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Community Development Block Grant

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TO: Homeless Services Consortium Agencies
FROM: Sue Wallinger
DATE: February 20, 2002
RE: 2001 Stats on Persons Served by Consortium Agencies

As in the past two years, the CDBG Office will produce a 2001 Annual Report on the number of persons served, but in an effort to get some year-end numbers out to you and the public, you will find the enclosed usual year-to-date format with a brief narrative.

There are a couple of changes I would like to mention. Hopefully these changes will more accurately reflect the numbers being served.

1. It has always been known that persons who received vouchers for motels from the Salvation Army will most likely be served in shelter when beds become available. Up to this point, I have not felt comfortable with making any adjustments to the voucher numbers to reflect this duplication. Unfortunately, some people who look at the quarterly reports are adding the “number of new persons in shelter” and the “number of persons served with vouchers” to come up with a total number of persons served by the shelter system. This is an inflated number of homeless persons being served. According to Salvation Army staff, the percent of persons who receive assistance with vouchers who eventually reside in a shelter bed is about 85%. This is an estimated average percent for a 12-month period. I have adjusted the figures to take this into account. The numbers have also been adjusted for 1997 through 2000. To determine a more accurate number of people served, the reader should look at the data for individuals under the “Age” heading and households, family and children under the “Family Status” heading.
2. It is difficult to gather much information from the data on transitional housing programs. Each agency was asked to report on the number of people that they served during that quarter. While this might allow for some comparisons from one quarter to another, it does not produce a clear picture of the total number of people being served. In an attempt to make this information more compatible with the Shelter and Services categories, these numbers will be collected differently in 2002. Each transitional housing program will report all of those persons being served during the first three months in the first quarter report. For the following quarterly reports, each program will report only those new persons in the program.
3. A reminder that some agencies serve and report on more than one population. Two examples of this are Port St. Vincent, which serves as both shelter and transitional housing, and Domestic Abuse Intervention Services, which serves both single women and families. An attempt has been made to adjust the figures so as to reflect a more accurate count by sub-populations. This may result in the data looking a bit odd (e.g. children showing up in single women’s shelter, the number of children disproportionate with the number of families). Since this report is basically a count based on beds rather than client-based, there will continue to be some discrepancies. Hopefully they will remain small in number.

End of the Year Service Numbers for Shelter, Transitional, and Services Only

There were a total of 3,437 persons served in eight **shelter** programs during 2001. There were 327 shelter beds available. Of those served, 434 were single women, 1,021 were single men, and 576 were families (a total of 1,982 individuals in families – 1,121 children and 861 adults). Non-white single men and single women make up slightly over 50% of those persons served, while non-white families make up 85% of families being served in shelter. During 2001, it was reported that 5,279 individuals were turned away from shelter. Some individuals were turned away because they have used shelter days available to them (1,729), they have some money that would allow them to “self-pay” at a motel (323), they were not eligible per program requirements (234), declined offer of assistance (61), and other reasons unrelated to shelter space. Of those turned away, 1,357 individuals were turned away because there was no shelter space available. There were 4,590 individuals turned away without a voucher, all of them because there were no vouchers available. According to agency staff with whom I spoke, there is some duplication in this number. At present, there is no easy way to determine the true number of individuals turned away and caution should be taken not to add the two “turned away” numbers to determine a total of homeless in Dane County.

A majority (59%) of the homeless families served have been homeless for less than one-month. The same is true for single women (60%), but slightly less for single men (49%). The most often given reason for families seeking shelter was the presence of violence or threat of violence in their homes (30%), followed by being evicted or not having a lease renewed (18%). Single women most often said they were in transit (17%) or that violence had been the primary reason for seeking shelter (14%). Single men most often said that roommate or family conflicts were the primary reason for seeking shelter (26%), followed by being in transit or transient (21%).

For families, 26% reported having some income from wages, 18% received SSI/SSDI, and 23% reported no income. The remaining families had a variety of income sources ranging from W-2, unemployment compensation, workman’s compensation, and child support. Single women with income were most likely to be receiving SSI/SSDI while single men were more likely to be receiving income from wages. Of the 576 families, only half reported receiving medical assistance (50%) and food stamps (53%).

Over half (53%) of the families, single women (54%) and single men (56%) served in shelter have lived in Dane County for less than one year. While it is unknown where these persons have moved from, a portion of them are from other communities in Wisconsin. Less than half of the families (44%), single women (40%) and single men (39%) have lived in Wisconsin for less than one year.

About one-third of single men (31%) and single women (33%) in shelter self-report issues with alcohol and other drug abuse, while only 15% of families report AODA issues. Nearly half of single women (48%) self-report issues with mental illness. One in four (25%) single men report issues with mental illness and 19% of families report mental health issues.

Prior to seeking shelter, 58% of families, 56% of single women and 54% of single men reported living doubled-up with friends or relatives; 15% of families, 17% of single women and 28% of single men reported living on the street or in vehicles prior to shelter.

