



## CECIL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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### CC Inter-Agency Council on Homelessness July 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Attendees: Gwen Parrack, CCHD; Julie Wright, CCHD; Earl Grey, Cecil County Housing Agency; Jason Burns, HMIS; Dana Brady, UBCSS; Kathryn Barakat, DSS; Pat Marks, Meeting Ground; Debbie Parker, UBCSS; Daryl Martin, Settlement House; Marianne Redding, CCHD; Trish Dana, DSS; Dotty Fritz, Immaculate Conception; Udo Sommerhoff, Deep Roots; Jean Marie Donahoo, UHCC; April Miller, Help Center; Gerry Crockett, Help Center; Eileen Ondra, SSCT

Udo Sommerhoff presented on Deep Roots, formerly Clairveux Farms. The farm was bought by Deep Roots in December 2013 and is run by one paid employee and four volunteers. They only accept families with children. The long term volunteers live there with their families and help with peer support, mentoring, and connecting the families currently in the program with resources. Families in the program are required to contribute by cooking, cleaning, etc. and must have income and/or sign up for state benefits that they qualify for. They must also be willing to work towards eventually earning their own income. The program currently has two apartments, both of which are currently occupied, with a wait list of about 12 – 14 families. There is no set amount of time that families are required to stay, but the average time is about one year. The next phase of the program is the family house, which consists of four more rooms. It is the hope that this expansion will happen within the next few months, but depends on funding and volunteers. At full capacity, the program will provide housing for about ten families. Deep Roots currently offers transportation for the families, to and from town, on Thursdays and is accepting food, and clothing donations any day from 9:00am to 8:00pm. All donations need to be dropped off at the dining hall. Funds are available to help families moving out of the program with security deposits. Udo provided literature to the group.

Gwen reported an update on Continuum of Care update. The HMIS grant was not awarded however HUD mandates HMIS participation for any agency receiving their funding regardless. The health department will be working with Jason as well as other HUD funded programs to determine how we will handle this when the grant ends as of September 30<sup>th</sup> of 2014. Jason will be sending out data report cards to those who enter into the HMIS system and scheduling a training/meeting for program managers and data entry staff who must complete Annual Performance Reports.

Gwen reported that the Strategic Planning Subcommittee has met two times since our last meeting. Their focus has been on pulling together a picture of all homeless resources in the county, including current housing openings/ trends in Cecil County, and a crosswalk of all funding coming into the county specifically for homeless or homelessness prevention services. The plan will have written goals and objectives developed by the subcommittee.

Gwen discussed the idea of this council taking a stronger role in advocating on issues of homelessness in the county. We will continue to educate ourselves collectively on homeless issues including current strategies being promoted by federal and state agencies in addition to local concerns.

Gerry Crockett from the Help Center informed the group that DSS re-gained the funding for birth certificates, licenses, and ID's for those in need and who were born in Cecil County. The process takes about an hour to complete. Those recently released from jail are able to obtain a free ID from the MVA when accompanied by their release paperwork. ID's are mailed in that scenario.

Gwen referenced the training on Human Trafficking being held at the health department on Friday, 7-18-14, from 8:30-12:30pm.

The next meeting of this group will be on Wednesday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, at 1:30 pm, in the Health Department Auditorium.