

Community Connection

Summer 2014

RIDE 2 THRIVE

The second annual free community event attracted hundreds of people.

Read more on Page 3



Metro Social Services Establishes New Community Partnerships

The Metro Social Services Family Support Division has had the wonderful opportunity to start several new partnerships that have increased our service delivery to customers and broadened our community presence.

Since June 1, 2014, we started three new partnerships with the following organizations: The Public Defender's Office, The Office of Conservatorship Management, and Urban Housing Solutions. We are also in anticipation of two additional partnerships that should be starting soon with the Sickle Cell Clinic of Matthew Walker and with Metro Nashville Public Schools HERO program. Metro Social Services will play a unique role in each of the partnerships in an effort to best serve the intended customer.

The purpose of our partnership with the Public Defender's Office is to provide direct social services via case management to individuals who have recently been released from incarceration and are in need of

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A year after its initiation, the How's Nashville campaign is going strong. Partner agencies including Metro Social Services are taking the lead to house the most vulnerable.

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Message from the Executive Director

In this issue of the Metro Social Services *Community Connection* newsletter we are excited to tell you about the opportunities for the organization over the next year.

Through our strategic planning process, we are defining our role as a social service agency and how we can better serve the community. As part of our changes, our lead article informs you about new and upcoming partnerships as we continue to reach out and collaborate to serve Davidson County residents in need.

As part of our new approach, we also have undertaken some internal restructuring. On July 1, 2014, two of our programs – the Family Support and Homeless Support programs – merged into one unit. The revamped Family Support unit will serve all customers in a holistic manner.

A tier structure was created to address customers’ needs in an efficient and effective manner following

recommendations and outlines of the Metro Social Services Community Needs Evaluation and taking into account each staff member’s area of expertise.

Tier 1 includes six social workers who determine eligibility and case management for Rooftop, Urban Housing Solutions, Mayor’s Office referrals, and walk-in customers.

Tier 2 includes four social workers whose main focus will be on addressing referrals from Urban Housing Solutions and the Public Defender’s Office as well as working with domestic violence cases, homeless seniors, and homeless families with children.

Tier 3 includes three social workers who are assigned to conservatorship cases, intensive case management cases, and work closely with program managers on data and outcome monitoring.



Renée Pratt
Executive Director

Over the course of this year, we will be reporting and updating you on our progress and specific outcomes as we strive to serve more Davidson County residents.

During the past six months alone, we observed a 67% increase in customers, whom our dedicated staff continues to serve with integrity and outcomes-oriented approaches to increase people’s quality of Life.

Pamela McEwen Honored ...



Pamela McEwen, Chief Financial Officer of Metro Social Services, was honored by the Omega Phi Alpha National Service Sorority with the Ann DeMatteo national Alumnae Services Award for her dedicated work in establishing the sorority as a charitable nonprofit organization 501(c)3 per the Internal Revenue Code. This status allows the sorority to receive tax-deductible donations and will help create grants and corporate sponsorships.

The Ann DeMatteo Alumnae Service Award is awarded each year at the sorority’s national convention to the individual alumna sister who has demonstrated the cardinal principle of service in her personal life.

Ride 2 Thrive: Helping Families Thrive

Ride 2 Thrive was a free community event organized by Metro Social Services and held on Saturday, April 19, 2014, at Hartman Park in North Nashville. The event provided a wealth of resources and information including free health screenings and fun for the entire family. About 800 individuals and families took advantage of the event.



Staff Update:



Karri Simpson most recently joined the Metropolitan Homelessness Commission June 2014 as a Project Manager. Prior to joining the Commission, Karri ran the service center at Operation Stand Down in the Edgehill Community. In that role, she served as a housing navigator for veterans and has been part of the How's Nashville leadership team.

Before her work at Stand Down Nashville, Karri worked in Washington, DC, for the National Coalition for Homeless Veterans and the Downtown DC Business Improvement District. Karri earned her MSW from the University of Michigan and a BA in Political Science from the University of Central Florida.



