

SDAB Minutes 9.25.25

Attendance: Jennifer Shaoul, Asa Johnson, Cynthia English, Erica Strang, Crystal Rivera, Mbacke Thiam, Beth Diesch, Lianne Anderson

Absent: Charisma White (attempt)

Today's agenda:

- Discuss and approve minutes from prior advisory meeting.
- Discuss shelter assignments
 - Crystal and Erica: Families with Children in Man or Bx
 - Beth and Lianne: Employment, maybe in Bk
 - Mbacke and Charisma: Adult Families in Q
 - Cynthia and Asa: MH in Bx
 - Identify: What do we want to identify/do/assess/novel challenges/etc (this is the one pager that Cynthia is working on, draft should be sent within the next few days)
- Discuss signage for said assignments as well as potential media options.
 - No media outreach for this purpose
- Discuss group rules and discussion mediation options, in addition to terminology explanations and disambiguations
- Training on slides by Jennifer
- Next meeting: October 30th 2-4pm (Same link as September meeting)

Discussion:—Discussed above in addition to below.

- Discussed the collection of data and the parameters surrounding viable data collection.
- Discussed making a specific recommendation in the finalized January report detailing what data needs to be collected and perhaps a comprehensive review of what data is already extant and accessible.
- Continued discussion as to the term “Ombudsman” and ensuring that shelter residents have access to information detailing where they can go outside of shelter for help navigating the shelter experience.
- Discussed preparations for shelter visits.
- Discussed continuing the training at the top of the year (January) as opposed to the next few meetings.
- Discussed a format for the report—suggestion was made to outline clearly defined purpose, followed by background, followed by recommendations, followed by a qualitative section where human centered stories would be included. Discussed the focus in November will be report format and who is responsible for what section, while in December we will bring together the portions to create a viable report. SO: purpose, background, recommendation, stories.
- Jennifer reminded everyone that they will need to sign an NDA before the site visits to ensure confidentiality of our clients and sites.

Next steps/follow-up items from August/September meeting:

- Report is due January 2026
- Brainstorming and creation of a standardized set of questions to ask the constituents we are able to interact with at the shelters we visit about their shelter experience.
- Cynthia in process of drafting the one-pager, will be sent to group within next couple of weeks

- Jen: Examination of what information is available regarding shelter staff turnover rates at the various tiers of management, both at the intake/assessment shelters and ideally at partnered provider shelter agencies. If data isn't available to the city then this may be a possible recommendation from this committee: Provider agencies to submit regular reports regarding staffing vacancies, with the idea that longer tenure of staff contributes to better engagement/more positive client outcomes.
- Beginning in the Fall, to possibly be assigned to incoming SWI: Grant writing project for self-advocacy Peer program for shelter inreach; possible collaboration with Ombudsman's office.
- Recommendation: Ensure that individuals have access to resources for advocacy
- Cynthia will propose possible adjustments to the terminology of Ombudsman, possibly "Consumer Advocate"; alternative perspective is that "Ombudsman" is unique nomenclature that may be memorable for some folks
- At next meeting: Propose and decide upon group rules/discussion mediation; Cynthia proposes time limit per agenda discussion item
- Draft signage for posting at shelters for site visits: Example, SDAB will be on site x date/y time to receive feedback about your experiences regarding accessibility in shelter (less wordy verbiage)
- Jen to discuss shelter visits with facilities team prior to September meeting
- Asa and Cynthia to create agenda for next meeting and will send to the group for review prior to September meeting
- Review/approval of one-pager drafted by Cynthia
- Continued training slides by Jennifer (left off on slide 57)
- Possible recommendation: Can make recommendation for data collection on specific quantitative points for DHS/DSS to follow up on following the observations and other findings in the Advisory Board Report
- Recommendation: Ensure Ombudsman information is included in all intake package (Cynthia notes she has seen it present more often than not, but may still be a recommendation); are all of the documents 6th grade level or below .