

Request for Funding of Homeless Respite Care in Juneau

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Background

The purpose of this plan is to provide an approach that can be implemented within Juneau during 2010 through 2011 to provide Juneau's homeless with short-term respite care after suffering a serious illness or injury. This plan also seeks to prevent the spread of communicable diseases, such as influenza and tuberculosis, amongst all segments of the Juneau community. This program is not to serve as a temporary shelter option for the homeless and only provides for stays in respite for two and up to seven days. The Juneau Homeless Coalition (JEDC, the Glory Hole, and the Front Street Clinic) and the United Way participated in developing this plan.

Respite care is acute and post-acute care for homeless persons who are too ill or frail to recover from a physical illness or injury on the streets but who are not ill enough to be hospitalized. Unlike respite for caregivers, respite for the homeless is short-term residential care that allows homeless individuals the opportunity to rest in a safe environment while accessing medical care and other supportive services. Respite care meets the post-hospital recuperative care needs for people who are homeless while reducing public costs associated with frequent hospital utilization.

A similar approach to the one proposed here was implemented by the Homeless Coalition during the 2009 to 2010 winter because of the H1N1 situation. A large part of the respite effort was funded by the CBJ. It was successful. Our recent experience with other communicable illnesses, injuries and recuperative requirements among our homeless population indicates, however, that Juneau has an urgent and on-going need for homeless respite care. The need is so serious that we are planning an on-going approach to address it but, while that approach is being defined, Juneau has an immediate need to provide broader homeless respite care this year and until a more permanent approach is implemented.

Recognizing the Need for Respite Care for the Homeless

Substandard living conditions, inadequate nutrition, extreme weather, and limited healthcare inevitably lead to serious health conditions. Shelters and homeless treatment programs are simply unable to accommodate clients recovering from surgery or those with acute health conditions. Also, Bartlett Regional Hospital cannot provide extended post-treatment care to homeless patients because of the expense of hospitalization. Therefore, people who are homeless here experience a high rate of unresolved health conditions or complications which lead to repeat emergency room visits and hospital stays due to improper healing at a tremendous cost to the Bartlett Regional Hospital, the Juneau community, and the health of the individuals who are experiencing homelessness.

- People experiencing homelessness have high rates of physical and mental illness, increased mortality, and frequent hospitalizations.
- Homeless persons are three to four times more likely to die prematurely than are their housed counterparts. These deaths are most highly associated with acute and chronic medical conditions exacerbated by life on the streets or in shelters.
- Homeless adults are hospitalized more frequently than those in the general population and often require longer inpatient stays; however, their lack of a stable home environment diminishes the long-term effectiveness of their hospital care.
- Frequently, people who are homeless are discharged from hospitals with self-care instructions that are difficult to follow. The stress of living on the streets, exposure to the elements, poor nutrition, and limited access to water and bathing facilities pose barriers to self-care that can lead to medical complications and hospital re-admission.
- Homelessness exacerbates health problems, complicates treatment, and disrupts continuity of care. Medical respite care offers an alternative to discharging patients to the streets while continuing the care provided by medical care providers.
- As an example, the CDC recommends isolation of an influenza-infected person for at least 24 hours after resolution of fever, without a fever-reducing medication. This poses a difficult task in the homeless population due to lack of separate rooms in shelters and other communal living spaces.

Many of us have suffered from illnesses and injuries that require bed rest for recuperation. Many of us have suffered from communicable diseases such as influenza.

We are able to remain at home until our medical providers tell us we are well enough to go about our daily activities. The homeless who are suffering from an illness or injury have a difficult if not impossible task obtaining bed rest. When a homeless person has been diagnosed with a communicable disease or when that person requires continuing rest after having received acute care, that individual is discharged back to the street. This threatens not only adequate recuperation by the individual but often results in relapses or ongoing acute illnesses. Discharge to the street can also threaten the general population in the instance of communicable illness.