There were six **transitional** housing programs operated by five agencies with the capacity to serve 297 households that reported for 2001. As mentioned on the previous page, it is not possible to add the transitional and shelter numbers to get a year-end total of persons served for 2001. Changes in subsequent reporting periods should eliminate this problem.

Four agencies report on **services only**; two of these agencies also provide housing for persons in need. Many of the people assisted in this category are not homeless, but at risk of becoming homeless due to an eviction or some other difficulty in obtaining or maintaining housing. In 2001, 5,335 individuals were assisted through a variety of programs including landlord-tenant mediation, financial assistance, tenant education and housing counseling.

Year-End Totals 2001 Comparison to Previous Years

The number of individuals in shelter continues to decline, from a high of 5,145 in 1997 to a low of 3,437 in 2001. However, the number of households served in 2001 was just slightly less than 2000 – 2,187 households served in 2001 and 2,190 households served in 2000. Both 2000 and 2001 showed a decline in households from 1999.

The number of individuals in families has declined from 2000 (2,025) to 2001 (1,865) while the number of single women has slightly increased from 2000 (416) to 2001 (476). The data on individuals in families and single women were combined from 1997 through 1999, however, using other numbers reported under “Family Status” you see the following trend – a decline in individuals in families and a slight increase in single women. The time spent in shelter has declined to an average of 22.78 days, which is a decrease from 2000 and 1999. The number of single men in shelter has declined slightly from 1999 and 2000 and is significantly lower than in 1997 and 1998. When broken down by sub-population, the average number of days in shelter increased for single men, but decreased for families and single women.

Individuals in Families				
1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
2,796	3,147	2,995	2,025	1,865

Single Women				
1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
467	436	445	416	476

Single Men				
1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
1,386	1,301	1,044	1,087	1,038

The number of persons who were turned away without shelter declined in 2001 (5,279) from 2000 (6,009). Shelters have collected and reported data on the reason for denial in only the last two years. In 2001, more people were turned away than the year before because they already have a place to stay, have some money to self-pay at a hotel, have used shelter days available to them, or were not eligible per program requirements. In 2001, twenty-five (25%) were denied because there was no shelter space available which is an increase over 2000 when 17% were denied because there was no shelter space available. In 2001, the Salvation Army reported that 4,590 individuals were turned away without a voucher, which was an increase over 2000 (4,409).

The majority of families, single women and single men in shelter continue to be non-white and the trend shows signs of slightly increasing.

Unaccompanied minors in shelter have increased from 9 in 1997, 4 in 1998, 8 in 1999, and 25 in 2000, to 75 in 2001. Some, but not all of this increase is likely the availability of the scattered site transitional housing program in lieu of a youth shelter and the participation of Briarpatch in reporting data.

The number of families with children continued to decline to a low in 2001 of 593 families. In addition, the number of children and the number of large families has also declined since 1997.

As for the reason that people seek shelter:

- Households who are in shelter as a result of violence have increased in 2001 (302) from 2000 (268);
- Households that identify themselves as in transit have increased in 2001(386) to its highest over the five year period starting in1997;
- Households who seek shelter because of being evicted have steadily decreased from a high of 485 households in 1998 to 279 households in 2001;
- Households who seek shelter following an institutional discharge have steadily decreased from 227 households in 1997 to 148 households in 2001.

However, a large number of households continue to be reported as “unknown or other” for the reason they are seeking shelter.

The numbers of households who have resided in Dane County for less than one year have remained steady at 54%. Four out of five of these households have been in Dane County less than one month – this has also remained steady since 1997. The trends for the last two years for families, single women and the last five years for single men are as follows:

Families			
	2000	2001	<i>Trend is that more households are new to Dane County than those who have resided in Dane County over one year. Data also shows an increase in 2001 over 2000 in number of households who have resided in Dane County for one month or less.</i>
Dane County Less Than One Year	46%	53%	
Dane County More Than One Year	54%	47%	

Single Women			
	2000	2001	<i>Trend is that more households (over half and increasing) have resided in Dane County for one year or less. The number of households that have resided in Dane County for one month or less is holding steady at 40%.</i>
Dane County Less Than One Year	51%	54%	
Dane County More Than One Year	49%	47%	

Single Men						
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	<i>Trend is that more households are less likely to have come from outside of Dane County. The number of households that have resided in Dane County for one month or less is also decreasing.</i>
Dane County Less Than One Year	61%	61%	67%	62%	56%	
Dane County More Than One Year	39%	40%	33%	38%	44%	

While the percentage fluctuates somewhat, the number of households that self-report mental health issues remains approximately one in four, with occurrence being the highest amongst single women. The number of households who indicate issues with alcohol and other drugs declined from a high of 43% in 2000 to a low of 27% in 2001. While the decrease is across subpopulations, single men reported AODA issues at a five year low – 33% in 2001, 65% in 2000, 62% in 1999, 44% in 1998, and 43% in 1997.

The number of households reporting that prior to shelter they spent time living in their vehicles or on the street showed an increase from 15% in 2000 to 22% in 2001. This increase is across all subpopulations.