

# Barrier Busters Network Action Group

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## May 27, 2009 Barrier Busters Meeting Minutes

Please sign the sign-in sheet.

### Attendees:

Mary Beth Lampe, CSTS, Barrier Busters Co-Chair  
Kelly Stupple, SB6/WCPH  
Kia M. Sweeney, Packard Health  
Julie Young, Turner Geriatric Clinic  
George Ridenour, Ann Arbor CIL  
Stephanie Rakes, UM Social Work  
Patricia Parker-Self, WC Dept. of Veteran Affairs  
Victoria Smith, POWER, Inc.  
Janet Hunko, HBS  
Ryan Cowmeadow, HBS  
Cara Talaska, SOS  
Linda Dintenfass, Red Cross  
Karyn Boyce, Ozone House  
Jennifer Brown, TSA  
Patrice LaGrand, NSS  
Mel Batkins, DHS  
Terri Wadsworth, MAP  
Amy Aseltine, Salvation Army  
Stacey Haskin, MAP  
Joel Skene, MAP  
Shannon Ellis, HNV  
Harriet Bakalar, HBS  
Chantal R. Cotton, Barrier Busters Intern  
Andrea Plevak, Office of Community Development, Master Barrier Buster  
Anita Mure, Office of Community Development, Master Barrier Buster  
Paul Sher, Legal Services of Southeast MI, Barrier Busters Co-Chair  
Helena Prince, Friends In Deed  
Colleen Joiner, Hemophilia Foundation  
Karen White, PNLH (Lighthouse)  
Kimberly Graor, SAWC  
Anna Byberg, Dawn Farm  
Charles Coleman, Dawn Farm  
Wendi Smith, Salvation Army (Ypsilanti)  
Marie Cope, Jewish Family Services  
Donna Fox, UMHS

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## I. Welcome and Introductions

## II. Announcements:

- a. Welcome New Members
- b. Friends In Deed recently sent out info about their open house and a furniture update.
- c. Packard Clinic is offering free immunizations and physicals on June 17. They offer this program one time a year at the Packard clinic.
- d. Ann Arbor Center for Independent Living has a new nursing home specialist, Dorothy Denner, OT.
- e. Washtenaw Public Health – “Touch a Truck” went very well. They had over 3000 people in attendance. They also had letters signed. If your organization or you (individually) are interested in birth to six years of age, the WC Health by 6 will have a series soon for you to get involved in. Contact Kelly Stupple for this.
- f. Colleen has a potential intern for part time work for any agency. Masters of Social Work student who has good work experience and is looking for a part time job. Email [colleen@hfmich.org](mailto:colleen@hfmich.org) if you have something or know of something available.
- g. Helena and Friends In Deed are offering an invitation to their open house. Please attend; it is on Tues. June 16<sup>th</sup> in celebration of their new building. Time: 4-7pm
- h. DHS – there are no changes to any contracts. Their office will be closed on State furlough days: June 19, July 6, July 24, August 7, Aug 21, and Sept 4. Please make note of these dates!
- i. DHS is going to a new computer system called “Bridges.” They go turn off and be unavailable on June 15<sup>th</sup>. Business will be done differently with the new system; your correspondences will look different and you will get correspondences from the state, not from the local office. Staff is in training now for the new system. **On June 16<sup>th</sup>, they will not have ANY computer connectivity on that day. General services will be slower for a while until the staff gets used to the new system. Case numbers and such will change but the client ID numbers will stay the same. Staff email addresses will also change.**
- j. We need an update from Sandy Reeber on the ETCS funds. According to the last email, utility assistance is definitely no longer available.
- k. DHS memo: SEI funding does not change; ES funding does not change for BB although the state told us that there was a moratorium on the fund. It is the same because of the contract that DHS has with BB.
- l. WHP funding freeze: talk to Kelly Stupple about it if you have questions. Plan A has to be in by this Friday. Plan B is freezing new enrollment. Current members are ok unless they miss their renewal date. **Please work with your clients to keep them on track to renewing on their renewal date.** If they miss it, they will not be reconsidered. The Plan B freeze is an indefinite freeze. The appointments for this week will be honored, but none thereafter. They are at 9000 members for Plan B

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and they need to be at 6000. They need to shift as many members to Plan A as possible.

**III. Minutes and Agenda Approval:** April Meeting Minutes are approved.

## **IV. New Business**

### **a. Miscellaneous:**

- a. McKinley Program:** Has anyone had any success yet with this program? Has anyone actually called McKinley about their program yet? HBS has had some negative feedback. We should keep track of this program and note the fine print of it. It is possible that the program exists because of occupancy problems. Maybe we should send some mystery shoppers or testers. Send an email to the listserv to ask who has tried it thus far and see if anyone else has experience with this.
- b. Transitional Housing:** Is there a way that BB can help with this program? This is an important community within the county. Can DHS ES funding help with this? No one is sure. FEMA funding may cover Transitional Housing.

