

Making The Difference: Opening Doors for Older Adults in Alameda County Building Allies to Address the Housing Crisis and the Unique Needs of Seniors

November 30, 2018 - Nile Hall, Preservation Park, Oakland

DISCUSSION CAFÉ TAKE-AWAYS

The lunchtime Discussion Café small group discussions that rounded out the conference were designed to help participants synthesize the information and perspectives they'd heard in the plenary presentations, and generate thinking and ideas that will help us all build a common vision and identify collaborative opportunities. Each group documented their “take-aways” and posted them on the Community Wall.

Retooling Homeless Programs to Better Serve Older Adults

- Where are the max funds and scale results?
- Are there resources available? If so, how much?
- Wheel-chair up keep service and equipment for homeless
- Income threshold is too low for services needed
- Improving services for people currently homeless (especially people in wheelchairs)
- Abandon senior housing projects
- Addressing how we communicate what services are available
- Work on Medi-caid / Medi-cal for Housing
- Family caregiver support and resources
- If we know how many older adults are eligible for CalFresh, that number tells us data to use to create policy and progress
- Homeless seniors have para-transit – chairs etc. accessibility issues
- Collaborative programs that get older adults out of the fray of multiple services
- Getting ahead of developmental issues / pre-determining affordable access
- Senior housing income criteria – base-line is too low
- We still need a social justice movement for aging

Retooling Housing and Rehousing Programs to Better Serve Older Adults

- Design subsidized housing accessibility - Good for seniors is good for all
- Accurate household income indefinitely / resident in subsidized housing to maintain eligible for low-income.
- Say people have to be connected to an agency without getting access to agency – CES requires referrals → resource problems
- Responsive and flexible systems that support seniors as circumstances change (ie. Shorter waiting list changes in levels of care and eligibility), move-in supports
- Start IHSS eligibility process during transit into housing – being proactive about supports needed to succeed in new housing (not cookie cutter, comprehensive teams)
- Include Shared Housing
- Repurpose public schools – other buildings for housing
- Make school buildings available for temporary rehousing
- Provide incentives to property owners to more temp housing

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Retooling Senior Services to Address Housing and Homelessness

- Older Adult
 - included
 - informed
 - contribute
 - heard
 - supported
 - part of community
 - has purpose
- Prevention level is trusted relationships and connects to intervention
- Build on relationships the client has (family mapping)
- Two levels: prevention and intervention
- Leadership developed at prevention level
- Prevention level is place and affinity based
- Build on trusted relationships with consumer and provider
- All providers are connected and can share
- First responders connected with prevention
- Technology infrastructure (Covia's program, Dahlia portal)
- All providers are connected and can share
- Housing subsidies available (help people stay where they are)
- Support people where they are

The Leadership Challenge: Breaking Down Silos of Homeless/Housing, Health and Senior Services Agencies

1. Bring more partners to the table
2. County agencies collaborate on reporting requirements and expected outcomes for agencies receiving money for same work funding from different sources
3. Trust
4. Core admin services
5. Shared data
6. Referrals from one organization to another based on client needs
7. Streamline and maximize resources
8. More convenings like this one
9. More info about other organization's offerings with clients
10. Long-term care management
11. Willingness to have tough conversations
12. Back any initiative that benefits older adults
13. Share contact information for who is here today
14. Support each other more
15. Support rapid response program

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16. Advocacy – those that can, do!
 17. Celebrate small victories and carry them forward
 18. Reducing jealousy of funding streams. Build trust and look at bigger picture
- Break-down silos
 - Community Healthy Record (part of AC3, Alameda County's Whole Person Care Project) is promising
 - Can funders communicate or collaborate
 - Emphasize the "whole" person to encourage funder collaborate
 - Develop policy/framework for county organizations to collaborate for care coordination

Unpacking Today – What Did we Miss? What do you want to see going forward?

- Hoping to bring all resources together
- Senior Round Tables
 - San Mateo
 - San Francisco
 - Silicon Valley
- Need common vision – some goal and way to achieve it
- Break down silos – industry wide
- Training of caregivers
- Need to create a "movement" in the Bay Area for Older adults, like the women's march and Black lives matter.
- Need to coordinate advocacy efforts and focus on the input and voices of people impacted.
- Improvements to and expansion of paratransit will help people access resources.
- Better supports for people with motorized wheelchairs on paratransit, public transit and in the community.
- Support for shared housing programs needed.
- Brainstorm: How do we change the way we come together? Create a one-stop shop not a complete system (there are examples)
- There was a very important element missing that demands discussion and awareness. See below link to a talk on KQED from an author who challenges the framework of relying on the super wealthy for their "generosity" and philanthropy while averting true social change that would impact their wealth and profits. The wealthy get to decide how American capital is spent rather than paying taxes so that communities and their elected officials can decide how to spend the resources according to social need.
<https://www.kqed.org/forum/2010101867565/anand-giridharadas-on-the-dark-side-of-elites-and-philanthropy>