Erie County CoC Strategic Action Plan

USICH Federal Strategic Plan Goals recommend to be adopted by local Continuum of Care collaboratives.
   A. End and Prevent Chronic Homelessness
   B. End and Prevent Veteran Homelessness
   C. End and Prevent Family Homelessness
   D. End and Prevent Youth Homelessness
   E. Set a path to end all types of homelessness

Strategic Focus Areas
In effort to meet the goals of the Strategic Plan, the CoC has identified five objectives that will guide our efforts toward these ends. To meet these goals, we will...
   1. Ensure that the Erie County Continuum of Care membership and governance structure is efficient and built in a capacity to best provide leadership, funding and support for the community.
   2. Meet the needs of our clients by offering a 'toolbox' of new and existing services and housing offerings based on best practices.
   3. Develop and ensure efficient and effective practices of data collection and use, to base forward-thinking decision making and program implementation.
   4. Increase our community awareness and marketing efforts within both the external community and with our internal stakeholders.
   5. Strategically engage and align the CoC within the community with those initiatives that best meet our client's needs.

CoC Performance Measures (HEARTH PMs)
While working towards our strategic goals and objectives, our efforts will be guided by benchmarks that allow us to monitor our progress. Efforts will be tied to the following:

   A. Reduction of average length of time persons are homeless.
   B. Reduction in returns to homelessness.
   C. Improvement of program coverage.
   D. Reduction in number of families and individuals who are homelessness.
   E. Improvement of employment rate and income amount of families and individuals who are homeless.
   F. Reduction in the number of families and individuals who become homeless (first time homeless).
   G. Prevention of homelessness and achieving independent living in permanent housing for families and youth defined as homeless under other Federal statutes.

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STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA ONE:	*Ensure that the Erie County Continuum of Care membership and governance structure is efficient and built in a capacity to best provide leadership, funding and support for the community.*
Objectives	**Action Steps**
1. **Oversee the process of ranking and distributing HUD-based funding and providing fiscal accountability.**	➢ Work with Lead Collaborative Agency staff on a transparent process of ranking/scoring for grant application process, as well as provide leadership and recruit members to serve on application review team. ➢ Ensure that the CoC implements procedures and distributes notifications regarding requirements of the application process on an annual basis.
2. **Seek other/additional funding opportunities to fill 'gaps' in services/programs that are identified by CoC data and assessment processes.**	➢ Leverage local leadership to create strong response to address lack of outreach and prevention funds. ➢ Develop and seek funding opportunities for formal street outreach. ➢ Continue to identify and monitor possible outside partnerships to expand funding opportunities. ➢ Identify funding for gaps that are not currently identified, but may come about during future assessment processes.
3. **Ensure that the efforts of the CoC and member agencies are aligned with the mission.**	➢ Ensure the committee structure is focused on meeting the goals and objectives outlined in the planning process. ➢ Address future issues by appropriating ad-hoc committees. ➢ In conjunction with 4:2, provide materials that educate membership on the mission and efforts of the CoC.
4. **Align the board structure to be in accordance with the HUD-recommended CoC model.**	➢ Review the current board structure and revise to meet the HUD-recommended model. ➢ Educate the Home Team membership the need for compliance with adoption of the HUD model. ➢ Develop an agreement on the timeframe and structure regarding the terms and functioning of the CoC. ➢ Regularly review and update the written standards and bylaws to be in compliance with HUD standards.
5. **Establish a communications process that is transparent to the CoC and public at large.**	➢ Establish website based off of models from other CoC's that effectively delivers information to the community with continually updated materials. ➢ Ensure that all documents, meeting notices, minutes and corresponding information are publicly available. ➢ Institute process that allows for input and open comments during CoC meetings.
6. **Work in conjunction with Lead Collaborative Agency to assure all policies, procedures, etc. are in compliance.**	➢ The CoC will continuously examine the support staff components and address issues preventing them from meeting requirements. ➢ Educate the CoC membership of their expectations as a member and what their roles are in terms of following policies and procedures.

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STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA TWO:	Meet the needs of our clients by offering a 'toolbox' of new and existing services and housing offerings based on best practices.
Strategy	**Action Steps**
1. **Collaborate with mainstream resources to build a seamless transition to housing opportunities.**	➢ Identify funding and expand the use of mentor and liaison programs (peer specialist/case manager approach) that will assist clients in service transition.
	➢ Expand case management services within local programs to meet client needs.
	➢ Engage with hospitals, prisons, mental health, drug and alcohol, law enforcement, court and judicial, education, and vocational rehab systems, as well as others that are to be identified.
	➢ Educate systems regarding the roles that a wide-range of federal/state programs/resources can play to increase the impact within an efficient housing support system.
2. **Develop a consumer/provider resource bank to guide consumers through the process of identifying needed helps and resources.**	➢ Create an in-depth flow-chart to assist clients in understanding points of the housing/helps process.
	➢ Use Coordinated Entry data to identify gaps in service needs, not just housing.
	➢ Explore best practices of how other communities make clients aware of needed services, and develop plan to adopt a model that will work locally.
3. **Develop a plan for and implement a mobile outreach component to take services and assessments to those in need.**	➢ Engage 'non-housing' providers such as Overflow Shelter and Emmaus to identify those in need who may not currently be receiving services.
	➢ Engage an outreach plan to better seek out and identify homeless youth.
	➢ Develop a common process that can be adopted by providers that will allow clients in need of ID's to easily obtain them.
4. **Increase community-wide prevention efforts.**	➢ Assist individuals and families with financial aspects of finding and maintaining safe affordable permanent supportive housing.
	➢ Assist individuals and families with supportive service aspects of finding and maintaining safe affordable permanent supportive housing.
	➢ Identify root causes of homelessness in subpopulations.
	➢ Increase outreach opportunities.
5. **Explore FUSE (Frequent Users Systems Engagement) model approach to deal with high-end system users.**	➢ Form ad-hoc committee to explore communities that have used the model.
	➢ Conduct cost-benefit analysis of adoption of model.
	➢
6. **Conduct ongoing analysis of housing stock and capacity, and identify innovative models to better serve clients.**	➢ Study what other options are used for Community-based housing models.
	➢ Develop sense of 'Community' among clients so persons can help each other in support (ex 5-6 unit housing models).
	➢ Identify best practices in strengthening landlord/provider relationships.

