

Introduction

The Oregon Department of Human Services, Health Services contracted with AIDS Housing of Washington to facilitate this HIV/AIDS housing needs assessment and planning process. The needs assessment began in March 2001 and was completed by January 2002.

The needs assessment process included: interviews with stakeholders, a consumer housing survey, focus groups with people living with HIV/AIDS, and a review of relevant planning and epidemiological data. A Steering Committee was developed to oversee the process, confirm critical issues, and develop recommendations.

The issues identified centered on housing, support services, the coordination of multiple service systems, migration of consumers, and issues specific to eastern Oregon and other rural communities. The recommendations developed to address the issues are organized into 3 categories—leadership, relationship building, and HIV/AIDS housing program initiatives.

Background

The Oregon Department of Human Services, Health Services hired AIDS Housing of Washington (AHW) to facilitate a community-based needs assessment and planning process and to develop an HIV/AIDS housing plan. The Oregon Department of Human Services, Health Services identified housing as a significant issue for people living with HIV/AIDS throughout Oregon, partially because of the frequency with which service providers were turning to HIV/AIDS services funding to address housing issues. AHW is a Seattle-based nonprofit organization that develops AIDS housing in the Seattle metropolitan area and provides technical assistance to agencies and communities nationwide.

The planning process began in March 2001 and continued through January 2002. The 6 counties of the Portland metropolitan area completed an HIV/AIDS housing needs assessment and planning process in 2000. That process was funded by the City of Portland, using funding awarded to that area from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program. For this reason, the Portland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) was not included in this process. Instead, the focus is on the counties outside of the MSA, referred to as the "balance of state."

Funding for this project was provided by the Oregon Department of Human Services, Health Services. Additional funds from AIDS Housing of Washington's National Technical Assistance Program supported this project.

Concurrent HIV/AIDS Housing-Related Processes

This year, in addition to initiating this process to look at HIV/AIDS housing issues in a broad perspective, the Oregon Department of Human Services, Health Services, working with Oregon Housing and Community Services and the Development Solutions Group, submitted a successful proposal for additional HIV/AIDS housing resources for the balance of state. Specifically, the

proposal was made to HUD's HOPWA program under its competitive funding opportunities. The majority of HOPWA funds—such as those received by the Portland metropolitan area—are distributed based on a formula to metropolitan areas and states with higher numbers of reported cases. Remaining HOPWA funds are awarded in a competitive process to programs that are innovative and replicable, or in areas that are not eligible for a formula award.¹

The proposed program features rental assistance and housing coordinators at community-based organizations in multiple regions. As of this writing, the Oregon Department of Human Services, Health Services and Oregon Housing and Community Services are just beginning to implement the program.

The findings and recommendations of this plan are intended to supplement the HIV/AIDS housing resources now available to Oregon through HOPWA. Many stakeholders who participated in this needs assessment and planning process also participated in developing the HOPWA application.

Planning Process

Interested community members, including people living with HIV/AIDS, representatives of AIDS service and housing organizations, housing developers, members of local government agencies, advocates, and others participated in this planning effort. Relevant planning, housing, homelessness, and epidemiological data were reviewed and incorporated into the *Oregon Balance of State HIV/AIDS Housing Plan*.

Community Participation

A Steering Committee was formed in March 2001 to oversee and guide the needs assessment and planning process. The committee was comprised of representatives from health, housing, and social service agencies and people living with HIV/AIDS from across the state. The Steering Committee identified critical issues and developed recommendations.

Key informant interviews were held with 90 people identified by the Steering Committee and other involved stakeholders. Group and individual interviews were conducted with case managers, housing and service providers, housing developers, government representatives, clinical social workers, and other concerned community members.² These stakeholders were identified as those most knowledgeable as well as able to provide leadership in the future on related issues.

A housing survey was distributed to people living with HIV/AIDS throughout the state in order to gather more information about individuals' housing histories, needs, and preferences. One hundred seventy-three people living with HIV/AIDS completed surveys. Please see the "Consumer Input" section of the plan for more detailed information about consumer survey activities, outreach strategies, and results.

Consumer focus groups provided another means to gather input from consumers. Focus groups are a more open-ended forum for consumer input than surveys, and they can reach people who might be unlikely to complete a survey. Consumer focus groups were held with people living with HIV/AIDS

¹ More information about the HOPWA program is available in the "HIV/AIDS Housing Resources" section.

² Please see the comprehensive list of key informants and agency affiliations at the front of this plan.

in Bend, Coos Bay, Eugene, Roseburg, and Malheur County.³ Twenty-eight people living with HIV/AIDS participated in focus groups. Findings from the consumer focus groups are presented in the “Consumer Input” section.

Review of Source Data

Data reviewed in the preparation of this plan include information from the following documents:

- *Central Oregon Continuum of Care application 2001*. Homeless Leadership Council.
- *Central Oregon Housing Needs Assessment*. Central Oregon Regional Housing Authority.
- *Consolidated Plan 2001–2005*. Oregon Housing and Community Services.
- *HIV Annual Report 1999*. Department of Human Services, Oregon Health Division.
- *Homelessness in Oregon*. Oregon Housing and Community Services.
- *Marion/Polk Counties Continuum of Care application 2000*. Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency.
- *Portland EMA & State of Oregon Needs Assessment Report*. Prepared for the Portland Area HIV Services Planning Council and the Oregon HIV Care Coalition by the Partnership for Community Health, Inc.
- *Year 2000 Deschutes County Housing Survey*. Central Oregon Community Action Agency Network (COCAAN) and the Homeless Leadership Council.
- *Out of Reach 2000*. National Low-Income Housing Coalition.
- *Priced Out in 1998: The Housing Crisis for People with Disabilities*. The Technical Assistance Collaborative and the Consortium for People with Disabilities Housing Task Force, March 1999.
- *State of the Nation’s Housing*. Harvard University Joint Center for Housing Studies, June 2000.

Other information available on the internet from the following organizations was also reviewed:

- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- National Alliance to End Homelessness
- U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis
- U.S. Census Bureau
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- U.S. Social Security Administration

Data provided by the Oregon Department of Human Services, Health Services form the basis for the epidemiological profile included in this report.

³ Consumers in Malheur County were interviewed on an individual basis over the telephone due to the amount of travel that would have been required of consumers to participate in a group.

HIV/AIDS Housing Plan

The *Oregon Balance of State HIV/AIDS Housing Plan* provides a framework for assessing and planning for the housing needs of people living with HIV/AIDS. It represents the culmination of a yearlong effort by a broad cross section of concerned citizens to determine the housing needs of people living with HIV/AIDS and their families throughout the state.

The plan includes an overview of housing and homelessness issues, a demographic profile of individuals who are estimated to be living with HIV and AIDS, an overview of HIV/AIDS housing resources, a summary of consumer survey results, identification of critical issues, and recommendations.

Given the dynamic nature of HIV disease and other factors that affect HIV/AIDS housing planning, it is essential to regularly reassess the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS and the most appropriate strategies to meet those needs. It is intended that this plan be built upon, revised, and expanded as current objectives are met and new gaps and needs emerge.