



Community Mobilization for Collective Impact

The Human Services Needs Assessment and Plan of Action

PERSELY ASSOCIATES

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SEPTEMBER 22, 2020

Needs Assessment Summary

Framework

- Individual and Family Success Approach:
 - Journey - Birth to the end of life
 - Pillars
 - Financial Security and Personal Safety
 - Family Relationships and Community Connections
 - Health and Well Being
 - Learning and education
- Systemic Issues - Organization of services for resident information, availability, access, ease of navigation, etc.

Methodology: Data and Community Voice

- Surveys – 2,450
- Focus groups – 15, with 171 participants
- Key Informants - 48
- Steering Committee – 25
- TOTAL – 2,694

Key Issues and Systemic Challenges

Key Issues:

- Housing and Homelessness
- Poverty/Income Disparities
- Opioid epidemic

Systemic Challenges:

- Lack of information and access to services
- Reactive, rather than proactive, planning
- Fragmented service delivery systems
- Gaps in services
- Racial and ethnic inequities

Findings and Recommendations: **Financial Security and Personal Safety**

Findings: Homelessness is a growing crisis in its complexity and its challenges.

Recommendation: Create a collective impact, proactive strategy to address this issue.

This will be addressed in the Plan of Action.

- ✓ Design and implement an organized system of services for homeless individuals and families,” including a single point of intake, and homelessness prevention in addition to crisis-based services.
- ✓ Review the use of the Homeless Trust Fund in the context of emerging strategies
- ✓ Longer term, engage Federal and State officials, municipal officials, developers and landlords to create a Passaic County Housing Task Force to confront and resolve the many challenging issues related to affordable housing and income disparities.

Findings and Recommendations: Financial Security and Personal Safety

Findings: 13.6% of all Passaic County residents, and 21.8% of children in the county, live in poverty. The County median household income is \$63,339, and the cost of living is \$97,512. Large income disparities exist among residents across the county.

Recommendations:

1. Ensure that benefits are made available to residents who are eligible, including SNAP, Work First NJ, Medicaid, and Family Care, CHIP, EITC, Child Care Tax Credits, etc. , and increase the accessibility of online applications for these services at locations across the county, especially in Family Success Centers, other CBOs, libraries, etc.
2. Develop a “Financial Recovery and Empowerment Initiative” in the county to support residents’ accessing these and other financial support services, such as VITA, EITC, first time homeowner programs, financial planning, entrepreneurship and other related services.

Findings and Recommendations: Financial Security and **Personal Safety**

Findings:

- Both violent crime and juvenile crime in Passaic County are the 5th highest in the state. There are not enough resources in the community to keep individuals out of the system. Also, many young people have been exposed to trauma and do not have positive perceptions of themselves.

Recommendations:

1. Encourage communities to complete neighborhood assessments on safety and crime issues and develop new solutions for crime mapping. “Neighborhood Watch” and other police-community partnerships to address crime should be explored across the county and should be encouraged and supported by the county and its municipalities.
2. Continue to examine and take steps to address racial and ethnic inequities, including minority overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system, and to utilize trauma-informed practices to serve youth.
3. Continue to develop the Prisoner Reentry program through existing and new partnerships.
4. Continue to develop and provide programs and services to prevent and address the needs of opportunity youth.

Findings and Recommendations: Family Relationships and Community Connections

Findings:

Transportation to suburban jobs, and for seniors and families to services, is needed.

Recommendations:

1. With the Workforce Development Board and One Stop Career Center, explore options to address transportation needs of job seekers.
2. Undertake a comprehensive examination of the value of utilization of Uber, Lyft, etc. to meet transportation needs, and utilize educational efforts and pilot programs to address resident transportation needs.
3. Develop and expand teleservices, to replace a resident needing to travel to access a service.

Findings and Recommendations: Family Relationships and Community Connections

Findings:

Residents, particularly immigrant and undocumented persons, often do not know about, or have difficulty accessing, services and resources. Many seniors are similarly challenged when trying to meet their needs.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a system for cataloging resources, and a plan for getting the word out to residents about help that is available.
2. Develop an array of other means to increase awareness of county residents about service availability, and provide education about services through community and faith-based agencies and libraries.
3. Increase out-stationing of services and supports at accessible community locations, and consider mobile services to improve resident access. Amplify virtual outreach and service delivery.

Findings and Recommendations: Family Relationships and Community Connections

Findings:

- There is a shortage of services up-county.
- Lack of mental health services for those who speak languages other than English.
- Lack of interpreters for residents who speak Bengali or Syhleti.

Recommendations:

1. Develop a comprehensive, place-based approach to service provision to address service needs up county.
2. Engage social service agencies who work with residents who speak other than English into better address the service needs of these residents.

Findings and Recommendations: Health and Well Being

Findings:

- As a symptom of the opioid crisis, opioid overdoses are continuing to increase.
- While the situation is improving, some babies are still being born after moms receive no/late prenatal care, and some residents in the County still do not have health insurance.

Recommendations:

1. Coordinate/integrate planning bodies to examine the opioid epidemic and availability of services and make proactive plans for prevention and early intervention.
2. Work with the Regional Peri-natal Consortium to increase outreach to pregnant moms about pre-natal care and the availability of FamilyCare.
3. Monitor the effects of COVID and unemployment on the level of health insurance coverage in the county.

