

**STATE OF GEORGIA**  
**INTERAGENCY HOMELESS COORDINATION COUNCIL**  
**2005 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT**

**Goal One**

**Expand access to and use of the Federal mainstream housing and support service programs by homeless families and chronically homeless individuals. HUD-identified mainstream service programs include Medicaid, TANF, SSI, CHIP, Workforce Investment Act, Food Stamps, Adult Literacy, Vocational Rehabilitation and Veterans Benefits. Mainstream housing programs include the affordable and supportive rental and homeownership programs administered by HUD, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and local agencies.**

**2005 Accomplishments**

- Enhancement of the Georgia Coalition to End Homelessness (GECH) Provider Network with toll-free and web-based, statewide access to information on providers and services.
- Selection of Georgia to participate in the national homeless policy academy on Homelessness for Families with Children which produced a goal oriented action plan draft.
- Selection of Georgia as one of 13 states to participate in the national SSI/SSDI Homeless Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) Technical Assistance Initiative.
- Georgia Department of Labor provision of Social Security Disability Insurance technical assistance and training to nonprofit homeless providers in Atlanta, Athens and Savannah.
- Georgia Department of Human Resources and the Governor's Office sponsorship of a Summit for a Healthy Georgia for state leaders and providers.
- Georgia Department of Labor and Department of Human Resources promotion of the Earned Income Tax Credit Program and training provided to nonprofit and government agencies working with homeless and very low income households.
- The state and federal Veteran's Administration coordination with local homeless service provider networks in Atlanta, Augusta and Savannah to conduct Homeless Stand Down Days.
- Establishment of the Department of Labor Employment Center and the Department of Human Resources funded Mental Health services at the new Atlanta Homeless Gateway Center.

- The State's Homeless Management Information System, Pathways Compass, has built a Mainstream Benefits Assessment tool into the system. This tool will leverage the data entered into HMIS and, upon request, present an assessment of the client's likely eligibility or ineligibility for Medicaid, TANF, SSI, CHIP, Food Stamps, and Veterans Benefits.
- Provided initial funding to the Dalton-Whitfield Community Development Corporation. This organization is piloting a first of its kind transitional housing program for families receiving 'mainstream services' provided by McKinney-funded counselors through the GA Department of Education.

## **Goal Two**

**Provide supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals and families that is both affordable and appropriate for the delivery of supportive services.**

### **2005 Accomplishments**

- The Georgia Department of Community Affairs establishment of the GeorgiaHousingSearch.org and the companion site, AtlantaHousingSearch.com, in conjunction with the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta to provide a free listing service for providers of affordable housing and a searchable database for households seeking affordable housing and for support service agencies assisting these clients to identify units that meet their needs through easy access to information on rents, bedroom sizes, available amenities, access to mass transportation, and accessibility features available.
- Modification of the Georgia Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) by the Department of Community Affairs to provide additional incentives for the development of supportive housing and the subsequent selection of three projects for 2005 federal and state affordable housing tax credit awards.
- Opening of four new supportive housing facilities in Georgia: Trinity House and Hope House in Atlanta, Grove Park in Macon and Hearthstone Landing in Canton. Funding commitments were issued for two additional developments, The Pines in Valdosta and Maxwell House in Augusta.
- Enhancement of the State Housing Trust Fund for the Homeless annual budget by \$267,400 to provide the state matching funds for the Shelter Plus Care supportive housing units. This bring to total 866 units of federally funded Shelter Plus Care units with 561 units under contract, including the 108 new units approved for funding in 2006.
- Establishment of Section 8 Rental Assistance cooperative agreement with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and the Department of Human Resources to provide a fund reservation for 400 subsidies through the Section 8 Housing Choice

Voucher Program for individuals with special needs, many of whom are formerly homeless.

- Establishment of the Supportive Housing Council of the Regional Commission on Homelessness to implement the Five Year Supportive Housing Plan for the Atlanta Region with regular planning and coordination meetings of service providers, housing providers and governmental officials.
- Establishment of the first Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) targeting frequent users of the local jails with a diagnosis of mental illness through a contract from DHR to Georgia Rehabilitation Outreach Inc. Publication of a cost benefit analysis of the first year of program implementation.
- Establishment of a cooperative link between the Georgia Department of Human Resources community-based mental health services and subsidized supportive housing units funded through Shelter Plus Care (S+C) contracts from the Department of Community Affairs. At present, 18 community service boards are participating.
- Creation of the \$20 million Homeless Opportunity Fund by the City of Atlanta to support the development of additional permanent supportive housing units and women and children assessment centers.
- Commitment of 500 project based Housing Choice Vouchers over five years by the Atlanta Housing Authority to promote the development of permanent supportive housing units through the programs of the Regional Commission on Homelessness.

### **Goal Three**

**Develop and adopt state policies to end the discharge of institutionalized individuals (to include discharge from correction facilities, public health or mental hospitals, treatment facilities, foster care, or juvenile justice programs) directly to homeless facilities which are unprepared and unable to meet the supportive service needs of the individual.**

#### **2005 Accomplishments**

- Establishment of an State Interagency Council collaborative chaired by the Office of the Governor to develop the Georgia Re-entry Impact Program (GRIP) to promote the successful transition of offenders being released from state prison back to community settings in such a manner as to reduce recidivism and promote public safety.
- Establishment of the Georgia Re-entry Partnership Housing (RPH) Program through cooperative agreement between the Georgia Department of Corrections, the Department of Community Affairs and the State Board of Pardons and Parole to identify and fund transitional re-entry housing programs with community, nonprofit, for profit, and faith-based organizations.