Deon Trotter joined the Homelessness Commission March 2014 as the Commission's Outreach & Housing Coordinator. Before joining the Commission, Deon worked with the Mental Health Cooperative as the Homeless Outreach Specialist and most recently as the Medical Operations Administrative Assistant.

Congratulations are also in order for Deon having received his Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, May 2014, from Argosy University.

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assistance navigating the system and re-establishing services to adjust back into the mainstream community.

In our partnership with the Office of Conservatorship Management we will provide assessments that address the health, safety and welfare needs of individuals who have been appointed a guardian or conservator by a court of Davidson County.

Under a new agreement with Urban Housing Solutions, Metro Social Services will provide application support which may include the VI-SPDAT assessment survey, case management, and other support services to customers who are referred to us from Urban Housing Solutions because they seek assistance obtaining subsidized housing.

Metro Social Services case managers will soon start working through the Sickle Cell Clinic of Matthew Walker to assist eligible Davidson County residents to improve their quality of life by focusing on achieving life skills that focus on independence and family stability.

The purpose of the partnership with Metro Nashville Public Schools HERO program will be to provide case management services for homeless families of school aged children. The goal is to assist families identified by the HERO program in navigating the system to obtain affordable housing.

In addition to these new agreements, Metro Social Services is continuing its partnerships with the Metropolitan Development Housing Authority, the Financial Empowerment Center, and Rooftop to assist customers with housing stabilization efforts. In particular, our supportive case management services focus on helping people to improve certain life skills necessary to stabilize their housing situations, fill out applications, and be connected with other community agencies through appropriate referral processes.

With its case management efforts, Metro Social Services' Family Support Division strives to take a holistic approach to people's needs. The new partnerships will improve access to services for people in need as Metro Social Services meets them where they are.

Metro Social Services anticipates that more partnerships will be established as the year goes on and looks forward to new opportunities.

- By Demitria Vaughn, Director of Programs

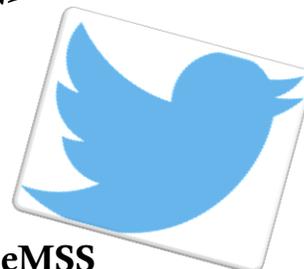
Board Update

Nikita Jones is the newest Metro Social Services Board member. She replaces Mr. Renard Francois. Ms. Jones, a native of Detroit, has worked in the nonprofit sector since 2008. Currently she serves as the Patient Relations Supervisor at Siloam Family Health Center. Ms. Jones has been actively engaged in the Nashville community for years and works with youth of the Dr. Betty Shabazz Delta Academy, volunteers with Nashville CARES, and is a board member of the Tennessee Returned Peace Corps Volunteers.



Metro Social Services is on Facebook and Twitter now!

Facebook.com/MetroSocialServices



@NashvilleMSS

Planning and Coordination Update

After the 2013 Community Needs Evaluation was released on April 9, 2014, at an event entitled *Magnitude and Patterning of Poverty*, presented by the MSS Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis staff.

MSS Board Chair welcomed participants on behalf of MSS and emphasized the importance of addressing the needs of those in Davidson County who experience poverty.

Dr. Paul Speer, Associate Professor of Human & Organizational Development at Vanderbilt Peabody College, and Community Needs Evaluation Research Advisor, discussed the importance of collecting and using data.

About 200 people attended the April 9 event and many others saw it on the Metro Channel 3's YouTube Channel. However, to share the information more widely, the Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis staff is making a series of presentations to various organizations in Davidson County. To request a presentation for a civic, faith or other community group, please send the request by email to MSSPC@nashville.gov or call 615-862-6494.

On April 10, 2014, the day following the event, the lead story for the *Tennessean* was about the release of the 2013 Community Needs Evaluation and the April 9 event. The title, *19% of Nashvillians live in poverty*, highlights the extent to which Davidson County individuals and families are affected by poverty.

