit for healthcare and community resources

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Finalized draft recommendations for the DCHLT strategic planning committee to review

CONCERNS

- There are currently limited pathways for a person experiencing homelessness to access medical care other than utilizing the emergency room.
- Few options are available for the aging population with long term needs, few facilities prepared to meet this need accept Medicaid or Medicare.

DCHLT Workgroup Reports

DCHLT DIVERSION WORKGROUP | CHAIR: MEGAN BALL

OCT-NOV 2023

This group has agreed upon a training curriculum and has a schedule to implement the in-person training.

Short-term action items

- Set up meeting cadence for 2024
- Identify and track HMIS Diversion data

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Agencies who agreed to Diversion at 100% completion for training
- Worked with the Barriers Fund committee to include Diversion turn around times, now set at 24 hours.

CONCERNS

- Availability of flexible funds to support diversion problem-solving efforts.

DCHLT Workgroup Reports

Cross Care Collaborative WORKGROUP | CHAIR: MICHELLE CONNER

OCT-NOV 2023

This group is currently in the knowledge-gathering phase, identifying gaps in the current system as it relates to the unhoused population and determining what can be done on a local level to address these gaps.

Short-term action items

- Continue mapping of Behavioral Health and Housing Systems; current progress is mapping Intercept 0 and 1 to make corrections, update changes, and highlighted gaps.
- Continue identifying organizations that are at the primary integration level of the response systems.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Key stakeholders are increasing participation and attendance of the meetings which is critical to making progress.
- Invited Behar County Mental Health Division to present at the January CCC meeting

CONCERNS

- Understanding the volume of resources to the capacity of each organization
- There is a lack of adequate jail diversion options for law enforcement

DCHLT Workgroup Reports

Strategic Planning Committee WORKGROUP | CHAIR: Megan Ball

OCT-NOV 2023

The committee is gathering 2-3 goals from each workgroup to make a formal recommendation to the team.

Short-term action items

- Present recommendations to DCHLT