- Utilization of Person Centered Planning for mental health consumers in state behavioral health hospitals as a part of the State Olmstead Compliance. DCA provided training on this method for all Shelter Plus Care providers.
- Development of the Incarcerated Veterans Transition Program through cooperative arrangements between the Georgia Department of Corrections, the Department of Veteran's Affairs and the Department of Labor.
- Opening of the St. Vincent DePaul Respite Center in Augusta to provide appropriate shelter and care for homeless individuals ready for discharge from Augusta hospitals.
- Development of the Metro State Prison Transition Program for women prisoners with children through cooperative arrangements between the Georgia Department of Corrections and the Georgia Department of Human Resources.
- Development of the Georgia Department of Corrections partnership with the Catholic Social Services, One Church / One Inmate Program to provide assistance to the families of inmates through faith-based community organizations.
- Development of a pilot discharge case management program for youth offenders by the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice.
- Sponsorship of training workshops by the Georgia Coalition to End Homelessness to providers working with homeless individuals recently discharged from state and local correctional, primary and behavioral health facilities.

## **Goal Four**

**Develop replicable local community planning model(s) to exemplify the process for integrated housing and service delivery strategies to be implemented at the local level for homeless persons. This model will include Guiding Principles in areas of collaboration, governance, authority and finances.**

### **2005 Accomplishments**

- Adoption of the Georgia Coalition to End Homelessness QEST (Quality Enhancement Standards Training) model by the Savannah-Chatham County Homeless Authority as an operational and administrative capacity standard for homeless shelter and service providers.
- The Savannah Area Behavioral Health Collaborative received national accreditation for its unique and successful integration of U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Georgia Department of Human Resources, Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Georgia Department of Community Health and private funds

into a seamless delivery system to meet the needs of the citizens of Chatham County, Georgia, including those most in need.

- The Georgia Department of Community Affairs' funding and support of the Pathways Connections Homeless Information Management System (HMIS) statewide implementation program including local community user committees.
- The Georgia Department of Community Affairs sponsorship of the Continuum of Care Planning strategy work group that explores and promotes best practices between the state and local Continuum of Care Plans.
- Sponsorship of the first Georgia Homeless Policy Academy for local providers by the Georgia Coalition to End Homelessness with regional follow-up planning sessions.
- Cobb County is working closely with the local jail to enumerate the number of homeless discharged each year, and to establish procedures and contact points for the discharge of homeless individuals from jail. Cobb County's hospital discharge planning group, comprised of service providers and health care providers, has successfully implemented discharge procedures for homeless patients. They are continuing to investigate options for respite care and the medically fragile.
- Recognition of Homeless and Special Needs best practice developments by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs at the annual Magnolia Awards.
- Replication of the Shelter Plus Care Program for permanent supportive housing by Georgia Rehabilitation Outreach (GRO) in Clayton County, Covenant House Georgia in Clayton County, MUST Ministries in Cobb County, Satilla Community Service Board in Douglas and the Northeast AIDS Coalition in Athens.

## **Goal Five**

**Engagement of the State leadership (Department Heads, Legislature and Governor's Office) in the adoption of strategies, allocation of resources and the implementation of these and future recommendations of the Council.**

### **2005 Accomplishments**

- Office of Governor appointment of State agencies, public providers and nonprofit advocate organization to the New Georgia Commission on Behavioral Health to review and recommend new State policies with respect to the provision of Behavioral Health in Georgia.
- Establishment of an State Interagency Council collaborative chaired by the Office of the Governor to develop the Georgia Re-entry Impact Program (GRIP) to promote the successful transition of offenders being released from state prison back

to community settings in such a manner as to reduce recidivism and promote public safety.

- Georgia Department of Human Resources and the Governor's Office sponsorship of a Summit for a Healthy Georgia for state leaders and providers.

## **Goal Six**

**Take the necessary actions to fully utilize and maximize the available Federal, State, public and private funds available to address the needs of the homeless and to meet the goal of ending chronic homelessness in ten years.**

### **2005 Accomplishments**

- Enhancement of the State Housing Trust Fund for the Homeless annual budget by \$267,400 to provide the state matching funds for the Shelter Plus Care supportive housing units. This bring to total 866 units of federally funded Shelter Plus Care units with 561 units under contract, including the 108 new units approved for funding in 2006.
- Submission of six Continuum of Care Plans in the State of Georgia providing for statewide coverage and the award of \$25.5 million in federal homeless funding projects through the local and state Continuum of Care applications and the entitlement Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) Program.
- The Regional Commission on Homelessness in Atlanta received \$17 million in private donations to demonstrate the effectiveness of services when combined with housing can end long term homelessness.

**STATE OF GEORGIA**  
**INTERAGENCY HOMELESS COORDINATION COUNCIL**

**DCA Commissioner Mike Beatty, Co-Chair**  
**DHR Commissioner B. J. Walker, Co-Chair**

**Represented State Agencies**

**Criminal Justice Coordinating Council**  
**Georgia Board of Pardons and Paroles**  
**Georgia Department of Community Affairs**  
**Georgia Department of Community Health**  
**Georgia Department of Corrections**  
**Georgia Department of Education**  
**Georgia Department of Human Resources**  
**Georgia Department of Labor**  
**Georgia Department of Public Safety**  
**Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education**  
**Georgia Department of Veterans Affairs**  
**Georgia Technology Authority**  
**Governor's Office of Planning and Budget**

**Community Representatives**

**Atlanta Regional Homeless Commission**  
**Georgia Association for Primary Health Care**  
**Georgia Coalition to End Homelessness**  
**Savannah – Chatham County Homeless Authority**

**Council Staff Co-Chairs**

**Terry Ball, Special Assistant to the Commissioner, DCA**  
**Gina Simpson, Deputy Commissioner, DHR**