Findings and Recommendations: Learning and Education

Findings:

- There are few affordable daycare options for many, particularly in Passaic and Paterson. This is a critical challenge during the COVID 19 pandemic.
- While high school graduation rates are improving, they are still below the state average.

Recommendations:

1. Work with the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency to develop strategies to increase the number and quality of Registered Family Day Care Providers, and the safety of child care services.
2. Continue collaborative efforts to improve school performance, and continue to support teens in their efforts to transition successfully to adulthood through programs such as summer youth employment.

Findings and Recommendations: Systemic Challenges and Opportunities

Findings:

- The Human Services system is perceived as reactive, rather than proactive, with planning and services for vulnerable populations operating in silos.
- Fragmented service delivery systems
- Racial and ethnic inequities

Recommendations:

1. Develop organized systems of services and supports to address current and future needs.
2. Respond to immediate crises while making a shift towards proactive prevention and early intervention.
3. Service needs and delivery must be examined in the context of racial justice and equality.
 - Integrate the concept of racial and ethnic equality in planning, implementation and monitoring activities, including inequities in resource allocation and service provision.

Recommendations: Systemic Challenges and Opportunities

1. Establish a public-private comprehensive community mobilization process that looks at all needs and all planning processes, with a goal of having a transparent local planning process for the allocation of not only county, but also state and federal, resource, and for measuring progress.
 - **Passaic County Collective Impact Council** – map out and implement strategies and systemic solutions to the priorities and challenges identified by this needs assessment.
 - First priority: homelessness
 - “**Collective Impact Cabinet**”, internal to County government, to support the Council.
2. Continue to improve the operations and image of DHS, in order to support their taking the lead in implementation of the needs assessment.



Applying Community Impact/Community Mobilization to the Housing Crisis

MEETING THE
EMERGENT
HOUSING NEEDS OF
PASSAIC COUNTY
RESIDENTS

Background on the Housing Issue

10 year plan to end homelessness is 12 years old, and unsheltered homeless increased by 63% to **583** from Jan 2019 to Jan 2020; Chronically homeless increased 351% from 2016-2020, currently at **77**.

The Needs Assessment has identified homelessness and affordable housing as a top need in the county.

On average, a Passaic County family spends 40% of their income on housing, the highest in the state. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) generally recommends a spend family 30-percent or less of its income on housing.



The housing market in Paterson is the sixth least affordable in the United States, according to a new study released by New York City-based personal finance firm SmartAsset. The situation is far worse in neighboring Passaic City which ranks first place as the least affordable housing market in the country.

- Residents in both cities face enormous difficulty in affording housing. For example, the study found on average renters in Paterson spend 44-percent of their income on housing while in Passaic City renters spend 50-percent – highest in the U.S.– of their income on rent.

City of Paterson’s median household income is \$36,106, which is \$30,000 short of what NJ DHS estimates is needed for housing.

Since late-March 2020 there has been an ad hoc task force to address non-congregant placement for homeless individuals to address the challenges brought about by the COVID virus.

The last Point in Time Homeless count (Jan, 2020) found 583 residents homeless.

- Homeless estimated to include **183** people with mental illness, and **191** with substance use disorder
- There were **59** households with children identified during the last Point in Time Count

Up to 4,000 Potential Court evictions of individuals and families at the end of November in Passaic County alone.

There is strong support for collaboration from the County, municipalities, and key community providers.

Needs assessment interviews have alerted key stakeholders to our intention to shift the system; Response has been overwhelmingly positive from residents, faith leaders, nonprofit leaders.

Current Situation

Approach to Meeting Housing Needs: Community Mobilization for Collective Impact

IMMEDIATE

A comprehensive approach using the Continuum of Care (CoC) and supports to meet immediate needs:

Strong new management capacity within DHS to lead the CoC/Initiative.

Single Point of Intake for Passaic County homeless residents.

Shelter beds combined with Rapid Re-Housing.

Case management (contracted) for every resident in the CoC, including access to individualized supports (e.g., cell phones, identification, etc.).

Tracking of results through HMIS.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Stage 1: Building a foundation for systemic change

Stage 2: Understanding systems and current reality

- (Stage 1 and Stage 2 are being done concurrently in Passaic County)

Stage 3: Making explicit choices of how to intervene

Stage 4: Maintaining focus and momentum

The Passaic County Collective Impact Council

Process to Initiate Systemic Change

- Under the public/community partnership, the Collective Impact Council, create a Task Force focused on homelessness to:
 - Design and implement an organized system of services and supports for homeless individuals and families – short and longer term solutions
 - Track the implementation of this approach
 - Authorized and supported by the County Freeholders and County Administration
 - Membership: DHS, BoSS, City of Paterson, Monarch Housing, Catholic Charities, Others

Next Steps

- ❖ Create the Collective Impact Council
- ❖ Create the Collective Impact Cabinet
- ❖ First step – pilot project to address homelessness
- ❖ Outreach to Potential Partners – Mid September
- ❖ Convene Homeless Task Force – End of September
- ❖ Issue RFP for Case Management and Individual Support Services – 9/23/20
- ❖ Services in Place – November 1, 2020



Questions and Discussion

