Attendance: Liz Moen, Steph Plaster, Abby Guilford, Matt Lewis, KaBao Lee, Betty Notto, Natalie Engelmann, Sheena Addis, Alyssa Paulson, Kim Prinsen, Sydney Schewe, Michele Reid, Bill Church, Lisa Robinson Gustner, Suzie Misel, Lily Anderson, Brittany Clausen, Latrisse White, Heather Duchscherer, Mary Wheeler

Veteran Updates- There are not many updates. 2 weeks from tomorrow for paperwork will be reviewed. More of an update next meeting. Submit application to declare that we ended veteran homelessness in SMAC.

Vacancy Report- will break down youth, family and adults in the future.

Increase in January and February when SMAC took over youth referrals

What are the numbers we are looking at? Alyssa- big spike in January and February. Dropped off the map when COVID hit and then we ramped back up. When this is broken down in youth, families and singles, we may see more trends in the numbers.

Denial report- has more interesting information.

If there’s anything you want to see in the vacancies next time, type it in the chat and Alyssa will provide that information for you.

Vacancy report- agencies that have opening within their program. It allows SMAC to know when they have programs available for a referral. They only count vacancies as “1” even if a housing provider requests 3 vacancies at a time.

Denial Report- displays reasons why a referral was denied from a service provider.

252 denials in the first half of the year. The number of denials may not add up to the number of the vacancies from a service provider because SMAC is tracking the denials carefully to investigate why folks are getting denied.

Ineligible- significant decrease on report. We are striving to deliver good referrals from CES. We need to know what service providers are looking for specifically to retrieve the best referrals as possible.

Question from Steph: Do we know if these numbers are at all due to increased communication via case consult? Or any other ideas about the change in numbers?

Answer from Abby: It is significant how much the denials over all dropped. For those who have been around a long time Liz brought denials up when we were still meeting at People Inc. demonstrating that large number of denials was a system issue more than a provider issue. We really ramped up case consultation and also the follow up that has been implemented with assessors is huge. THANK YOU for the commitment to change. It does make a difference!! Of course it's not perfect yet but it is awesome to see action affect change.

Racial Disparities in Coordinated Entry- 3 data sets: 4/1/2020-6/30/2020 Quarter 2

We are using Quarter 2 data because this is the first time we have data so we wanted to match it up.

The numbers we’re looking for were for African American, Multiracial and Native/Indigenous folks because these folks were most impacted by the SPARC data. The overall numbers are close to what SPARC was finding but splitting it up between youth, youth families and singles are different.

Looking at it, 30-33% of Black/African Americans for SPARC data and we are a little under it by 25%. Likely caused by Singles data.

In Shelter Households served, Singles tend to be more White than families and Youth numbers are smaller and easily skewed. We need to pay attention to Native youth families.

Outreach clients served: The overall number is pretty high for White folks and scattered for folks of color.

Question from Heather: Does anyone know the racial breakdown for the general population of the SMAC region? So that we have it to compare it to other regions.

Answer from Abby: White 86%, Black 4%, Multiracial 5%, Native American/Alaskan less than 1%, Asian/Pacific Islander 5%

A suggestion: Breakdown of where we are at and where we can impact these numbers.

The reason that was not included in this data because knowing the general population may not be helpful, however, knowing the general homeless population is helpful to know how the system can be helpful in dealing with folks in an equitable way.

A suggestion from Michele: using Wilder Research to find the triennial survey breakdown of this information. This could give us a starting point to find what we are looking for.

Breakout Session-

Michele (Anoka County), Hans (YMCA), Heather (Hearth Connection), Brittany (The Link) & Lily (Guild Services)

* Brittany-What will we do when we get all of the data?
  + Michele- SPARC looks at the Point in Time (PIT) count to figure out the disparities to get the root of this issue. After we get more data (comparing Quarter 2 vs. 3), we can look at what’s going out and see how we can work collectively to accomplish these goals.
* If people who are White are getting more access to resources vs. Youth of color, what can we do to make sure this is equitable?
* Heather- every single White person was able to access CE and shelter, however, most of the people who did access CE didn’t access to shelter or most people who got shelter didn’t get access to CE. There are more White folks getting access to outreach. How approachable are outreach workers to Black and indigenous folks?
  + Hans- would like to dig in to geography. Are we only focused in targeted areas that are set up for outreach protocol? People are spreading farther apart because of COVID because encampments are spreading.
    - Heather- YMCA are serving more Black and indigenous folks in outreach.
  + Lily- curious how SMAC counties are laid out in homelessness impacts access for people of color.
    - Michele- very few shelters in SMAC and only 14 people can be served. It may be advantageous to look at chronic homelessness as a distinguishing factor. The suburbs tend to not be in your face as far as being creative to locating folks. More white folks are getting better access to data. There are disparities in PIT data based on White and people of color not receiving equitable care in shelters so POC do not stay in shelters more than White folks.

Large group- Data discussion

KB- surprised in high percentage of data. Coming from Ramsey, it’s a huge difference in how folks are serving POC vs. White folks. Looking forward to seeing more data.

Where are the services physically located? Are they accessible for all people? Are we requiring them to come to us or that they need to physically meet us where we are?

Criminal background can pose as a barrier to reaching shelter.

Abby- similar conversations and seeing Native families who are getting Step 1 assistance but not getting Step 2. Native families are fearful of stating that they are homeless because of fear of getting their kids taken away. Single adults of color may not be seen as much in data because they aren’t living in encampments versus other groups.

Michele- people who are entering shelter but then are self-resolving because of discrimination; we need to know if that’s actually happening. We do know through the SPARC listening sessions that folks aren’t entering into shelter because of discrimination. Southeast Asian families don’t enter the system because they “double up” and live generationally. We need to take all of these things into consideration.

Mary- It’s important to note that it’s hard to understand the nuance racism and bias that lives within the system. If folks going out to collect data don’t look like the folks they serve, it will be biased. It’s also important to note that folks living in a charged environment are concerned about their safety and don’t want to share things with the government.

What are we going to do with this data?

Continue to dig for more data. Today’s discussion was focused on access. Our next discussion will focus on what the data looks like when folks are in the system. When we have this conversation, we will wrap up and focus on ways to improve access and prioritization.

The timeline: the SMAC Governing Board will vote on prioritization in October. They will put together a few different recommendations with the governing board and the Directors Council.

Next month’s focus: prioritization