7. Use of consumer feedback for program adaptation decision making	➢ Develop process of collecting year-round consumer input.	
	➢ Identify root causes of homeless in subpopulations.	
	➢ Discuss merits and adopt a homeless consumer committee under the Home Team that would have governance board representation.	

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA THREE:	*Develop and ensure efficient and effective practices of data collection and use, to base forward-thinking decision making and program implementation.*
Strategy	**Action Steps**
1. **Ensure providers understand and know the requirements for collection, entry and use of data to meet HUD/HMIS standards.**	➤ Develop a formalized process for requesting data from HMIS administrator. ➤ Provide training resources via meetings, webinars, etc. for providers to learn and understand how to better use HMIS data analysis tools on their own. ➤ Provide training resources via meetings, webinars, etc. for providers to learn and understand HUD standards.
2. **Work towards 100% HMIS participation of homeless providers.**	➤ Identify who is not currently using HMIS and identification of the barriers that are prohibiting them from doing so. ➤ Work with non-users to identify resources needed for their adaptation of HMIS use and work in conjunction with non-users to get these needed resources. ➤ Communicate the benefit to the non-user providers on how 100% adoption will benefit their agency and the whole CoC/community at large. ➤ Explore best practices and benefits for gathering homeless prevention data and begin entering all landlord evictions (as this may be mandated soon in future). ➤ Identify optional modules that can be used in HMIS which would allow for provider-specific customization of HMIS and assist the providers in efficient and effective system use.
3. **Develop and implement external system data sharing and collection processes.**	➤ Identify current data sharing practices currently in place. ➤ Hold discussions w/ outside systems regarding potential uses for sharing data and gaining support from those potential partners. ➤ Explore best practices of how other communities share client data. ➤ Update client privacy policy to assure protection of all client-confidential information. ➤ Implement plan to share information. ➤ Identify high-end system users for targeted intervention strategies.
4. **Explore and discuss commonly-used data and performance measures on regular basis.**	➤ Utilize Coordinated Entry for data reports/system needs and identification of data trends. ➤ Use other data resources and performance measures in conjunction with PIT and CE data for decision making.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA FOUR:	Increase our community awareness and marketing efforts within both the external community and with our internal stakeholders.
Strategy	**Action Steps**
1. **Develop, implement and maintain a marketing plan aimed at consumers.**	➢ Develop a simplified flow chart for both consumers and direct care staff that will help identify process of working through the system.
	➢ Incorporate success stories identified in 4:4 and incorporate into plan and on website.
	➢ Incorporate awareness activities developed in 4:5.
2. **Develop, implement and maintain a marketing plan aimed at providers.**	➢ Focus on provider-to-provider education regarding services in the community.
	➢ Incorporate success stories identified in 4:4 and incorporate into plan and on website.
	➢ Incorporate awareness activities developed in 4:5.
3. **Develop, implement, and maintain a marketing plan towards general public.**	➢ Incorporate issues that will assist in the reduction in the stigma of homelessness.
	➢ Develop new 'branding' strategies around the CoC and incorporate into campaigns.
	➢ Incorporation of awareness activities identified 4:5.
4. **Advocate to those in decision making roles/policy makers.**	➢ Incorporate awareness activities developed in 4:5.
	➢ Develop a series of success stories and use in marketing campaigns.
	➢ Utilize trend data to advocate with policy makers for change.
	➢ Conduct trainings such as Bridges out of Poverty trainings and/or similar events to convey message regarding the struggle of homelessness/near homelessness.
5. **Develop homeless awareness activities that can be incorporated in 1 through 3.**	➢ Explore what other communities have developed in terms of community-based events to bring awareness of housing and homelessness issues.
	➢ Create local awareness activities geared towards marketing.
	➢ Explore what other communities have done to bring homeless awareness to the forefront.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA FIVE:	Strategically engage and align the CoC within the community with those initiatives that best meet our client's needs.	
Strategy	**Action Steps**	
1. **Educate and engage stakeholders from other community efforts on the CoC mission and systems.**	➢ Use existing priority groups as starting point in analysis.	
	➢ Compile a 'bank' of community/state collaboratives that have ties to mission of the CoC.	
	➢ Establish process to increase stakeholder involvement in CoC efforts.	
2. **Work towards a creation of synergy w/ other partners.**	➢ Conduct formal and informal assessments to avoid duplication in efforts.	
	➢ Expand efforts to eliminate silos.	
3. **Development of 'a voice' facet on how to represent CoC.**	➢ Done in conjunction with Objective 4:3.	
	➢ Educate and train CoC members.	