**Equity and Inclusion Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Friday, October 16,2020**

**9:00-10:30am**

**Introductions – 5 min**

Cheryl Zoll; Jonathon Morey; Keleigh Pereira; Heather Roy; Sharon Hall-Smith; Bekki Craig; Michele LaFleur; Lisa McGahan; Brooke Murphy

**Last Meeting Recap - 5 Min**

* Workgroup updates
* HUD – Equal Access Rule
* Goals

**Racial Disparities/Inequities Data – 35 min**

***New data – by project group and county***

* In CE Workgroup, desire to look at racial disparities by project group and county
* Compare rates of general population, comparing income levels, comparing those to rates in homeless system

***Question:***

* We can clearly see disparity in Black and African American population and Hispanic population- do we have data about why disparity is happening?
  + *At this point, don’t necessarily have clear idea of why, although we have ideas.*
* Can we communicate this data with front line staff so that we can correct this disparity?
  + *Need to think about what is happening prior to shelter*
* From personal experience, would have rather been placed somewhere and have stable situation. Not understanding why some turn down housing opportunities or shelter
  + *We have been told by shelter and housing providers that people turn down housing and shelter slots for variety of reasons- location, accessibility, rules, family size, other preferences*
  + *We could incorporate this question into some questionnaire of folks with lived experience of homelessness to better understand reasons*

***Racial Disparities ES & TH***

* Hampshire County – Greater disparities in Hispanic and Latinx households
  + Does this data include EA shelters? *Yes*
  + Maybe we should look at same data but broken down by families in individuals
* Berkshire County - Has smaller disparity but still has disparity for Black and African American populations and American Indian/Alaskan Native population
* Franklin County – greater disparity in American Indian/Alaskan Natives

*Member Comment:* If we were to look at the median household income for various races, may paint a picture as to why we are seeing a greater disparity for certain races because if have less income coming in, less able to afford rent.

***Vulnerability Assessment data:***

* Looked at various risk factors by race
  + History of Evictions
  + Major Health or Safety Issue
  + LGBTQ
    - 24% are Hispanic and Latinx
  + 60+
    - Heavily leaning white
  + At imminent risk of homelessness
    - Proportions are much higher than general populations
  + Chronic or Acute Medical Conditions
    - Hard to know what
  + Lacks Access to Shelters
  + Unstably housed
  + Chronic homelessness
    - Expectation for PSH providers that they are housing people first who experience chronic homelessness
  + Living Outside
  + YYA
    - Portion of Black or African American and Hispanic and Latinx are higher than general population
  + Family with children
    - 21% are Hispanic or Latinx
  + Chronic or Acute Substance Abuse
    - Assessment tool risk factors aligned disproportionately with experiences of white non-Hispanic male population
* Comment
  + Would be helpful to have charts by % of demographic
* Questions:
  + Evidence of having acute or chronic substance use- wondering if that’s correlated to higher incarceration level? *Perhaps but we can’t assume from data alone*
  + *Many data trends we are seeing are similar to nation-wide data which signals part of systemic racism and impact on housing/housing access*

***Discussion of data presented:***

* Shows systemic racism
* Seems like a lot of why questions came up and answers will inform what we do
* Wanting to dig more into those whys
* Are some of these numbers impacted by who is getting incarcerated?
* A lot to absorb but appreciated seeing

**Equity and Inclusion Goal and Action Steps for Fall 2020/Winter 2021 – 35 min**

* Co-Chair conversation
  + Looking for co-chair for committee
  + Reach out to Brooke if interested and want to learn more about possible responsibilities
* New CoC staff- Coordinated Entry Specialist will be taking on facilitation
* Planning goals and action steps
  + Reviewed Strategic Goals Chart
  + Committee members in attendance felt chart could be useful to mapping out strategic goals, activities, and action steps for the group
  + Reviewed chart together
  + Will send out so members can add ideas prior to next meeting.
* Lived experience
  + Needing to engage more people with lived experience of homelessness in committee, committee work, and hearing from their perspectives

**Next Steps for Committee – 2 min**

* Next meeting November 20th
  + CE Specialist will join