

STATE OF MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Mental Hygiene Administration
Office of Special Needs Populations

Maryland Advisory Council Meeting
Presented By: Marian V. Bland, LCSW-C

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Office of Special Needs Populations Mission & Purpose

- Responsible for planning, development, monitoring, and coordination of services for adults who have a mental illness who are considered special populations
- Special Needs Populations: Homeless; Incarcerated in local detention centers or transitioning from prisons; Trauma survivors (physical or sexual abuse or man-made or natural disaster); Deaf or Hard of Hearing; and other populations as determined by the Department or MHA.

Special Needs Populations Programs

- ▣ *Criminal Justice* - Maryland Community Criminal Justice Treatment Program (MCCJTP), Trauma, Addictions, Mental Health and Recovery (TAMAR), Chrysalis House Healthy Start Program, Reach-In Program (partnership with Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services)
- ▣ *Homelessness* - Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH), Shelter Plus Care Housing, SSI/SSDI, Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR), Homeless ID Project

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PARTNERSHIPS

Co-Occurring Release Program
(Reach-In Program)

Department of Justice Second Chance Grant

DPSCS/DHMH Collaboration

- ▣ In April 2011, Secretary Sharfstein (DHMH) and Secretary Maynard (DPSCS) created a team to improve the transition of individuals who have a mental illness from jails and prisons to the community
- ▣ Team Identified 4 Areas of Concern:
 - 1) Pre-trial best practices between mental health and substance abuse providers
 - 2) Best practices for sharing post-trial assessments
 - 3) Data sharing
 - 4) Community Corrections/Re-entry

Second Chance Grant

- ▣ Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) submitted a grant to develop a Reach-In Program (Co-occurring Release Program) in April 2012 in partnership with DHMH.
- ▣ Awarded \$599,546 (2 year award) - 10/1/12 - 9/30/14
- ▣ Grant will fund two case managers, one peer support specialist, and a Program Manager who will work closely with a community supervision agent.
- ▣ Target Population: Moderate to High risk offenders with a history of chronic mental illness and substance abuse who are returning to Baltimore City (60% of the prison population)
- ▣ Seventy-five individuals will be transitioned from the Patuxent Institution in Jessup to the community over the two year period.

Second Chance Grant - Continued

- ▣ In-reach services will be provided 4 months pre-release from prison and 6 months post-release by the case management/peer support team.
- ▣ Client stipends which are included in the grant will be used to assist with security deposit or temporary rental subsidies, clothing, or food upon release
- ▣ Access to Recovery funding will also be used for housing subsidies.
- ▣ Entitlement training such as SOAR included in the grant
- ▣ Baltimore Mental Health Systems, Inc. will be procuring services from a vendor
- ▣ Anticipated start date: February or March 2013

HOMELESS ID PROJECT

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Purpose of the Project: Individuals are often unable to access services and other supports due to lack of identification. In FY 2012, MHA awarded \$500,000 in funding through Alcohol Tax Appropriation to provide birth certificates, state identification, and assistance with SOAR and other entitlements for individuals who are homeless and at risk for homelessness.



Homeless ID Project Eligibility Criteria

- ❑ Homeless or at risk for homelessness
- ❑ Adults who have a mental illness or co-occurring substance use disorder and minor dependents if needed to access housing or other supports
- ❑ In state or out of state birth certificates within the projected rates
- ❑ In-state photo identification
- ❑ Request through regionally determined process

Homeless ID Project - Continued

- ❑ Baltimore City and all counties have access to funding
- ❑ Lead agencies have been designated to implement project regionally
- ❑ 8,320 IDs are expected to be provided (\$15 state id and \$24 for birth certificates)
- ❑ Five SOAR dedicated positions for Baltimore City, Baltimore, Frederick, Montgomery, and Lower Shore Counties

Conditions of SOAR Funding

- ❑ 40 SOAR applications per case manager with 71% approval
- ❑ Attend 2-day training held on November 7 and November 9, 2012
- ❑ Attend mandatory workshops annually (3-4 workshops)
- ❑ Full certification after 6 months of completing a two-day SOAR training
- ❑ Monthly reports



SOAR Initiative



SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) is a strategy that helps states to increase access to mainstream benefits for individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness through training, technical assistance and strategic planning.

Typically 10 - 15 percent of all homeless adults who apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Programs through the Social Security Administration (SSA) are approved on the initial application. Access to these benefits can be very challenging for individuals who are homeless with mental health problems due to the complex process. Nationally through SOAR, 71% of SSI & SSDI applications are approved on the initial application in an average of 101 days.



Maryland's SOAR Outcomes (October 2012)

- ❑ Within Maryland as a whole, there has been 319 SOAR related approvals (82%).
- ❑ Many applicants had claims that were previously denied prior to using the SOAR process.
- ❑ Average processing time for initial claims is 70 days.
- ❑ Over \$2.5 million in federal dollars are estimated to have been brought into the state through the SOAR Program.

Maryland SOAR Sites



SOAR (Continued) Baltimore City's and Montgomery County's Outcomes

- Baltimore City providers submitted 204 applications through SOAR.
- 188 or 92% were approved.
- Average processing time 61 days.

- Montgomery County providers submitted 35 applications through SOAR.
- 32 or 91% approved.
- Average processing time 67 days.

Contact Information

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Thank You and Happy Holidays!