In 2009, Juneau had approximately 403 homeless individuals. Juneau's social service providers believe that the homeless population here is even higher. No one can deny that homelessness is a huge problem in Juneau and that we have the highest rate of homelessness in Alaska according to the Project Homeless Connect numbers of January, 2010. With the winter upon us and based on our experience in prior years, we estimate that up to five individuals experiencing homelessness will require respite care for post-acute care or bed rest to recuperate per month. Each case is different but we anticipate that a homeless individual will require an average of approximately two and up to seven days in respite care.

Juneau needs a continuing program for homeless respite care. JEDC is organizing the data for that proposal. This interim program will help to clarify the specific requirements of such a program.

Costs

Our partners in funding the interim respite care program are the Glory Hole, JEDC, the Front Street Clinic, and Bartlett Regional Hospital. We ask that the CBJ join this partnership.

The costs for this interim 2010-2011 respite care program are estimated to be:

- A total of 120 nights or approximately 10 nights per month of hotel occupancy at \$80 per night for a total of \$9,600
- Three meals per day per person and snacks for a total of 120 days to be donated by the Glory Hole
- Hospice and Home Care nurses providing care as needed
- Front Street clinic monitoring clients
- A total of 60 trips from the hospital to a hotel for \$20 per trip for a total of \$1200 for transportation

- Administration, program tracking, and billing provided by JEDC

The out-of-pocket costs for the program for the 2010-2011 year are estimated to be \$10,800. We estimate that additional necessary services will account for approximately \$5400 or one-third of the total actual cost of the program.

In-kind services are being donated to the program by the Glory Hole, JEDC, Hospice and Home Care nurses, and the Front Street Clinic and we expect that these services comprise one-third of the total cost of the program. One-third of the costs, or one-half of the out-of-pocket costs, are being funded by Bartlett Regional Hospital. We are requesting that the CBJ fund one-third of this interim program, equal to one-half of the out-of-pocket costs, by providing up to \$5,400 during this year. Note that the highest direct monthly cost to CBJ during last winter's program was \$792 which was charged in October, 2009.

Agencies

Agencies involved in the 2010 through 2011 plan are:

- **AWARE Shelter**
1547 Glacier Highway
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 586-6623
- **Bartlett Regional Hospital**
3260 Hospital Drive
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 796-8900
- **Catholic Community Services, Hospice and Home Care Nurses**
419 East 6th Street
Juneau, AK 99801-1020
(907) 463-6100
- **The Glory Hole**
247 South Franklin Street
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 586-4159
- **JEDC**

612 W. Willoughby Ave., Suite A
Juneau, AK 99801-1732
(907) 523-2300
(907) 465-3353
(907) 789-5535

- **SEARHC**

- **Ethel Lund Medical Center**

- 1200 Salmon Creek Lane
Mail to: 3245 Hospital Drive
Juneau, AK 99801
(907)463-4040

- **Front Street Clinic**

- 225 Front Street, No. 202
Juneau, AK 99801
(907)463-4201

- **Juneau Dental Clinic**

- 3245 Hospital Drive
Juneau, AK 99801
(907)463-4041

- **Juneau Eye Clinic**

- 1200 Salmon Creek Lane, ELMC First Floor
Mail to: 3245 Hospital Drive
Juneau, AK 99801
(907)463-4086

- **Juneau WIC Clinic**

- 3245 Hospital Drive
Juneau, AK 99801
(907)463-4099
Toll-free (800)330-2229

- United Way of Southeast Alaska

- 3225 Hospital Drive
Mail to: PO Box 20249
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 463-5530

In Progress

1. The Homeless Coalition seeking funding from CBJ and local philanthropic organizations

2. The Glory Hole identifying a back-up hotel
3. The Glory Hole verifying the feasibility of requiring that stays in respite not be extended beyond seven days
4. JEDC conducting training for Bartlett Regional Hospital, Juneau Urgent and Family Care, and the Front Street Clinic to ensure that the plan is well understood and referrals are completed properly
5. The Homeless Coalition working with the Front Street Clinic and Hospice and Home Care nurses to determine the basis and procedures for discharging an individual from respite care
6. The Front Street Clinic developing a discharge form
7. JEDC developing a release form
8. The Glory Hole developing visitor log forms
9. The Homeless Coalition developing a program information sheet to be given to medical providers for orientation of clients being sent to respite care

Process

Please see the last page for an overview diagram of the procedures and organizations involved in the interim respite program.