The April 9 event remains online and available for viewing on Channel 3's YouTube Channel.

Despite its length of about 250 pages, the Community Needs Evaluation does not have the space to include all the information about demographic, social and socioeconomic data available. In addition, an annual document cannot cover the continual increase in knowledge from ongoing research and other updated information about unmet needs, poverty and the devastating effects of poverty on the residents of Davidson

County and throughout the U. S.

In order to share additional information, Metro Social Services-Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis regularly prepares issue papers on a variety of topics, with several of those from recent years included on this web page at www.nashville.gov/Social-Services/Planning-And-Coordination.

Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis also develops quarterly newsletters. The newsletters not only promote the issue papers but also share a variety of information about specific social/human services issues, public/private operations, evidence-based practices and more. The Summer 2014 newsletter is available at the Social Services' Planning and Coordination page online.

An important role played by this program is its collaboration with and assistance for other service providers. All five Planning & Coordination/Social Data Analysis staff members are involved with an array of organizations on a variety of social/human initiatives. The staff provides technical assistance, community coordination, data and other information to help direct service providers throughout Davidson County.

During recent months, the staff has worked with Rooftop, NeedLink and other organizations to compile data on financial assistance provided to people in need in Davidson County. The group has formed the Financial Assistance Coalition and submitted data for a trial period of March-June, 2014. The data will be analyzed so that it can be reviewed by the Coalition at the next meeting in September. This data would show the volume of assistance being provided, as well as identifying a better view of the unmet need through those who were not able to obtain assistance.

With the anticipated release of county-level data from the 2013 American Community Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau in September 2014, the process of collecting and analyzing data for the next Community Needs Evaluation continues.

- By Dinah Gregory, Director of Planning & Coordination

Program Feature: *Quality Improvement Unit*

The purpose of the Metropolitan Social Services (MSS) Quality Improvement Unit (QI) is to provide education and oversight for social work ethical practices, NASW Standards and best practices, of MSS employees, volunteers, and board members for continued performance and quality improvement.

The QI unit has a primary goal of developing, improving, and maintaining best practices in customer services while enhancing staff development, efficiency, effectiveness, retention, and job satisfaction. MSS customers deserve the best quality services that MSS can provide and services should be strengths based and customer focused. MSS staff deserves the opportunity to develop their professional skills and professional self-worth to the fullest extent possible. The QI Unit is a team member whose primary role is to support MSS staff in these endeavors.

To that end, the MSS QI Unit:

- Promotes and assures continuous improvement in the quality of management processes and services provided by MSS.
- Seeks to continually improve the quality management system based on customer feedback and analysis of the data gathered.
- Monitors services through meetings, reports and briefings.
- Analyzes audit results to ensure that the best technical information is used in our processes and procedures.
- Analyzes tasks to ensure we are incorporating “lessons learned” into our processes and procedures.
- Analyzes data gathered to ensure that we are meeting our customers’ needs.
- Develops training programs for all staff based on regulation requirements as well as staff development needs discovered during quality reviews.
- Conducts internal audit and compliance monitoring.
- Conducts quarterly case record reviews and reports.
- Conducts routine contract monitoring and reports.
- Monitors risk management and prevention.
- Develops agency policies and procedures.
- Develops methods and measurements for supervision of the delivery of services and oversight.
- Maintains ethical standards for the agency in accordance with standards set by NASW, Metro Government, and general best practices.
- Assures that operations maintain alignment with agency’s mission, values, and strategic plan as well as those set forth by Metro government.

- *By Michelle Rikli, Quality Management Coordinator*

Senior Nutrition Program

Because of the increasing number of persons between 50 and 60 years of age who have disabilities, the Metro Social Services Senior Nutrition Program recently expanded the age eligibility for those who need and meet the other requirements for home delivered meals. Under the new criteria, Davidson County residents who are age 50 or over may be eligible for home delivered meals if they meet the limitations and financial eligibility.

