PLANNING AND EVALUATION

2013 Community Impact Report

Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service

Research & Planning Division

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Planning and Evaluation

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TRAVIS COUNTY
HEALTH and HUMAN SERVICES & VETERANS SERVICE

PURPOSE

Who we are:

A Department of Travis County that serves the community under the guidance of the Commissioner's Court

What we do:

Address community needs through internal and external investments and services

What we strive to accomplish:

Maximize quality of life for all people in Travis County

- Protect vulnerable populations
- Invest in social and economic well-being
- Promote healthy living: physical, behavioral, and environmental
- Build a shared understanding of our community

VALUES

We value helping people.

- We provide accessible, person-centered services with respect and care.
- We work to empower people through our service to them, always honoring the strengths and differences of the individuals and families of Travis County.

We value the accountability and integrity of our staff.

- We value the diversity of our staff and the experience each of us brings to TCHHS/VS.
- We honor our collective service to the public, including the careful stewardship of public funds.
- We value the quality services we provide to the community in a spirit of shared responsibility.

We value cooperation and collaboration in the community at large and within TCHHS/VS.

- We are interdependent and connected.
- We treat one another with respect and value effective communication and teamwork.
- We honor our partners in the community and engage with them to more efficiently and effectively serve our clients.

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Introduction

The Travis County Commissioners Court, through Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service Department (TCHHS/VS), annually invests over $15 million in community-based social service programs. These Department investments align with and supplement our direct services to meet the needs of local residents. Community-based organizations are frequently geographically and culturally embedded in the communities they serve and are often best positioned to provide needed services.

Purpose of Report

The annual Community Impact Report provides an overview of TCHHS/VS investments in health and human services. The *2013 Community Impact Report* offers highlights of community conditions most pertinent to the services purchased, and details investment, programmatic, and performance information on the Department's social service contracts. This information allows policy makers, program managers, and others to better understand these investments, recognize accomplishments, identify areas for improvement, disseminate lessons learned, and highlight areas warranting further research.

Organization of Report

This report addresses nine issue areas plus a summary of Planning and Evaluation investments. The Investment Overview summarizes information from across all nine issue areas. Each issue area section begins with community conditions information and then provides performance highlights about the programs included within that issue area. Each program is classified into the issue area most closely aligned to its central goals and objectives.

Although this report highlights community conditions for individual issue areas separately, each issue area must be considered in a broader context. Community conditions related to a single issue area may have similar or related root causes and broad-level consequences. Current economic conditions also have a global impact on community conditions.

Performance highlights contribute to local knowledge about the Department's contracted community-based programs. This report provides detailed information about each program covered by an issue area, including an overview of program goals, services provided, eligibility criteria, and funding. Also captured are each program's performance results, compared to its contractual performance goals, and explanations of notable variance (+/- 10%) between the performance results and goals.

Notes on Methodology

Community conditions discussed in this report reflect the most recent information available at the time of writing. Most data included in the *2013 Community Impact Report* cover calendar year 2013, because the majority of the social service contracts included in the report follow a calendar year schedule. Program and performance highlights are drawn from contracts and reports provided by contracted service providers. Estimates from the American Community Survey have been tested at a 90% confidence level for reliability. In some cases, all noted, estimates were unreliable due to small sample sizes.

Considerations When Reading This Report

Performance results provide only a starting point for understanding the impact of these programs. These summary statistics are not necessarily an indication of the programs' overall performance, but rather a snapshot of their performance over a one-year period. Within these reports, service providers offer explanations for variance in performance, which provides context and meaning to summary results.

Performance results do not reflect programs' full value to and impact on the community. Therefore, it is important to keep the following considerations in mind when reviewing program performance.

Readers should use caution when comparing output and outcome results across programs, as participant characteristics can significantly influence a given program's performance goals and results. For example, performance results may be lower for programs with clients who face considerable challenges (e.g., serious mental illness or addiction issues) and have little social support.

Factors beyond the program's control may also impact the program's performance. For example, the relative scarcity or abundance of jobs in the local economy will impact client employment rates for a workforce development program, regardless of the quality of training and support provided. Without controlling for these factors, the true impact or efficacy of the program on outcomes cannot be discerned.

Readers should also use caution when examining outcome results for programs with less than 30 clients, in which the outcome of just a few clients can greatly affect the program's total outcome result. In these instances, examining percentages may be less helpful than examining raw numbers.

