ALLIANCE for HOUSING

C4 Meeting Minutes
12.6.2021

Attendees: Regina Cannon, Leah McCall, Audrey White, Ashley Burton, Holly Gauthier, Julia Steinberg, Liz McLachlan, Eric Burton, Karen Plants, D'Asia McDonald, Shannon Smith, Melanie Grund, Tina Golding-Jewett, Brian Wright, Holly Douglas, Mellena Martinez, Erinn Johnson

Quantitative Data

- Black folks are 14% of the population in OC and 51% of community experiencing homelessness, whereas white folks are 76% of the population in OC and 42% of community experiencing homelessness.
- Black or African American folks' length of time homeless is consistently longer than white folks over a 3-year period.
    - What factors contribute? Where could we have intervened?
        - Increased rent without subsidy increase, lack of housing stock.
- First time homeless by race: black folks are consistently higher percentage over 3-year period.
- Returns to homelessness by race: black or African American folks return to homelessness at a higher rate than other races (63% return in less than 6 months, 65% return in 6-12 months).
    - Landlords are not always willing to accept vouchers.
        - How to encourage engagement with case managers?
            - Incentivize by paying participants, follow-up surveys may need to be longer to capture accurate data including questions about access to food/assistance.
- Oakland County Blueprint: https://www.oakgov.com/advantageoakland/communities/Documents/oc-blueprint-end-homelessness_final-report_2021.pdf

Qualitative Data – Snapshot from Stakeholder Interviews/Survey

- **People and Culture**
    - Strengths:
        - The CoC provides transparency and clarity on guidelines and is responsive.
        - Voices are valued.
        - Members overall were supportive and positive of the CoC activities and work.
    - Opportunities for Growth:
        - Ensure that communication across the Alliance and CoC and different levels (from leadership to direct service providers) filter through to front line staff.
            - Set aside time to ensure communication, standing interactive update meetings, information sharing hub instead of email overload, etc.
        - Consider implementing recurring training opportunities for CoC members on racial equity.
- **Policies and Procedures**
    - Strengths:
        - There was consensus that the assessment and referral process was equitable, but that the tool may not be.

- Try weighting VI questions differently.
    - Consensus around policies and practices within the CES and CoC were fair.
    - There are feedback mechanisms between frontline staff and Alliance committees.
  - o Opportunities for Growth:
    - There was uncertainty whether folks with lived experience were in the alliance.
    - Having folks who have experience of being in the system is essential for decision making and ensuring services are person-centered and trauma informed, while giving them decision making power and input.
    - Consider reviewing hiring policies and procedures for equitable recruitment and hiring practices.
    - Clients have uneven experiences as it relates to accessing resources to fill out applications, develop and deliver documentation, and this has led to a disparity effecting Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.
    - Consider implementing access to computers, printers, desks to provide clients with assistance.
      - The Alliance does have laptops available for use.
- **Community and External Programs and Services**
  - o Strengths:
    - Alliance members are responsive to the needs of clients and very passionate about the work.
    - Alliance members are well informed of the referral and assessment process.
  - o Opportunities for Growth:
    - Ensure services are culturally responsive and person-centered; consider a standing recurring process to include voices and feedback from folks with lived experience so that the community, programs, and providers can better understand their needs.
    - There were disparities in folks having limited access to resources (phone, wifi, access to printed documents, etc.) particularly Black, Indigenous, and People of Color facing those barriers than their white counterparts that may result in dropping out after the referral process.
    - Funding to obtain leases for units to sublease to program participants.
- **Based on the racial equity trainings you have participated in up to this point, along with the work you do daily, please rate where you are with these concepts**
  - o 72% of participants would like to learn more about anti-blackness.
  - o 66% of participants would like to learn more about internalized racial oppression.
  - o 55.55% of participants would like to learn more about structural racism.
  - o 55.55% of participants would like to learn more about a racial equity lens.
  - o Based on these results, consider the following recommendations:
    - Embed opportunities for continual education and training. This may include book clubs, annual or recurring training opportunities, alliance-wide town-hall meetings, etc.
    - Emphasize the use of racial caucusing that creates a space to discuss and learn about race and race equity, not only for one race or ethnicity (*i.e. we have*

internal listening sessions in safe spaces, a black leader speaker series, and African American employee affinity group, among others, racial equity training, etc.)

- **Based on your perspective, please rate your organization against the below listed criteria**
  - ○ 66.67% of participants were either unaware or had little to no knowledge about activity in recognition and rewards of racial equity accomplishments.
  - ○ 50% of participants were either unaware or had little to no knowledge about activity in collecting, disaggregating, designing, and analyzing data by race to get a clear picture of inequities and outcomes gaps, both internally and externally.
  - ○ 55.65% of participants were either unaware, did not believe or had little to no knowledge about BIPOC within their community being treated as leaders and assets to the work and are authentically engaged in decision-making.
  - ○ 66.66% of participants were either unaware or had little to no knowledge about activity in the organization having policies and programs in place to attract, retain, and support BIPOC to achieve success within the organization.

Next Steps

- Develop a cohort group that is a safe space to discuss difficulties with implementation, provide guidance, and having specific ways to monitor and track the implementation of this work.