

CHC - Basic Needs Sub-Committee
Meeting Tuesday, May 25, 2021
2:00 – 3:00 pm
Discussion Summary

Attendance

- Lisa Zuhn – Los Alamos JJAB
- Maura Taylor – Self Help
- Susan Williams – First Born Program
- Christal Salazar, Victim Assistant
- Christine Martinez, Los Alamos JJAB
- Deni Fell, Los Alamos County Social Services

Updates/Needs

LA Cares emailed that their drive-thru distribution process will continue through the summer.

The Victim Assistant is working with 1 – 2 domestic violence clients per week, has seen inquiries regarding elder abuse and a couple cases related to homelessness. The homeless situations may be related to warmer weather and people relocating to Los Alamos seeking services. Transitional housing continues to be an issue and now that COVID restrictions are lifting hotel options are also becoming scarce. A conversation was held with County Councilors regarding the need for transitional housing, but no progress was made. Additionally, no progress was made in discussions with Canyon Walk Apartments regarding options. At this time, victims are having to stay in their homes and develop safety plans.

Self Help is continuing to see requests for utility assistance, but the majority are for areas outside of Los Alamos. Also receiving a steady number of calls for rental assistance and healthcare financial assistance.

First Born Program is still seeing a need for mental health services and emotional support. They are returning to in-person home visits and are providing clients, many new to the area, with information on wildfire safety and planning. Susan will send the Wildland Fire Action Guide to be distributed to the group.

Los Alamos County Social Services office is currently having appointments in-person, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. Effective June 7, the office will be available for in-person Monday – Friday. They are currently seeing a variety of basic needs requests.

JJAB Resource Specialists are seeing a continued need for assistance with mental health services, summer camp activities, and student academic supports with the end of school. One Circle program collaboration with PEEC will be held for 7-9th graders starting June 17th. Also, Pride events are planned for June.

The entire group voiced a concern regarding mental health services. Both local psychiatrists have waiting lists and the majority of therapists are not taking new clients. People are having to travel out of Los Alamos for services or rely on their Primary Care physicians for assistance, specialists are not available. Especially with COVID the need has increased.

County Health Council Update

Lisa Zuhn provided an update that the CHC is starting to discuss a Community Health Plan and also is looking to work on a community resource directory that would allow community members to look up available local resources. Self Help indicated that they are also working on this type of community resource directory and the expansion of 211 services but need stable funding. Self Help would provide expanded resources online and phone resource services. They have received funding from Santa Fe County to work on this project for their area. Lisa is going to connect Maura with the Social Services Manager and CHC work group to discuss collaboration options.

Discussion – Projects/Focus for the Sub-Committee

The discussion centered around what the sub-committee would like to focus on next. The following options were discussed for distributing basic needs contact information within the community:

- Provide informational packets (similar to the ones provided to LAPS) to First Born for home visitors to distribute.
- Provide Basic Needs flyer to Dr. Cook's office, Trinity Urgent Care, and LAPS counselors (Fall semester).
- LAVA is starting flyer distribution services again, have them distribute the flyer.
- Distribute basic needs packets to specific residential areas in the community.
- Create a large poster, have a booth, or provide flyers at the summer concerts once in-person – Cathy D'Anna with Los Alamos County would be the contact person
- Have flyers or ad at the bus stops or on the buses – Donna Casados at Social Services may be able to assist with contacting Atomic Transit
- Send out flyers again via social media platforms

A suggestion was also made to distribute American Rescue Plan Act 2021 information via LA Cares distribution event.

Next Scheduled Meeting

The next Basic Needs Sub-Committee meeting will be scheduled for the end of July.