1. Should a homeless person present ill or injured and request evaluation and care from a medical facility, normally the Front Street Clinic, Urgent Care and Family Medical Clinic, or Bartlett Regional Hospital, and the medical provider decides that the person is in need of short-term shelter and bed rest to recuperate, the medical provider may write an order for short-term respite care.
2. The Front Street Clinic, Urgent Care and Family Medical Clinic, or Bartlett Regional Hospital contacts the hotel to which the client will be sent for respite.
3. If the medical provider believes that the person is in need of services from Hospice and Home Care nurses, physician orders are required. If not, go to step 5 below.
4. If services are requested from Hospice and Home Care nurses, the physician's order must be in place and Hospice and Home Care is then contacted by the medical facility requesting those services.
5. The Front Street Clinic, Urgent Care and Family Medical Clinic, or Bartlett Regional Hospital emails the Glory Hole, Hospice and Home Care nurses (if necessary), the JEDC, and the Front Street Clinic to identify the client who is being discharged to respite and the hotel to which the individual will be moved.
6. The Front Street Clinic, Urgent Care and Family Medical Clinic, or Bartlett Regional Hospital notifies the hotel that will be receiving the client.

7. The Front Street Clinic, Urgent Care and Family Medical Clinic, or Bartlett Regional Hospital calls a taxi to transport the client from the medical facility to the hotel.
8. The taxi company bills JEDC for the transportation.
9. The Front Street Clinic staff checks in with respite resident at least twice per day.
10. The Glory Hole provides three meals per day plus supplemental fluids and snack food to the client at the hotel.
11. The Glory Hole places forms in the hotel room and at the hotel desk.
12. The Front Street Clinic checks the person's enrollment status and work to enroll him or her, if the individual is not currently enrolled for services at the Front Street Clinic.
13. A log-in sheet for those who provide services to the client is inside the room. Volunteers knock to enter but if the patient does not answer or cannot get up, the volunteer should ask for a second key at the front desk, returning it to the front desk when they leave.
14. After two to three nights, the Front Street Clinic staff or Hospice and Home Care nurses determine whether the client's stay must be extended for another two or three days. A client may be referred to stay an additional two to three nights, if deemed necessary, by notifying the JEDC. A client cannot have his or her hotel stay extended unless approved by the medical provider. In no case may a client's stay be longer than seven days.
15. The hotel bills JEDC for the room.
16. The hotel cleans the room after the client leaves.
17. The Glory Hole provides a bus token to particularly needy clients upon check-out.
18. JEDC collects all forms for billing, data collection, and procedure refinement. This information will also be used to develop the on-going homeless respite care plan for Juneau.
19. JEDC bills Bartlett Regional Hospital and the CBJ monthly, each for one-half of the total out-of-pocket costs incurred during the previous month.
20. Visitor Policy:
 - a. Visitors must be at least 13 years of age and currently healthy and not showing any signs of infection
 - b. Visitors must check-in with the hotel's front desk
 - c. No more than one visitor per respite resident is permitted, unless exempted by Medical Provider
 - d. Client and visitors must refrain from disrupting hotel operations
 - e. Visiting hours are from 8am until 8pm

f. Visitor may help the patient with bathing, toileting, changing linens, feeding and oral hydration. If a client has medications, visitors may assist the patient in taking them.

2010-2011 Respite Program Procedures and Organizations

Bartlett
Regional
Hospital

Urgent Care
and Family
Medical
Clinic

Front
Street
Clinic

1. Discharge to Respite Form
2. Respite Program Information Sheet
3. Email to
 - The Glory Hole
 - Home and Health Care Nurses
 - JEDC
 - The Front Street Clinic
4. Hotel
5. Taxi Service

Hotel

Glory Hole
-Food
-Forms
-Bus Token

Hospice and
Home Care
-Medical care
-Discharge

Front Street
Clinic
-Monitoring
-Discharge

JEDC
-Forms
-Payments
-Billing