### **b. New Business: BB Evaluation Pilot Program**

#### BB Evaluation Pilot Program Facts and Statistics:

- i. 68% response rate total; each agency had over 50% response rate
- ii. The main requests made during the pilot program time period were housing and utilities: 51% were for housing; \_\_\_ for utilities
- iii. Every consumer was asked about housing. They were asked the following questions:
  - 1. What is your current housing situation?
  - 2. Are you housed in the same place as you were at the time of your request?
  - 3. Are you current on your rent/mortgage?
- iv. 72% are renters; 6% are with friend or family; 6% are home owners; the rest of the living situations are a small percentage.
- v. 76% report being current on housing that made housing requests
- vi. 56% of housing requests made were living in the same place as the time of requests
- vii. 68% of utilities requests report being behind on their bill now

#### Agency Feedback:

Janet, Housing Bureau for Seniors Intern, did the surveys and they went pretty smoothly for her. Harriet suggests that we should ask a question about how long the client was worked with by their case managers. This type of question could be asked to figure out

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who simply received money versus those that received case management in the long run.

## Group Suggestions:

- i. Maybe the utilities questions should be mandatory for everyone like the housing questions.
- ii. Cara (SOS) says it is good for agencies to collect the contact info of an outside aunt or older relative who is more stably housed than the client themselves at the time of request. It is easier for us to get in touch with the client through such cases.

## Positive Feedback:

- i. The information collected here was extremely enlightening for the agencies.

In an upcoming meeting we will provide training for the evaluation survey in Encompass. The permanent 6 month evaluation surveys will start in the upcoming months.

## Other Information:

- a. No one has received an email about following up with clients yet
- b. We walked through the survey in Encompass with all of the questions quickly
- c. We will define "budget counseling" together at our next meeting.
- d. We will also define what it means to be current on utilities. Does "on a payment plan" mean current? Need one definition.

## Questions and Answers:

**Q:** If we were unable to reach a person, who does the mailing?

**A:** The Barrier Busters Staff Intern. You just inform them that you were unable to reach the client by phone or files.

**Q:** If a Barrier Buster leaves their agency, who receives the emails about survey follow-up?

**A:** If a person leaves an agency, then the master buster, Andrea, will get the email too and will send it to your email.

## General Encompass Updates:

- a. There are a few changes to the regular encompass application.
- b. There is an affordability box that calculates the percentage the rent is of a person's annual income.
- c. There is also a new box for 211 or landlord referred folks.
- d. We will have a manual on all encompass stuff soon.

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- e. **Please put in 777-777-7777 as the Soc Number of undocumented persons as you enter them into Encompass.**

## V. Old Business:

Senior Serving organizations currently only serve people aged 55+ (HBS) or aged 60+ (NSS).

We've asked the Community Foundation to lower the age requirement for those between the age of 40 and 60. We are getting a lot more requests for folks in that age range and we are taking more money from the general fund for these folks. Let Andrea know before June 9<sup>th</sup> if you have info about this.

Welcome packet; encompass manual; membership form. We are working on these and will bring these to you for approval as we get them done.

We will also be meeting with our funders about transitional housing and other policies; we will update you as we get the information.

## VI. BB Emergency Unmet Needs Fund Update

We just applied for the FEMA grant. We will update you as we find out about the outcome.

\$1.7 million over 2 years is our allotment from MSHDA.

United Way funds are coming to WC through the Housing Alliance and agencies have to be members of the Washtenaw Housing Alliance and using HMIS to receive the funds through funding requests. If you are an HMIS/WHA using organization, then you will be referred to the WHA route. If you are not, then we will have more funding freed up to potentially help you.

Can we use BB Emergency Unmet Needs Funds for non US citizens? We have gotten confirmation from the Senior Services Fund, the General Fund, and the City of Ann Arbor Water Utilities Fund, that we can use BB funds for undocumented residents. DHS said that you have to prorate the amount for the undocumented resident.

**Please put in 777-777-7777 as the Soc Number of undocumented persons as you enter them into Encompass.**

Andrea will be out of the office next week. Please contact Anita at 622-9018.

Anita funding update:

The County General Fund dollars are good until Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>. Not sure what will happen for the next two years (because of budget issues)

City of A2 recommended \$20,000 to fund us with

Other "New" monies coming are City of Ann Arbor Water Utilities Funds

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Hopefully our grant will go through and we will be in very good shape.

## VII. Case Consultation

Kelly asks: There are babies being born at local hospitals who have parents who do not have photo IDs and the parents cannot get birth certificates for the kids. Has anyone had any trouble with this?

NSS has. Only once.

Maybe if they say it to the mom as she comes in to have the baby or when she comes in for a checkup. Are the hospitals following the law? The second question is “are the people undocumented?”

Kimberly Graor helps to get IDs very often. If the teen/parent has no ID, their parent can get a copy of it for them and then they can call “Vital Records” and get it for the new parent. The older parent can then give it to the new parent.

People can't get birth certificates without a photo ID. We are not sure if a school ID could count yet or not.

**Motion to adjourn. Seconded. Meeting Adjourned.**

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