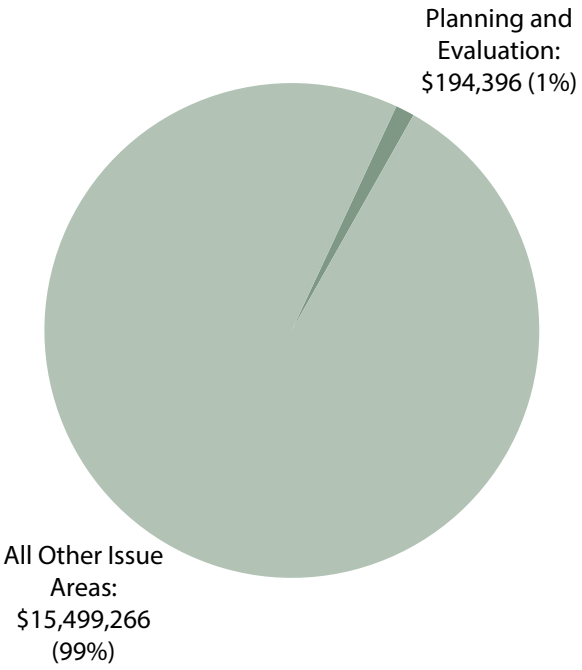
Finally, this report captures a selection of performance measures, which may not reflect the program's full impact on participants and their families, peers, and neighborhood. Performance measures may not all be equal in importance or value to the community.

Investment Overview

Our Investment

TCHHS/VS invests in programs that provide planning and evaluation services to supplement the Department's own planning and evaluation work. Programs within this area provide planning and evaluation services to improve knowledge of community conditions and needs, and improve effectiveness and efficiency of health and human services.

Investment in Planning and Evaluation and Other Issue Areas, 2013



Funding Summary

The 2013 Funding Amount reflects calendar year funding (January 1 through December 31, 2013) unless otherwise noted.

Agency Name	Program Name	2013 Funding Amount
Community Action Network	Community Action Network	$65,996
Ending Community Homelessness Coalition	ECHO Support	$50,000*
Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources	Evaluation Services	$78,400

*Funding from March 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013

Community Action Network

Community Action Network

Program Description

The Community Action Network (CAN) is a partnership of government, non-profit, private, and faith-based organizations who work together to enhance the social, health, educational and economic well-being of Central Texas. As a convener, connector, and informer, CAN works to enhance awareness of community issues, strengthen partnerships and support collaborative strategies that promote equity and opportunity. The CAN mission is to achieve sustainable social, health, educational and economic outcomes through engaging the community in a planning and implementation process that coordinates and optimizes public, private, individual actions and resources.

The CAN is governed and led by the CAN Partners, who adopt an annual work plan that helps focus the use of CAN's resources. In addition to implementing its annual work plan, CAN shares research, data, and information through CANews, CAN's Twitter feed and website, the Community Dashboard, and televised CAN Board and Community Council meetings.

CAN received additional funding to conduct the CAN Policy Forum, a full-day forum to address the growing inequities in the Austin/Travis County community. Participants are educated on current and future economic, political, community engagement and demographic trends. They also learn about and identify cross-cutting, collaborative strategies and associated barriers that need to be overcome to move the community towards greater equity and opportunity for all people.

Funding

The total TCHHS/VS investment in the Community Action Network program for 2013 was $63,096. This investment comprised 23.7% of the total program budget. The additional investment in the CAN Policy Forum was $2,900, which comprised 40.4% of the total CAN Policy Forum budget.

Eligibility Criteria

The Community Action Network does not provide direct social services to clients. The CAN provides a community forum for creative and collaborative problem solving, inclusive community participation and community consensus building.

Community Action Network

The Community Action Network (CAN) met or exceeded the targeted range of performance expectations across all measures. Staff reported that in addition to regular monthly and quarterly meetings (Board, Community Council, Executive Committee, Dashboard Steering Committee), CAN convened several additional meetings of work plan implementation teams throughout the year, including the Safety Net Work Group, Cultural Competency Work Group, Placed-Based Planning Work Group, Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, and a special meeting of leaders in Manor to discuss community planning opportunities. This resulted in higher numbers of meetings and attendees and impacted all three output measures.

The second and third outcome measures reflect those participants who responded to the morning and/or afternoon survey at the CAN Policy Forum, so there are duplicate responses. The total number of participants at the 2013 CAN Policy Forum was about 185; 144 people responded to the morning survey and 94 people responded to the afternoon survey. Only two people indicated that their awareness of community issues was enhanced to "no extent" (see the second outcome) and only five participants indicated that their awareness of collaborative strategies was "not enhanced" (see the third outcome).

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of meetings convened	76	48	158%
Number of attendees participating in meetings convened by CAN staff (unduplicated)	1,020	138	739%
Number of attendees participating in meetings convened by CAN staff (duplicated)	862	563	153%
Outcomes			
Board member participation rate at CAN Board meetings	76% (196/257)	80% (176/220)	95%
Percentage of Policy Forum or CAN Retreat participants who indicate that their participation increased their awareness of community issues	99% (236/238)	80% (100/125)	124%
Percentage of Policy Forum or CAN Retreat participants who indicate that their participation increased their awareness of collaborative strategies that will enhance the community's well-being and promote greater equity and opportunity	98% (230/235)	80% (100/125)	122%

Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO)

ECHO Support

Program Description

The ECHO Support program coordinates and submits the Austin/Travis County Continuum of Care's (COC) annual application for U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds directed toward preventing and ending homelessness. The program recruits volunteers and conducts the annual Point in Time Count of the homeless population, which is required by HUD for the COC process. Program staff strive to improve data collection and reporting regarding the Austin/Travis County homeless population, including needs, services and access to housing, and share reports on community data generated by the Housing Management Information System (HMIS).

