

**Support & Connection Center Community Advisory Board (CAB) Meeting Minutes**

**June 17, 2021 – 4:00pm – 5:00pm via Zoom**

 Agenda

1. Introductions- Jody Rudin, Executive Vice President & COO
2. Program Update - Susan Dan, Senior Vice President of programs
3. Q&A

**Attendees:**

Carey King**/**Uptown Grand Central

Joe DeGenova**/**CUCS

Jody Rudin/Project Renewal

Susan Dan/Project Renewal

Janet Smith-Dobson/DOHMH

Charles Mulham/Project Renewal

Shawn J. Hill/Assembly Member Rodriguez

Benjamin Zabar/FDNY

Dely Perez/DOHMH

Jennifer Goldman/OMH

Carly Wine/CB 11

Najwa Awad/OMH

Marlina Pierre/CB 11

Bob Moon/OMH

Angel Mescain-Archer/CB 11

Daylyn Bhavsar/Project Renewal

Arianne Watson/Alliance for Positive Change

**Welcome & Reintroduction:**

Attendees were welcomed by Jody Rudin and given a brief recap of the Support & Connection Center (SCC) activities over the past 16 months. The SCC originally opened in February 2020, but its services were suspended in March 2020 due to COVID-19. Project Renewal worked with DOHMH to develop a modified operating plan and was able to reopen the SCC in late October 2020.

**Program Update:**

Susan Dan described the modifications made for COVID-19 and gave a summary of program activity since October 2020.

Prior to reopening, Project Renewal installed HEPA filters and plexiglass barriers. The dorms were reconfigured to allow for social distancing and reduced capacity from 16 beds to 10 beds.

Since reopening 98 men and women have been referred for services. Guests have completed

144 stays (1-5 nights) – which includes about 30% of guests who have returned for additional stays. In addition to overnight stays, guests are eligible for aftercare services. Aftercare services include occupational therapy, linkages to healthcare, and advocacy. There are currently 48 guests in aftercare. These guests have had a total of 492 service encounters – 273 in person & 198 by phone.

Until recently, the SCC was receiving referrals exclusively from the 25th precinct. As of 6/6/21 we can accept referrals from the 28th and 32nd precincts, and the new BHEARD teams.

**Questions & Discussion:**

**Where are the referrals coming from? Are these individuals from the local community?**- All of the guests referred to us are encountered in the local community although they may be from other locations. Some of the guests we have worked with have shelter histories and we have helped to reconnect them with shelter.

**Why have we expanded to other referral sources?** – DOHMH responded to this question and explained that the expansion was to address the underutilization of the beds. Project Renewal and DOHMH both made it clear that the commitment to the 25 is still a priority. If SCC can achieve full capacity with referrals from the 25 then the expansion may be reconsidered.

**BHEARD procedures and relationship to SCC** – Project Renewal explained that BHEARD follows the same protocol as the precincts do when making a referral to SCC. They are required to call to check for bed availability and answer 4 pre-eligibility questions about the potential guest. There were several questions about BHEARD’s procedures for transport and how they determined who to bring to the SCC. Project Renewal clarified that we are a potential destination for BHEARD referrals, but that we have no other affiliation with them and cannot give any definitive information about their procedures.

**What have we learned so far? Were there any surprises**? – No one realized how important aftercare would be in helping guests achieve longer term goals and in keeping connected to SCC services.

**What are the greatest needs/challenges we are facing?** – Since many of the guests we work with are street homeless – the greatest need is for a safe place to stay. Project Renewal has been fortunate enough to connect with MOC and JCC to secure access to safe haven or stabilization beds for some guests.

Have we included all relevant stakeholders in the meeting invite? – It was noted that there was no representation from the precinct on the call. Project Renewal noted that we worked closely with DI Henning from the 25 and would be sure to reach out to encourage precinct representation at the next meeting.

Project Renewal staff will reach out to regularly schedule meetings going forward.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00pm.