Home delivered weekday lunches may be provided to participants who are:

- Incapacitated/disabled due to accident, illness or frailty;
- Unable to prepare meals due to limited mobility, inability to safely prepare meals, psychological or mental impairment, or lack of knowledge and/or skills to select and prepare nourishing and well-balanced meals;
- Have a monthly household Income no more than \$1,600 for one person; \$1,870 for two people; and
- Do not have the support of family, friends or other community services to provide meals

Eligible participants may receive these meals at no cost. For additional information, please contact the Senior Nutrition Program at 615-880-2292.

Metropolitan Homelessness Commission & the How's Nashville Community Campaign

The Metropolitan Homelessness Commission recently examined the annual outcomes of the *How's Nashville* campaign efforts and found that 80% of people housed by partner agencies in June and July of last year are still in permanent housing.

Overall, our community was able to double its housing placement rate since the launch of the *How's Nashville* campaign in June 2014.

How's Nashville partners continue to work on assisting homeless individuals and families with permanent housing opportunities and are now working on a pilot project called Connect Nashville to link people who are about to move into housing with ongoing support services. The goal is to coordinate referrals with community providers to ensure an effective use of our partner agencies' resources.



Snapshot of Homeless Individuals Assessed through the How's Nashville Campaign:

Other achievements include:

- Raised more than \$100,000 since January 2014 – half of which was from donations made to the Gail Kerr House the Homeless Fund;
- Renewed partnerships between the Homelessness Commission and MDHA to receive up to 18 Section 8 housing vouchers a month benefitting the How's Nashville campaign;
- Continued partnership with more than 30 organizations; and
- Launched work on a community-wide Coordinated Entry System.



Camilla Caldwell Fund

The Camilla Caldwell Fund was set-up to accept donations from the public to provide emergency help when there is no alternative – due to timing, availability, or other issues.

Metro Charter Section 11.1102, paragraph 9 allows Metro Social Services (MSS) to receive donations from firms, individuals and private or governmental agencies. Camilla Caldwell donations may be used as follows: indigent burial plots when operating funds do not meet the need; one night only temporary housing in crisis situations; other emergencies which do not meet the criteria of other programs operated by MSS or other social service agencies. Any use must be approved by the MSS Executive Director.

The Camilla Caldwell Fund has been in existence for over 25 years. It was named for the first Director of MSS. The Fund has always been entirely supported by individual and organizational donations and has been used for a variety of worthwhile purposes: eyeglasses for a child after the TennCare funded pair was broken, a headstone for a veteran’s grave, emergency shelter, etc. Most recently, the Fund was used for



food and temporary housing for 15 individuals who lost their housing when Metro Police shut down the Hallmark Inn on Trinity Lane due to the high volume of crime at the location. MSS caseworkers continue working with these individuals to find permanent housing solutions.

Donations to the Camilla Caldwell Fund can be made by sending a check made payable to Metro Social Services to:

Metro Social Services
PO Box 196300
Nashville, TN 37219-6300

Please note in the memo line that the donation is for “*Camilla Caldwell Fund.*”

- *By Pamela McEwen, Chief Financial Officer*

Metro Social Services

800 2nd Avenue North, Suite 100
Nashville, TN 37201
(615) 862-64000

Board Meeting:

**Every fourth Wednesday
of the month at 3 p.m. at
the address above.**

Contact Numbers:

Administrative Offices
(615) 862-6400

Adult and Family Support Services
(615) 862-6432

Information and Referral
(615) 862-6458

Brief Counseling
(615) 862-6432

Adult Homemaker Services
(615) 862-6480

Senior Nutrition Services
(615) 880-2292

Burial Assistance
(615) 862-6458

Relative Caregiver Assistance
(615) 862-6432

Homeless Services
(615) 880-2526

Planning and Coordination
(615) 862-6419

The best number to call to find out about services available through MSS and elsewhere in the Nashville community is (615) 862-6458. More information is available online at www.nashville.gov/social-services