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PATH Application Public Notice

The Bureau of Homeless Services, Division of Behavioral Health, NH Department of Health and Human Services is requesting public comment regarding the annual SAMHSA funded Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) application.

The PATH application State Summary Narrative (below) will be posted on the DHHS website from Monday, March 13, 2023- Wednesday, March 15, 2023. All interested parties may use this opportunity to comment on the State Summary Narrative by contacting:

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New Hampshire PATH State Summary Narrative

For 2023, New Hampshire PATH funds will be contracted with four provider agencies to carry out the PATH required activities and eligible services. The PATH grant provides services to those at risk of or experiencing homelessness with serious mental illness (SMI) and/ or co-occurring substance use disorders. The PATH services include outreach, screening and diagnostic treatment, training and case management. PATH case management services involve providing assistance in obtaining and coordinating services for individuals experiencing homelessness meeting the above criteria including, but not limited to: assistance in obtaining income support services, housing assistance, supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits, and supplementary security income benefits.

The PATH provider agencies will be determined through a competitive RFA process open to nonprofit private entities, including community-based veterans organizations and other community organizations. It should be noted that due to the formula grant status, NH PATH has been level funded for over 30 years. Due to the limited level funding received (despite the rising costs of housing, living expenses, volume of individuals served, more administrative expectations, the dramatic increase of PATH eligible individuals), NH is unable to have complete statewide coverage of the above activities using PATH funds alone. The awarded contracts will serve regions which the greatest numbers of individuals experiencing homelessness with a need for mental health, substance use, and housing services are located. Each awarded contract will be level-funded at \$72,000 each.

PATH providers are on the front lines in NH's Coordinated Entry System (CES)- to quickly identify, provide equitable access and engagement, and deploy rapid response to individuals who may be eligible for PATH assistance. These providers work in conjunction with more general outreach workers (such as ESG outreach) to ensure leveraging of funding and time to effectively maximize hours with the most vulnerable households who be, or are currently enrolled in PATH. It is through the CES that PATH providers can triage immediate urgent needs with households, provide crisis referrals, evaluate households with a standardized vulnerability assessment and place them on the regional Prioritization List for housing. Given the dynamic nature of the homelessness experience, and the possibility of static representation from an assessment score, PATH providers are also advocates for their individuals and households served in monthly case conferencing if the assessment score produced is not reflective of the experience the provider has had with the individual. Matching the most vulnerable individuals with the housing resources that will allow them to be successful in housing stability is the goal.

The NH PATH program is designed to reach highly vulnerable people who might not otherwise seek assistance or come to the attention of the homelessness service system. PATH providers are expected to provide services that ensure people's basic needs are met, while supporting them along pathways toward housing stability. In particular, individuals experiencing long-term and chronic homelessness often show high rates of trauma, mental illness, substance use disorders, and chronic physical conditions. Given the high mortality rate and health disparities for these individuals, this population is a priority for NH PATH providers.

NH PATH providers are expected to conduct coordinated outreach inclusive of other funding streams to ensure they are meeting household need among various subpopulations including veterans, chronically homeless, families...etc. PATH funds are awarded to agencies who are able to demonstrate consistent outreach strategies with community partners to ensure comprehensive identification of potential PATH eligible individuals. Through New Hampshire's coordinated entry system, a comprehensive system of service providers and stakeholders collaborate statewide. building resiliency and supporting recovery.

The NH PATH program is fully in compliance with using the HMIS data system to track and manage data, having been fully operational since July 1, 2016. All NH PATH outreach staff and back-up personnel from their agencies are fully trained in HMIS and complete various trainings throughout the year on PATH data quality and management from New Hampshire's HMIS vendor- the Institute for Community Alliances.

NH PATH providers also collect and report certain data to ensure obligations under the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) (P.L. 103-62). All PATH recipients must submit required annual PATH data through the PATH Data Exchange (PDX). Agencies are evaluated on their programs regularly and use results of these evaluations to explain their successes and failures. Their performance is then linked to their budgets.

The current performance requirements for PATH, as specified under GPRA include:

- 3.4.15 Percentage of enrolled individuals experiencing homelessness who receive community mental health services (Outcome);
- 3.4.16 Number of individuals experiencing homelessness contacted (Outcome);
- 3.4.17 Percentage of contacted individuals experiencing homelessness with serious mental illness who become enrolled in services (Outcome); and
- 3.4.20 Number of PATH providers trained on SSI/ SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) to ensure eligible clients experiencing homelessness are receiving benefits (Output).

SAMHSA also requires states to report data for the following three outcome measures:

- Number of persons referred to and attaining housing;
- Number of persons referred to and attaining mental health services; and
- Number of persons referred to and attaining substance use disorder services.

The NH PATH providers receive free trainings coordinated by the Bureau of Homeless Services, at Outreach Subcommittees, featured COC trainings and featured federal partner webinars throughout the year. Agencies will also ensure trainings are provided to their PATH staff, as noted in their annual Intended Use Plans.

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