

City of Lawrence
Outside Agency
Bi-annual Report
2016

Reports on activity should be submitted electronically to Danielle Buschkoetter, at dbuschkoetter@lawrenceks.org. Reports on activities from January 2016 to June 2016 are due on July 15th 2016. Cumulative reports on activities from January 2016 through December 2016 are due on February 15th 2017.

Agency Name:

Reporting Period (please check one):

☐ January - June
(deadline July 15)

☒ January – December
(deadline February 15)

1. Give a brief narrative of the activities that were funded with City funds over the reporting period checked above.

City grant funds provided to the Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center provide for the activities of homeless outreach services in the City of Lawrence, KS. These activities include provision of a point of first contact for people experiencing homelessness in the City of Lawrence, KS; financial activities to assist with a portion of first month's rent/deposit or utilities for individuals or families ready for housing; provision of ongoing case management services for people experiencing homelessness in order to assist them with achieving the goals necessary to get out of homelessness, such as navigating through the application process for local, state, and federal benefits; provision of a reliable means to attend medical and legal appointments, as well as employment searches and interviews.

2. Provide specific detail (and supportive documents, if needed) to demonstrate progress made toward your goals/objectives.

The primary goal and objective of the Homeless Outreach Program is to connect with people experiencing homelessness in the City of Lawrence, KS. and to assist such individuals or families with successfully obtaining housing. The homeless Outreach Team exceeded their goal of housing 50 people for fiscal year 2016 by helping to house 83 individuals and families. Outreach workers assisted 31 individuals in obtaining employment and 4 others obtained Social Security benefits, which exceeded the goal of 20 for the year. Outreach Team members also participated in panel presentations to the City of Lawrence Law Enforcement for Crisis Intervention Training.

3. How have you impacted the citizens of Lawrence?

By providing direct services for people experiencing homelessness in the City of Lawrence, KS. the homeless outreach team is directly helping to reduce the level of abject/extreme poverty in the community. Other impacts on the community include greater consistency with mental health care for clients who are homeless and mentally ill resulting in a reduction of inpatient hospitalization; reduction of the mortality rate and the risk of death for people experiencing homelessness; an increase in the overall quality and standard of living in the community by improving the quality of life for those experiencing homelessness; and a reduction of cost incurred by the city and other community organizations, such as emergency room costs and or legal/court/jail costs.

4. What barriers, if any, have you encountered?

The primary barriers for people experiencing homeless in the city of Lawrence, KS are: lack of sufficient/adequate funding to procure housing and/or lack of other appropriate housing programs/services (such as a housing first program) necessary for people to successfully get out of homelessness; lack of affordable housing or lack of landlords or management companies willing to lower rental rates and work with and rent to people experiencing homelessness and the kinds of backgrounds many people in this situation have; lack of employment opportunities or other opportunities to establish a living income for people with no/low income; lack of adequate general assistance for those who are impoverished or disabled; and a lack of adequate understanding and willingness to help or provide greater resources for assistance by the overall citizenry, local, state, and federal government or any other organizations.

5. Review the line-item budget you provided in your application. How much of your allocation has been spent?

100% of the funds provided for homeless outreach services have been spent.

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2016	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
(Reports dues 10 th of January, April, July, October)				X

Individuals Served this Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
New Individuals this Quarter	87	44	38	25
New Families w/Children this Quarter	9	16	10	1
Individuals Carried Over	105	67	78	78
Families Carried Over	11	6	13	7
Total Clients seen this Quarter	212	133	139	111

Demographics this Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Mental Illness	101	75	93	75
Substance Abuse	52	47	52	56
Dual MI/SA	38	32	37	42
Veteran	6	9	5	6

Housing Status this Quarter	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Unsheltered	23	16	20	18
Emergency Shelter	38	24	26	25
Precariously Housed	24	24	61	16
Housed	49	54	41	35
Unknown	36	5	5	10
Evictions this Quarter Despite Efforts	1	6	5	7

Additional Information	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Approved for Disability this Quarter	1	1	1	1
Employed this Quarter	5	12	6	8
Chronically Homeless	79	24	42	38
Individuals Housed this Quarter	11	23	19	22
Families Housed this Quarter	1	5	1	1
Households Avoiding Eviction	7	4	7	2

2016 has proven to be a year of transition for the Homeless Outreach Team. The year started with the senior worker leaving to take another position, and the team spent two months with only two workers. In April, the team hired Katrina Fabac to replace Brad Cook. However, as a direct result of the 2017 city cuts to social services, and specifically a \$30,000 cut to the Homeless Outreach Team, the Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center was forced to eliminate another position from the team, permanently reducing the team to only 2 workers for the 2017 year. The team leader Sharon Zehr also left to take a

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new position. Because the Bert Nash Center is experiencing difficulty filling the team lead position, which would also oversee the hospital discharge team, Bert Nash administration elected to create a lead Case manager position to lead the team in the interim. Mathew Faulk, the senior member on the Homeless Outreach team applied and was promoted to the lead position.

On paper, the city cites the team budget being reduced by \$10,000 for the 2017 year. It should be noted, however, that the 2016 budget reductions proposed in 2015 were overcome by extra city funds provided to the Homeless Outreach Team through WRAP program funds granted to the Bert Nash Center. Because extra WRAP funds earmarked for Homeless Outreach were not provided in the 2017 budget, the cuts to the program's 2017 budget actually amount to a \$30,000 reduction from the 2016 budget.

Nationally, the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness in a given year ranges from 1 to 3 million, depending on the year, the accuracy of counting methods etc. If the City of Lawrence, KS lies within the national average, with a population around 100,000, between 300 and 1,000 people will experience homelessness a year in the municipality. The city has reduced the number of outreach workers from 4 to 2 workers serving a population potentially ranging between 300 and 1,000 homeless individuals a year. The Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center does retain a federal PATH outreach worker on the Homeless Outreach Team; however, PATH workers are restricted to only serving homeless individuals who qualify as Severely and Persistently Mentally Ill (SPMI) or Severely Mentally Ill (SMI).

Despite such a year of change, the Homeless Outreach Team exceeded its goals for housing in helping to house 75 individuals and 8 families for the year. Since the team is limited to approximately \$9,000 in total flex funding to spend on clients served, the team continues to rely heavily on other agencies to locate funds for housing assistance. In the team's efforts to coordinate with other agencies to procure housing dollars, it is specifically noted that funds for housing assistance are inordinately low in an environment of exceeding need. Rental rates and screening practices by landlords and property managers also present large barriers to housing for the homeless population in the City of Lawrence, KS.

At the end of 2016, the number of people within the City of Lawrence who qualify as chronically homeless remains high, with a total of 38 served in the final quarter. The number of families served was low compared to past quarters. But the number of individuals needing homeless services remains high. The team served a total of 227 new homeless clients for the year.

The homeless outreach team also applied for grant funds through the Balance of State, as HUD announced new program funds were available for the first time in several years for the state of Kansas. There were a total of 6 new program applications through the balance of state. The CoC reported, however, that HUD only granted one new program, which was a relatively small coordinated reentry program grant ranging between \$20,000 and \$30,000. All other new program applications were not awarded. Permanent and supportive housing for homeless individuals and families remains a dire need, especially in communities such as Lawrence, that have high rental rates per capita, and high competition for employment. High rent rates combined with low employment opportunities for people from

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disadvantaged backgrounds and low service funding have created an environment of exceeding difficulty for the homeless and other severely poor populations in Lawrence and Douglas County, KS.