Other program activities include: developing a plan, recruiting volunteers and leading the Austin Travis County Homelessness Awareness Campaign, including the Homeless Resource Fair and other community education opportunities; continuing progress towards ending homelessness as outlined in the ECHO Community Plan to End Homelessness; and helping accomplish activities laid out in the Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Implementation Strategy, which includes community engagement, community-wide assessment for homeless persons, and coordinated screening and referral processes.

Funding

The total TCHHS/VS investment in the ECHO Support program from March 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013 was $50,000. This investment comprised 32.9% of the total program budget.

Eligibility Criteria

ECHO does not provide direct social services to clients. As a membership organization working to end homelessness, ECHO's constituency spans the continuum from homeless clients to passionate individual volunteers and well-informed staff from local non-profits and government agencies to elected officials and other policy makers.

Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO)

ECHO met or exceeded goals across all performance measures. Staff attributed their strategic community outreach efforts to the increase in volunteers recruited for the annual Point In Time (PIT) Count (see the second output). In 2013, 22 volunteers counted outside of the City of Austin, compared to 20 volunteers in 2012 (see the first outcome). With the additional recruitment of volunteers outside the City, getting to know the areas better and improving consistency among team captains by allowing them to count in the same area for multiple years, the success in finding/counting the homeless outside the City has improved—the number of homeless people counted in the PIT Count increased from 19 in 2012 to 34 in 2013 (see the second outcome). Staff recruited and trained the Pflugerville Fire Department to participate in the count and also conducted a Poverty Simulation for Samsung employees in Pflugerville (see the fifth output).

Staff reported that they have made progress in preparing for the HUD Continuum of Care Notice of Funding Availability and began plans for the November 2013 Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week and the January 2014 Point In Time Count. Staff are also working to include the Travis County Jail and the Health and Human Services Neighborhood Centers in their coordinated assessment pilot and implementation. Finally, staff are working with Travis County Criminal Justice Planning on housing programs.

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Outputs			
Number of Continuum of Care applications submitted for HUD funds	1	1	100%
Number of volunteers recruited to conduct the annual Point In Time Count	304	220	138%
Number of homeless people counted in the Annual Point In Time Count	2,121	2,000	106%
Number of monthly reports from the HMIS system reporting community level homeless data	12	12	100%
Number of homeless awareness campaigns outside the City of Austin	2	1	200%
Outcomes			
Percentage change in the number of Point In Time (PIT) volunteers counting outside the City of Austin in 2013 compared to 2012	10%	10%	100%

Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO)

Performance Goals and Results

Performance Measure	Total Program Performance Results	Total Program Performance Goals	Total Program Performance Goal Achieved
Percentage change in the number of homeless people surveyed outside the City of Austin in 2013 compared to 2012	79%	20%	395%

Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources

Evaluation Services

Program Description

The Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources at The University of Texas at Austin (RMC) provides consulting and evaluation services to evaluate the impact of local investments in workforce development and/or other social service programs, including emergency assistance efforts.

The workforce services evaluation component offers independent verification of the benefits Travis County HHS/VS creates through its investments in the workforce development programs at American YouthWorks, Ascend Center for Learning, Austin Area Urban League, BiGAUSTIN, Capital IDEA, Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, Skillpoint Alliance (Gateway program), and Workforce Solutions (Rapid Employment Model program), and includes both an outcome evaluation and an impact evaluation. The outcome evaluation documents program results in terms of the number of clients completing training, number placed in employment, quarterly earnings, and other outputs/outcomes that can be determined largely through linked administrative data. The impact evaluation uses a quasi-experimental design to match program clients with similar individuals receiving other workforce services available in the region. By comparing the employment outcomes and receipt of Unemployment Insurance (UI) and public benefits between participants and non-participants, evaluators can estimate the impacts of program participation.

The social services evaluation component has two phases. The first phase includes data exploration and interviews with key program administrators, which is essential to understanding the goals of the services, the outcomes expected, and the data collected. Phase 1 work is intended to identify programs with data to support further evaluation, as well as identify data collection issues and suggest solutions for improving data collection to support future evaluation efforts. The second phase includes an initial outcomes evaluation based on findings from Phase 1. Key questions for this research include:

- Are services being provided as planned?
- Who is being served?
- What are the participants' outcomes?
- What is the impact of participation on key measures of interest?

Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources

Evaluation Services

Funding

The total TCHHS/VS investment in the Evaluation Services program for 2013 was $78,400.

Eligibility Criteria

The Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources does not provide direct social services to clients.

Performance Goals and Results

The evaluation reports produced by the Ray Marshall Center are available at: http://www.utexas.edu/research/cshr/rmc1/index.php/projects/current-projects/278-an-evaluation-of-workforce.html.